26th September 2013

REPORT OF WASHINGTON AREA COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY SECTOR NETWORK

1.   Purpose of the Report
1.1   The report provides an update with regard to the Washington Area Community and Voluntary 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 and reporting back, providing a two-way flow of communication.

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

3.   Washington Area Community and Voluntary Sector Network (ACVSN) Progress Report

        The Washington ACVSN has met twice since the last Area Committee in June.

- VCS Network will continue to work on developing and supporting the VCS re collaboration, communications, intelligence and mapping.
- VCS Reps are to give both oral and written updates to the Area Committee and the Boards of Network developments, as requested.
- The Network has been invited to contribute to discussions with regards to the City Council's VCS Relationship Transition Project. The project will consider how best the council can work with the sector to achieve joint objectives and priorities going forward. A special meeting of the VCS Network was held on the 26th June. Members in attendance gave their views and input to the discussion and outcomes from this meeting were taken forward by the VCS Network representatives to a meeting held on 16th September. Further updates will be presented to the next Area Network meeting.
- Kasia Kurowska, Partnership Manager, Age UK was appointed as the third Washington VCS Representative at the July 2013 meeting of the Network.
- The Network has discussed the 'One Directory' being developed as part of Area Committee's Adult Social Care priority. The Network wish to be involved in the development of the directory and ask that consideration is made to the format of the directory, ensuring it is accessible to all sectors of the community. The Network agrees that the production of a directory is a positive development and recommend that existing resources such as the directories developed and maintained by Washington Mind and Age UK are considered and utilised as part of this work.
- There is funding available through Sunderland Carers Centre to give unpaid carers a break from their caring role. People can be referred from any organisation or self-refer and up to £500 is available. Information leaflets are being produced and will be circulated once available. In the meantime Area Committee members can call Karen Bailey on 0191 549 3768 for more information.
- The VCS Network welcome the SIB 'Call for Projects' process used to develop services and activities to reduce social isolation. This funding opportunity was given to all members of the Network and the outcome will be discussed by the Network at their next meeting.

4.   Recommendations

4.1   Members are requested
- To note the contents of the report and consider the opportunities and issues raised by the Washington ACVSN

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