

9 APRIL 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 twice since the last Area Committee in January 2014.

3.1 February 2014

Following a request for nominations to fill the VCS Representative vacancy, left by Lee Wardle, the group considered and agreed that Susan Brown, Project Manager, Easington Lane Community Access Point (ELCAP) be appointed to the position. Susan will join Ann Owen and Sam Galilee as representatives at Area Committee, and along with Cllr Richardson, will co-chair VCS Network meetings.

The group were given a presentation by Rosalind Scott, project officer, regarding the funding application to Heritage Lottery Funding 'Parks for People' for Houghton Rectory Park. The first phase of the application is under development and further updates and consultation will take place with the Network at relevant stages throughout the process.

Jolene Dunbar, Community Engagement Librarian for the Coalfield area updated the group on the changes to the library service. Jolene's role is to deliver the library service to the local community and support the literacy needs of the community. There are 13 community book collections in place across the area, where people can borrow and return books. Information about the books at home service was also given and the Network was asked if they have any suggestions or ideas on how to improve the service to contact jolene.dunbar@sunderland.gov.uk

A Call for Projects from the Area Place Board was discussed. Area Committee allocated a budget of £30,000 for local organisations to develop projects (up to £5,000 per project) to improve the environment. Members of the Network welcomed the opportunity to put forward applications to deliver local improvements.

3.2 March 2013

The group were given a brief presentation from Steve Ruffell, South Tyneside Foundation Trust, regarding the Health Trainers programme. Steve made the group aware that there are a team of 12 Health Trainers for the City who will support any resident over 16 years of age with regard to issues such as healthy eating, smoking cessation, exercise and wellbeing. The Health Trainers also carry out NHS Health Checks and work with

individuals for up to 12 months. Plans are underway to allocate specific staff to each area and local organisations were asked for their help in identifying a base or host site for the locality workers.

The Foundation of Light gave information on the Improving Futures project they are delivering with two primary schools in the Coalfield area. The project aims to give children a better future by supporting their families. Family members are supported to take part in the programme and access local activities and services in their neighbourhood.

A steering group for the WW1 Commemoration project has now been set up and HLF (Heritage Lottery Funding) and Area Committee SIB (Strategic Initiative Budget) funding will allow local groups and organisations to come together to plan and deliver a range of displays, activities and programmes to mark the beginning of the First World War.

VCS Network members are planning to hold an 'information fair' to advertise and showcase the services and activities available in the area. It will be an opportunity for the vast range of local organisations to share information with each other, local residents and Area Committee members to continue to strengthen partnership working in the Coalfield area.

3.3 Future meetings

The next meeting, to be held at 10 a.m. on 1 May 2014, will discuss Family, Adult and Community Learning (FACL) and the development of a 'Coalfield Information Fair'.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Members are requested

- To note the contents of the report
- To add support to the development of an 'Information Fair'

Contact: Susan Brown, Area Network Representative
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