

18 MARCH 2020**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 60 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 once since the last Area Committee in December 2019. As well as the meetings the network has been involved in the Let's Talk Sunderland. With a lot of the network actively involving residents and volunteers to attend the conversation and be involved in the campaign.
- 3.2 Contact is made regularly with support and advise enabling organisations to deliver as effectively and efficiently as possible across the area. The network continues to deliver activities and services which support the Area Committee priorities and support our communities.
- 3.3 Throughout the year the network has received partner updates either electronically or at the meetings. Information is shared on what's happening across the area, events, opportunities etc. partners regularly attended the Network meetings to present information. The following schemes, initiatives and information have been presented:
- GRANTfinder searches and opportunities
 - West Area Event debrief and 2020 delivery
 - West Apprenticeships
 - Call for projects relating to training to 'Get a better job'
 - Training opportunities
 - Healthwatch Report & video re Care Home Life
 - CCG Pathway to Excellence
 - Assistance and Rest Centres (Emergency Centres)
 - Community Reuse Network
 - NHS Screening Programmes
 - Sunderland Green and Open Spaces Forum
 - Introduction to the new Social prescribing team at the CCG
 - SCC Let's Talk Resident Engagement Let's Talk Sunderland
 - Community Lottery Fund

- 3.4 At the February meeting the network discussed the feedback from the Let's Talk Sunderland resident engagement. The network was presented with information about Crowdfund Sunderland, ways in which to get involved and ways to support residents who have ideas. This has led to ideas being prepared for the next round of fundraising.
- 3.5 The network continues to support the West Sunderland Community Facebook page, sharing information for residents to see and be involved in.
- 3.6 The VCS network continues to receive GRANTfinder and NEPO opportunities on a regular basis and the Area Team continues to support the network with funding advice and guidance as well mentoring board members / trustees and development of sustainability plans to ensure the sector continues to be able to deliver and thrive.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are requested
- To note the contents of the report

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