

Securing More Funds For Local And National Charities

Chair: Malcolm Fleming, People's Postcode Lottery

Jo Yule: Missing People

Jo Bucci: People's Postcode Lottery

Baroness Young of Old Scone

Baroness Shami Chakrabarti

Fleming introduces the event and the speakers, and plays a video showing the work of the Postcode Lottery. He hands over to Jo Bucci:

Bucci says that she views her job as a privilege rather than a career, and explains the history behind the postcode lottery. She says there are many sides to the postcode lottery: it is about the players, and also the charities they support. They are an external lottery manager and have a licence to manage lotteries on behalf of a number of charities. In 1989 their founder was working for the Dutch equivalent of Oxfam and looking for a way to create a sustainable income, which led to the idea of a postcode lottery. It is now the third largest private funder in the world. Bucci touches on what she says is the most privileged aspect of her job – she explains that no one asking about profit, and as much money is invested in the charities as possible. Communicating where money goes is very important for them as an organisation. She says they believe in making the process as simple as possible and to be on the end of the phone for people – as they need to be able to help people who are from very small charities the process needs to be as easy as possible. It is also about ordinary people supporting ordinary people, no more complicated than that. All charities involved have a lottery licence; their job is simply to lead them to the players.

Bucci explains the trusts which are involved in the lottery. Grants start at £500 and go up to £20,000, and she says this is an area where demand outstrips supply, as all the charities they work with are recipients of some funding from the trusts. She explains the work they do with the charities and the impact that the player's money has had as the all winners will donate some winnings to charities involved. Bucci then explains one of the challenges they face – currently the applications for trust funding total £47million and the trusts cannot give out that much. The law on funding was written to protect the National Lottery, but the disparity in funding between the two is huge. She says it doesn't need to be an either or choice, people can play both. There is a limit on more than £4million of tickets in a draw, and this has led to a reduction on investment in charities. She explains that the administration costs involved in having a lottery licence also pose a challenge to charities who find the process expensive.

Baroness Shami Chakrabarti explains the difficulties in fundraising, drawing on what had happened to her whilst at Liberty. She says applying for grants from big trusts is difficult, and often you need to employ professional fundraisers who become technocrats when it comes to filling out the numerous forms. Explains that her experience of working with the Postcode Lottery is refreshing in terms of the privilege they feel with regards to the work they do. Lots of the charities that qualify for the Postcode Lottery wouldn't qualify for the National Lottery, and it empowers people who would not otherwise be able to do the work they do.

Jo Yule explains the work of Missing People. She says that the fundraising environment is difficult and has political elements: demand is off the scale. The line has been redrawn between what's expected of charities and where the state would previously have provided support. She says this puts unique demand on the charity sector and the team at Missing People have been struggling to cope with demand, so fundraising is vital. Support from the Postcode Lottery is unique, especially in terms of the relationship between charity and players. She says the trust you have from the lottery is also touching, as you are allowed to try new ideas out and be innovative, something which the charity sector has done very well even though funding has been restricted. This means they can choose how they best spend the money, and also allows them to plan for the future. She says charities can learn from one another and celebrate successes together when they are part of the Postcode Lottery.

Baroness Young also explains her relationship with the postcode lottery, which supports the Woodland Trust, the charity she is Chair of. She says there is huge public support for charities but funding uncertainty is an issue. She goes on to say that there is a lot of pressure from the media, government and charity commission, and the new fundraising regulator has set off on slightly the wrong foot by being more about punishment than support. The work of the Labour party in the run up to the election shows what can be done in terms of social media and fundraising, and there are lots of other innovative ways that charities can start raising funds. Due to funding from the Postcode Lottery she says the Woodland Trust were able to buy a huge pine forest which hadn't been well looked after, and now have a full programme of restoration because of the funding. Baroness Young goes over her ideas for a future Labour government – it needs to support charities better than the current government, implement a more supportive regulatory regime, secure a change in the rules for society lotteries, and lift the annual limit.