

11<sup>th</sup> March 2015

## REPORT OF WEST AREA VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR NETWORK

### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report provides an update with regard to the West 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 West Area Network delegates will present a report to each Area Committee meeting informing Members of activity, progress, issues and concerns of the sector.

### 3. West Area Voluntary and Community Sector Network (AVCSN) Progress Report

The West AVCSN has met twice since the last Area Committee in December 2014.

- 3.1 The West VCSN continue to deliver activities and services which support the Area Committee priorities of Streetscene and Environmental improvements, Activities for Young People, Health and Wellbeing, Job Prospects, Skills & Training and Activities for older persons to reduce social isolation.
- 3.2 In January, the VCSN welcomed the Council's Public Health Practitioner who discussed emotional health and well-being. He informed the group that £31,421 had been allocated by the West Area People Board to support health and mental well-being projects for local residents. He also introduced the Community Mental Health Profile 2014 report, and advised the group that the website provides a detailed breakdown of data for the West area.
- 3.3 The Essence Service delivered a presentation to the group, outlining that it is funded by CCG to assist the quality of life of people who have been diagnosed with Dementia. The service began in September 2014 and work in partnership with the Sunderland Carers Centre. An update on health and social care, and opportunities to improve pathways, was also provided by the City Council's People Directorate.
- 3.4 In February, the Sunderland Carers Centre attended and gave an overview of their work, which is shared across 5 new integrated teams across the city (including one for West). The Centre explained to the group that a variety of carer training is available, and also provided details of a wide range of activities and support given to the many different needs of carer's across the city.
- 3.5 The VCS network has been invited via a small call for projects to be involved in the West Area Heritage Event in May, giving the network an opportunity to showcase the activities being delivered in the West as well as celebrate the heritage of the West area. The network has also discussed the event in detail during each meeting to discuss and gather ideas to ensure the event is well attended and a great success.

3.6 The VCS group also considered the selection process for the West Area Committee VCS Representatives, as they are being requested to put forward nominations to replace one network rep. The group will make their decision and appoint the successful candidate at the next VCS meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

3.7 The network has also shared and received information which has included:

- Healthwatch Sunderland News Bulletin
- Changes to the Care Act 2015
- Consultation on Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment
- Jobs / funding updates and opportunities
- NEPO opportunities

#### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 Members are requested

- To note the contents of the report

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