

REPORT OF WASHINGTON VOLUNTARY SECTOR NETWORK

- **Purpose of the Report**

The report provides an update with regards to the Washington Area Community & Voluntary Sector Network

- **Background**

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 sector in the area, and reporting back, providing a two-way flow of communication.

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

- **Washington Network**

In Washington the VCS is made up of a wide range of organisations ranging from independent local branches of national charities through to small VCS groups and organisations. Collectively these organisations provide Washington residents with a wide range of local services, activities and opportunities and have a significant role within community life.

- **Washington Voluntary and Community Sector Network (VCSN) Progress Report**

Washington Network has met once since the last Committee meeting. At the meeting in April the Network received a presentation from Active Sunderland which provided a comprehensive update on the work of Active Sunderland across Sunderland and within Washington and the partnership opportunities available

The meeting also included updates from all present on the services and activities they deliver in Washington and the opportunities for networking and partnership development.

Regular funding bulletins are provided to the Network from the VCS Alliance to ensure VCS organisations are kept informed of funding opportunities available

- **Area Arrangements Update**

The Area Arrangements team are working in collaboration with the Sunderland VCS Alliance and wider Council services and partners to bring forward social value from investments and from businesses delivering in the city, to support the voluntary and community sector. The Area Arrangements team and the VCS Alliance are also working together to understand where local community services are currently being delivered within the area, to support resident community resilience and wellbeing.

Moving forward from the warm spaces , we are continuing to work closely with the sector to extend and co-produce the 'welcoming warm spaces', which in the future will be potential hubs for community activities – delivering support activities as part of the wider social prescribing offer – Links for Life. A detailed update will be shared in

relation to 'Links for Life' and the need to continue to grow the capacity within the VCS, in a future area network report.

Recommendations

Members are requested to note the contents of the report and consider the opportunities and issues raised by the Washington VCSN.

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