

22 SEPTEMBER 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 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 have not met since the last Area Committee due to Covid -19. The network has kept in regular contact sharing information and ideas. The 3 reps are hoping to hold a virtual VCS network meeting in the Autumn.

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 shielding.

3.3 Representatives from various VCS organisations were invited to take part in a team's meeting with Cllr J Kelly and Sandra Mitchell to discuss lessons learned (positive and negative) from the Community Hub response to COVID-19 and to consider what we might learn which will influence our future VCSE arrangements. Further discussions with the network will take place over the coming months.

3.4 Organisations from across the network are now starting to re-open. Activity programmes look very different to ensure organisations are working within government guidelines to keep everyone safe by respecting social distancing and implementing rigorous hygiene procedures.

3.5 44 Organisations from the West Area received support from the Sunderland City Council Local Support Scheme, this totalled to £114,500

4. Recommendation

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

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