

11 June 2018

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 (VCS) 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 the Networks 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 March 2018.

3.1 March 2018

Sunderland Culture

Vicki Kennedy and Rachel Hamer updated the group on the 'Great Places' programme being delivered across the City. Sunderland has been awarded £1.3m for four projects

Unify – working with communities on both sides of Northern Spire to create cohesion

Unlock – developing creative economy in the City centre

Uncover – working with children and young people across Washington

Unleash – Coalfield project working with groups of younger and older people on cross generational projects to focus on healthy living, food and heritage. It is a three year project and Vicki and Rachel will work with existing groups and initiatives to ensure no duplication

3.2 April 2018

Sunderland Community Hub

A presentation on the Community Hub www.sunderland servicedirectory.co.uk was given. The hub is owned by Sunderland City Council and Together for Children and provides online information about services, activities and events in Sunderland. The site has 3 main categories:

Families - services and activities for children and families

Local Offer - supporting children and families with special educational needs and disabilities

Adults and Older People - services and activities for adults and older people

Local groups and organisations can log in to the site and create their own profile to advertise activities and services they deliver. Individuals can search for services and activities they are interested in and find information on a range of subjects.

The group were encouraged to use the site as individuals and also as groups and to provide any feedback to develop or improve the site.

Area Priorities

The group discussed the current priorities which projects had delivered to in the 2017/18 year. Members were asked to comment on current priorities and identify any issues they felt should be considered by Area Committee when setting priorities for 2018/19.

3.3 **May 2018**

An event to celebrate 100 years of Votes for Women was held on 11 May at ELCAP. The event was attended by over 50 people and included:

- Gertrude Bell's story
- Emily Wilding Davison's story
- Exhibition on life for women then and now
- Cookery demo by The Canny Kitchen
- Heritage Exhibition
- Address by Bridget Phillipson MP

May meeting - Co-op Estates

The May VCS Network meeting was attended by Yvonne Orton, a representative of Co-op Estates, who gave an interesting and informative talk entitled Tax, Care and Toy Boys with information about protecting your family's nest egg, inheritance tax and lasting powers of attorney.

Stop Smoking Services

Yusuf Meah from Public Health outlined the problems with smoking related issues in Sunderland. The biggest risk to health and life in Sunderland is smoking. Public Health commission services to help people to live longer, in a better state of health. Stop Smoking services are being reviewed and there is a greater need for community based services which are being re-commissioned. The group was given information on how they can become involved.

- 3.4 VCS Network meetings continue to be well attended and are seen as the recognised route for local organisations to receive and share information with Sunderland City Council, statutory and voluntary sector partners and each other. On average 30 – 35 people attend the meetings and over 100 are on the mailing list. All local organisations are encouraged to engage with the Network and take part in activities and meetings.

4. Recommendations

4.1 Members are requested

- To note the contents of the report
- To continue to support the Sector when developing and implementing actions against local priorities

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