

26 June 2019

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 2019.

3.1 March 2019

Community Reuse Network

A community reuse network has been set up to reduce the amount of bulky furniture going to waste. There are over 13,000 bulky waste collections a year across Sunderland and 60% of collected items are re-usable but end up being destroyed. Some items end up fly tipped, and one area of the city received over 2,000 reports of fly tipping in three months.

If you have furniture you would like to give away, use our free collection service and donate items to a local community reuse charity. You can also pick up a bargain and buy pre-loved items in the online store. Log on to <https://reuse.network>

Sunderland Culture

Vicki Kennedy updated the group on the Great Places funding which was gained to deliver an arts and culture programme to improve health. The programme, delivered by Sunderland Culture, was launched at 2018 Hetton Carnival, and will be involved in this year's carnival on 21 June 2019. There will be commissioning opportunities for VCS groups and local artists.

Social prescribing with GPs and pharmacies is being explored and a cultural audit is being carried out across the Coalfield area. The audit will identify opportunities and gaps and work will be commissioned to address need.

3.2 April 2019

Fighting All Cancers Together (FACT)

Anjali Brough gave an informative overview of the support and services FACT offers across the North East. FACT was set up in 2008 and provides support beyond clinical services. Community hubs have been set up across the North East with funding from Public Health England. The main form of support in hubs is social interaction where people can talk to others in similar situations. Counselling services are available for adults and children.

Services include men's group, family sessions, wig fitting, kindness kits and mastectomy wear. Call 0191 4420833 for details of the many other services available. Visit the facebook page @FACTCancerSupport

Hetton New Dawn Community Allotment

Hilary Avent informed the group about the plans to diversify and extend services based on the needs of the community to tackle poverty and food issues. The community allotment at Downs Pit Lane, Hetton le Hole will offer individuals a chance to get involved in growing their own fruit and veg in a supported community environment and gives the opportunity for social interaction and friendship. The project is open to all including those who may have support needs or would have difficulty maintaining an allotment of their own. A launch of the allotment, including food, music and fun, is taking place at 2 p.m. on Sunday 2 June – all welcome. www.hettonnewdawn.org.uk

Coalfield Area Place and People Board

Councillor Anne Lawson thanked the group for the exercise they carried out at the February meeting, to identify priorities for the area. The ideas put forward by VCS Network members were discussed at each of the Place and People board meetings, with suggestions taken on board.

3.3 May 2019

Coalfield Community Transport

Dave Ellison gave an informative presentation about the ELCAP Community Transport project. The project provides a service to a growing number of local community groups including Lunch clubs, Disabled Clubs, Youth Clubs, Schools, Churches and Residents' Associations. The project also offers a door to door shopping bus service to those who are isolated or cannot access amenities independently. The drivers will pick up passengers at a pre-arranged time and date, take them to the relevant supermarket and then drop them off at their home, ensuring they (and their groceries) are safely in the house.

Affordable travel is provided to Community Groups all year round to a range of exciting and varied places, including markets, events, shopping, theatre, seaside and scenic routes etc. Groups include people of all ages and abilities and new groups and individuals are encouraged to participate. The trip charges contribute towards the Community Transport and general running costs etc and help to maintain the quality service provided.

Social Activity in the Community

There are a wide range of free and affordable social activities and clubs on offer across the whole of the Coalfield area. Groups gave updates and information on what they can provide and how people can be involved. A leaflet promoting SIB funded activity was circulated. Groups and organisations were encouraged to work together and refer residents to services appropriate to their individual need.

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
- To use information gathered from Network meetings to inform current and future priorities

Contact: Wendy Cook, Area Network Representative
Debbie Ainscow, Area Network Representative
Paul Finch, Area Network Representative