

A sum of £100,000 was allocated to a large Call for Projects (C4Ps) to provide additional community and volunteer support within the area. The Area Committee agreed that **one successful project** would be selected for the full amount available. Four applications were received and assessed against the project brief using a standard scoring method. Coalfield area Elected Members, Officers and relevant partners and officers, were consulted. Based on all information available, and in line with the project brief, the following project is recommended for approval.

Increasing Capacity in the Coalfield – SNCBC

24 month project commencing January 2016

The project 'Increasing Capacity in the Coalfield' will support new and existing Coalfields groups to increase capacity and enable residents to participate in volunteering, via a bespoke pathway. The project will employ a full-time Volunteer and Community Support Co-ordinator (VCSC) to deliver the service.

The VCSC will support Organisations to identify existing and emerging 'capacity' needs and volunteering opportunities. The VCSC will develop volunteer role descriptions and person specifications and will help to advertise and recruit to opportunities and will support Organisations to develop, or review their existing, volunteer strategy, policies and procedures including induction, supervision and appraisal.

SNCBC is familiar with providing diverse high quality community services on reduced budgets and understand the pressures faced within the VCS. Their work in Children's Centre has shown that it is important that both volunteers and Organisations have a forum to discuss best practice, common issues and to promote inter-agency mentoring support and buddying for new Organisations/Group. The VCSC will provide individual Organisation mentoring support and also develop a Volunteering Forum for Coalfields Organisations/Groups.

Residents wishing to participate in community work/volunteering will be engaged through marketing exercises and will be referred to meet with the VCSC to discuss their goals and gather some base information of their skills and experience. They will then be invited to attend an information session offering the potential to join the volunteering pathway which provides access to free training on the roles and responsibilities of the volunteer equality and diversity, health and safety and safeguarding training, completing health and DBS clearances and through individual mentoring with the VCSC, identify any specific training needs.

SNCBC will provide a matching service between volunteers within the pathway and Organisations/Groups offering volunteering opportunities, by discussing role descriptions, person specifications and the frequency/timings the volunteering opportunities available. The Co-ordinator will arrange a meeting with the Organisation and Volunteer to discuss the role/s and to view the building/area where the volunteering will be delivered. A volunteering trial is available so both parties can work together before making a long-term commitment. The project will also build a bank of volunteers to support one off events such as fun days, trips for children/young people and volunteering as champions to promote services and to 'buddy' with residents to enable them to access services for the first time. SNCBC has trained 12 people in the Coalfields area as Children's Centre Champions in the last year and will incorporate the Champion training into this model.

The VCSC will provide ongoing mentoring support to the volunteer, through regular 2/3 way meetings and will liaise closely with the Organisation/Group providing the volunteering opportunity to identify strengths and progressions as well as any weaknesses or barriers. The project proposes to bring together representatives from the Organisations forum and volunteer's forums to form a Coalfields Area Steering group and will extend invites to support Organisations such as Sunderland City Council, Gentoo, VCAS, Volunteer Centre and Voluntary and Community Network. The group will focus on finding solutions to common emerging issues identified by the VCSC and will consider applications to

the Coalfields Capacity Fund providing support for volunteer travel, specific training costs, support to address crisis points in Organisations etc. The application process will be through a simple form considered against set criteria to a maximum award value. The forums and steering groups are key to developing the forward strategy of the Project and in supporting Organisations and their volunteers to be more capable and robust to sustain in the future.

Recommendation: Approve.

The project meets all requirements of the project brief and was given the highest score during assessment. A description and examples of how the outcomes will be achieved has been provided.

The organisation has a wealth of experience in working in the Coalfield area and with volunteers and voluntary sector organisations. They have two bases in the area and also provide outreach and sessional work in a number of locations.

The organisation has all of the relevant requirements in terms of financial, governance and legal systems and has the capacity to deliver and monitor a project of this scale. Evidence of good partnership working and support for the proposed project has been provided.

Terms and Conditions: In addition to standard SIB T&Cs

- The organisation will be required to provide a written update strictly within stated timescales each quarter, reporting on outputs, outcomes and progress of the project and to process financial claims.
- Project monitoring visits will be carried out quarterly by Scrutiny and Area Arrangements to ensure the project is meeting the requirements of the agreed terms and conditions and to offer relevant support to the project in order to ensure maximum success, impact and value for money.
- The project co-ordinator will be required to attend VCS Network meetings.
- The project will be reviewed after six months to discuss and review target outputs.

Applications also received, and not recommended for approval based on scores allocated and all other available information, are listed below.

Coalfields Volunteer and Community Support Project - Washington Mind

Coalfield Area Volunteer Academy (CAVA) - ShARP

Coalfields Volunteering Development Project – Volunteer Centre Sunderland