

SESSION NOTES

9th July 2020



Fundraising in the age of Covid-19

A record of a Tarnside resilience webinar for 10GM

Patrick Boggon of Tarnside Consulting held a webinar for charity leaders from Greater Manchester.

The aim was to understand the challenges faced by charities in the face of Coronavirus, and the opportunities ahead.

The opening session explored the challenges:

- Massive uncertainty
- No event or retail income
- Economic uncertainty
- Increase in demand for services
- Focus on NHS and healthcare.

“the impact of uncertainty on our staff...”

“working virtually: ZOOM fatigue!”

“being a relatively new organization weathering this situation”

The Coronavirus pandemic is estimated to bring about a reduction in charity income of around £4.3bn throughout the virus’ peak in the UK (IoF/NCVO). At the same time demand for services is likely to grow exponentially, as people suffer the wider consequences of ill health, isolation and poverty.

Charities will be needed more than ever as society reconciles with its future and communities recover. Fundraising will without doubt have its challenges: yet it is the work now which will define our ability to care for and support people beyond.

And what of the opportunities?

Immense change always creates opportunity: extraordinary circumstances force people and organizations to do the unthinkable. Charities have the chance to:

Change whatever it was you “always did that way”... now is the time to be bold;

Move staff, promote talent: who’s shown resilience and determination? Will your team need to change in shape and talent?

End anything that’s not really working...

Invest in areas that do work well and test new markets. Very few organisations will come out of this ‘the same’ so now is the time to refocus for the future.

As ever a clear view of cost and return is essential: charities that understand costs and profitability will be able to track performance and remain agile.

The group considered what opportunities lay ahead for their charities:

“flexible working offering better working conditions and aiding a better work life balance...”

“discovering need ways of working Eg. library offering a ‘click & collect’ facility”

“socially distanced meeting in parks”

“Big Manchester got an initial £500,000 from National Lottery and has brought in a further £600,000 from other sources LA, Health and other grants”



Income Streams

The Tarnside Fundraising Matrix is a simple tool which maps out all potential income streams and the vehicles required for each. It allows charities to consider in which areas they currently fundraise, and where there is untapped potential.

Participants looked at their current fundraising and where opportunities lay for new income streams and operations.

“Ongoing donations”

“Legacies”

Not all areas will be suitable for all charities, but a ‘gap analysis’ can throw a light on untapped potential... and what’s needed to reach it.

Markets / Vehicles	Individuals	Foundations	Companies	Community	Statutory
Committed Giving					
Digital					
Special Events					
Capital Campaign					
Major Gift					
Project Funding					
Legacy Giving					

But how can charities succeed in new markets?

So much has changed and continues to change daily... but the key to success will remain the same.

A clear and compelling **Case for Support** which meets a real need will always raise money. Regardless of sector, people choose to support causes which can demonstrate how they will resolve a problem, deliver change, and do this efficiently and sustainably.

The Great Aunt Maude test gave participants the opportunity to test their ‘pitching’ skills, by presenting a brief version of their Case for Support to their peers.

This exercise places fundraisers in the role of both ‘askers’ and ‘donors’ and highlights the need to speak powerfully to donors’ needs and interests...

Great Aunt Maude left Britain for Saskatchewan after the war. You never heard from her until you received news she had died and left a legacy. Of this legacy £1m is yours to keep and £1m must be given to charities in Staffordshire, straight away.

Three groups pitched for funding to the ‘trustees’, as follows:

Group 1 proposed to work with families with complex needs across Gtr Mcr experiencing mental health issues, alcohol/substance misuse domestic abuse, reducing incidence of mental health, anxiety and its causes, and involving 50 volunteers long term.

Group 2 outlined their vision to upscale and sustain support for the BAME community across Greater Manchester, raising the level of conversation about the BAME Community and building a legacy to affect positive cultural change over 5 years, in turn enabling further development.

Trustees ‘scored’ the pitch against the following criteria:

1. Sustainability
2. Impact
3. Evidence of need

Outcomes were as follows:

Group 1: 7/10 “would benefit from more evidence of need... liked the tangible legacy with additional sustainability from matched funding”

Group 2: 6/10 “would benefit from more evidence of need... Felt a little ‘now’ as opposed to the future”



Learning point:

Participants struggled to present a ‘perfect pitch’ and to develop criteria that would allow them to assess the quality as well as the sector of a project. In tough times everyone will need to present a crystal-clear pitch – and to understand that donor’s criteria will be key (and that these may well change rapidly).

Regardless of sector, donors tend to consider three key elements when giving:

1. **How does this make the world a better place?** What’s the big problem it solves?
2. **Is it value for money?** Can they measure success, and show ‘bang for my buck’?
3. **Is this the right organization?** How do I know these people will really deliver?

Any pitch – or document – *must* be measured against these criteria. Donors need to see compelling **ideas**, backed up with **clear projections and figures**, and to understand the **skills and track record** of those delivering it.

So, what might lie ahead.?

The session ended with a discussion about what might lie ahead. Patrick Boggon outlined some of the areas he believes are worth exploration:

Digital is essential with even older charity supporters, now reliant on the internet. Charities must be digital ready, and should consider how they should use all channels creatively.

New communities have emerged... people are collaborating locally to support their community, their hospitals and more. There's an appetite for localism and activism like never before.

Charities that harness this goodwill and engage with **volunteers** will develop an effective volunteering force AND engage new donors.

Retail – the world has been sorting out their cupboards, so charities with a retail operation should prepare for a tsunami of donated items. Charities not currently working in this area should consider options...



Telephone and Social media fundraising will be effective to reach people who are at home more and who might want to speak to people....

Agencies are reporting a significant increase in contact and giving levels. Charities should make contact and – especially in the case of known supporters – pick up the ‘phone.

Though many charities have paused asking for **legacy gifts**, solicitors are reporting a 500% increase in will writing enquiries.

There will doubtless be a negative impact on people's assets in the short term, but it's clear people are motivated by the pandemic to put their affairs in order in a way which remembers important causes.

Major donors are making the headlines (just!). The young Duke of Westminster has given £12.5million on behalf of his family; Steve Morgan £12million, and JK Rowling £2million. People have had a chance to reflect and will be making “once in a life time gifts”.

It's likely they will be supporting charities they know well and who have been clear and persuasive about their current plans and needs. Time is of the essence!

*The crisis has sparked a wider conversation about **charity and social justice**. It's likely that the millions who clapped on their doorstep and supported Colonel Tom Moore and his walk represent one of our **greatest ever national engagements with philanthropy**. In the face of an unimaginable crisis we have seen the **very best of people's nature and capabilities**.*

Might people continue to think a little differently about what feels ‘worthwhile’ from now on? Could charities continue to provide a sense of pride, localism and connection? Those charities who explore this will know, and might transform their fundraising for good...

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