

**21<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

**REPORT OF NORTH AREA VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR NETWORK**

**1. Purpose of the Report**

1.1 The report provides an update with regard to the North Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network

**2. Background**

2.1 To develop the capacity and influence of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) across the City, Area Networks have been established and delegates represent each Area Network at Area Committee taking forward issues on behalf of the whole VCS in the area, reporting on area priority delivery by the VCS, and reporting back, providing a two-way flow of communication.

2.2 North Area Network delegates will present a report to each Area Committee meeting informing Members of activity, progress, issues and concerns of the sector.

2.3 The North VCS Network is made up of over 100 local groups and strategic local/national/regional partners. The network meets on a regular basis to share good practice, support one another and receive regular updates and information sharing.

**3. North Voluntary and Community Sector Network (VCSN) Progress Report**

3.1 The North VCS Network met in June 2023 at Castletown Methodist Church, September 2023 at Redhouse Community Centre, October 2023 at Marley Park Community Fire Station, December 2023 & February 2024 at Marley Park Community Fire Station

3.2 The meetings have included the following agenda items:

- Health Screening Programmes
- Networking and Information Share Opportunities
- Change the Game
- Wear Moving
- Makem Money – Small Grants Programme
- Sunderland Software City Skills Programme
- Go Online – Digital Update
- Good Things Foundation – Data Banks
- Back on the Map – Employment Support Project
- Sunderland Voluntary Sector Alliance

3.3 Members of the network who signed the Pledge for Links for Life were invited to apply for the new call for projects in September. The programme is building on the learning from the warm and welcoming spaces by:

- ensuring we are able to offer services and support within our communities
- ensuring we have support and activities available which bring residents together
- enabling active engagement and improve health, wellbeing and financial resilience.

Successful projects commenced delivery of Links for Life in January 2024

3.4 The Network representatives regularly consult with the Network to ensure that the agenda items reflect their requirements.

#### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 Members are requested

- To note the contents of the report and consider the opportunities and issues raised by the North VCSN.

Contact: Ruth Oxley, Area Network Representative.  
Email: [ruth@snyy.co.uk](mailto:ruth@snyy.co.uk)  
Richy Duggan, Area network Representative  
Email: [sunderlandcommunityactiongroup@hotmail.com](mailto:sunderlandcommunityactiongroup@hotmail.com)  
Peter Curtis, Area Network Representative  
Email: [peter@northeastssport.co.uk](mailto:peter@northeastssport.co.uk)