

REPORT OF WEST AREA VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR NETWORK

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report provides an update with regards 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 are in place 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.
- 2.3 The West VCS Network is made up of over 70 local groups, as well as strategic local/national/regional partners. The network meets in the West on a regular basis to share good practice and support one another. The network feeds into a virtual network and feed into and receives weekly updates as part of an information share.

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

- 3.1 The West VCS Network has met virtually once since the last Area Committee. The network has continued to kept in regular contact sharing information and ideas.
- 3.2 Pallion Action Group and Youth Almighty Project continue to work with the Council, CCG, Gentoo and volunteers to provide support for shopping, prescriptions, to local residents in the West who are Clinically and Extremely Vulnerable.
- 3.3 At the virtual meeting, the network welcomed presentations from Green Doctors and WEEE projects, both presentations were engaging and the network was provided with information on how to work together.
- 3.4 The virtual meeting heard from Council Officers on a proposal to support the Voluntary Community Sector, the presentation was well received and further information will be discussed in the community months.
- 3.5 Organisations from across the network have been operating throughout lockdown, often working with support buddles of individuals or remotely. Activity programmes continue to look very different to ensure organisations are working within government guidelines to keep everyone safe by respecting social distancing and implementing rigorous hygiene procedures.
- 3.6 12 local Voluntary Groups have been supported to deliver Christmas activities from the Sunderland City Council Winter Covid call for projects, to support families and residents across the West. Further grants will be allocated to the VCS to support them to deliver activities through the winter months of January through to March.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are requested to note the content of this report.

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