

4th December 2024

REPORT OF WEST AREA VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR NETWORK

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report provides an update with regard 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 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 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 and strategic local/national/regional partners. The network meets on a regular basis to share good practice, support one another and receives regularly updates as part of an information share e bulletin distributed via the Sunderland VS Alliance.

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

- 3.1 The West VCS Network met in person in September at Silksworth Youth and Community Centre and again in November at Next Door, Pennywell.
- 3.2 The September and November meeting included the following agenda items:
- Loan Shark Awareness
 - Groundwork Recycling Education
 - Sunderland Food Bank
 - Ageing well ambassadors and We’ar shining the light
 - Network and Information Share – VCS organisations were able to share updates, projects and upcoming events that were taking place.

The meetings were well attended and provided a really good networking opportunity and information share around activities and events happening in different organisations.

- 3.4 Organisations from the West Area who deliver the Links for Life have been invited to apply for further funding to continue there delivery up until end of March 2025. Organisations have also been invited to apply for a call for projects “Community Support to enable people who smoke to quit”.
- 3.5 Youth Organisations from across the West Area took part in a glow in the dark walk from Washington Wetlands Centre to Hylton Castle on the 8th November for national youth work week.

- 3.6 Many West Area organisations are delivering a range of festive activities, lunch clubs, and community celebrations. Puffin Billy is also visiting South Hylton Tansey Centre, Grindon Young Peoples Centre, Farringdon Youth & Community Centre, Silksworth Youth and Community Centre, Lambton Street Youth and Community Centre and Hope for All on the 18th of December.
- 3.7 Opportunities have been shared through Community Resilience team to the network including training, funding and workshops.
- 3.8 The Network selected 2 new reps at the September Network meeting.
Lisa McEwan from Pallion Action Group and Shelly Fowler from Youth Almighty Project.

4 Recommendations

- 4.1 Members are requested
- To note the contents of the report and consider the opportunities and issues raised by the West VCSN.

5 Contact

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