

22 JANUARY 2014

REPORT OF COALFIELD AREA VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR NETWORK

1. Purpose of the Report

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

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

The Coalfield VCSN has met three times since the last Area Committee in September 2013.

3.1 October 2013

A presentation was given by the Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (SCCG). Penny Davison is the Commissioning Manager for the Coalfields area and shared the key health challenges for Sunderland, the Coalfield area in particular. The Network were informed that the SCCG do not run services and are not providers, but they do commission them and are working in partnership to improve the running of services for people in the local area. The group will be kept informed of funding and commissioning opportunities via the Network information sharing.

Colleagues from Sunderland City Council Sport and Leisure service gave information on how they can support local VCS organisations who are delivering sporting activities within the community. The Sports Development Officer for the Coalfield area, Laura Bartlett, advised the Network that a Sunderland active newsletter goes out, which regularly provides updates of available funding and informs of any events coming up, which people can sign up for. Grant funding and training advice is also offered and the group were asked to let Laura know of any clubs or groups who need support.

3.2 November 2013

Laura Cassidy, Health Improvement Practitioner, is the Public Health representative who covers the Coalfield area. Public Health has moved to the Local Authority and their aim is to improve health and focus on prevention. Public Health is working in partnership with the SCCG. At present Public Health is looking at obesity issues with children and at the integrated wellness model to move forward and improve services for people in the future.

There is a need to promote engagement and maximise communities and organisations contributions to improve health and reduce inequality. This has been demonstrated recently via the Call for Projects for Healthy Life Choices for Young People.

An update was given on Welfare Reform and the Benefits Cap, and its impact on the local community. The recent changes in crisis support were discussed and the group wanted to ensure that the distribution of food parcels in the area was consistent and fair.

Lee Wardle, VCS Network Representative and Co-Chair of this group has resigned from ELCAP and, therefore, this group. A replacement rep will be sought, via nominations.

3.3 January 2014

Sunderland City Council procurement team attended the meeting to give the group an overview of the purchasing and procurement process of the Local Authority. Groups wishing to be considered for any future funding opportunities or contracts were given information on how to register their interest and receive information when relevant.

The group discussed the planning of events for 2014, the main focus being on activities and events to commemorate 100 years of the beginning of World War 1. The group are supportive of the proposal to this meeting to allocate SIB funding for the development of local events.

Future meetings

13 February 2014

20 March 2014

4. Recommendations

4.1 Members are requested

- To note the contents of the report and consider the views of the Network in the influence and delivery of Area Priorities

Contact: Sam Gallilee, Area Network Representative.
Ann Owen, Area Network Representative