

**REPORT TO:** Employment Learning & Skills Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 14 January 2009

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Health & Community

**SUBJECT:** Community Development Annual Report 2007/08

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform the board on the delivery of Community Development in 2007/08.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- i) The Board comment on service performance;**
- ii) The Board consider future developments of service delivery**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The role of Community Development in building relationships with our communities and capacity to engage has evolved considerably in line with government policy. Most notably the Communities in Control White Paper.
- 3.2 The Community Development Team sits in Cultural & Leisure Services and is made up of four full-time posts and two part-time posts and a Senior Community Development Officer.
- 3.3 The team is located in neighbourhoods providing a key link to those communities in which they are based and a platform for Halton Borough Council services and partners on which to engage.
- 3.4 The team is also responsible for distributing Halton Borough Council starter grants, community development grants and voluntary youth development grants.
- 3.5 The team has a pivotal role in providing strategic support to external funding bringing additional funding streams to Halton. The Team supports groups accessing external funding leveraging considerable amounts into the borough directly supporting community activity.

**4.0 SERVICE DEVELOPMENT**

4.1 The Community Development team in 2007/08 provided direct support to 90

community organisations. This support enabled capacity building for groups to play a key role in delivery of 72 community led initiatives. 2,084 active volunteers have participated in supporting community groups, delivering initiatives and providing community events, an increase of 945 from the previous year.

- 4.2 Community Development Officers are active in developing and facilitating partnership approaches, during 2007/08 the team worked with 51 partner organisations on 265 projects/initiatives.
- 4.3 Supporting community groups to lever external funding into the Borough has become an increasing element of the Community Development Officers role. In 2007/08 we assisted local groups to access £524,635 from external streams and £8,370 from internal grant pots, a total of £533,005.
- 4.4 An evaluation of the service is undertaken annually to contribute to continuous improvement for the service. Due to problems with office service support the evaluation for 2007/08 was incomplete and we are unable to report on customer evaluation for this period.
- 4.5 We have undertaken a half yearly service user evaluation for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2008. Seventy-eight groups who had used the service were invited to comment with fifty-four returning completed evaluation forms a response rate 69%. Key points from the evaluation are:-
  - All but one organisation are very satisfied with the service they have received.
  - Groups valued existing support and advice received from Community Development Officers high-lighting funding support and identified training and shared resources for further support.
  - Improved marketing was identified as a way to improve access to the service; a number of suggestions were made to facilitate this; attending 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector events; use of the Internet and newsletters etc.
  - Only one group was dissatisfied with advice given, this was followed up and the explanation was the group concerned hoped for easier access to funds for a play area and were disappointed to be advised they needed to apply for external funding and to secure maintenance revenue.
- 4.6 Community Development Officers provide periodic briefings to the Ward Members and have circulated Annual Reports for the 2007/08 period. Some high-lights of Community Development activity contributing to strategic priorities are detailed in 9.0.
- 4.7 Halton Community Development Practitioners Forum provides a leadership role and facilitates a cohesive approach to community development across all sectors in the borough. It provides a mechanism for networking, sharing of best practice and common issues. The forum meets quarterly, there are 26 local agencies represented. The meetings are well attended and valued by participants. In 2007/08 the forum provided a sub regional link to and played a leading role in raising awareness of and responding to the Central Government

initiative 'The Community Development Challenge'

4.8 Halton Community Engagement Network - In 2007/08 four workshops were organised to share learning experiences in public consultation and engagement in the Borough. Community Development Team and Research & Intelligence Section delivered the training sessions, providing practical support to staff from Halton Borough Council services and departments and partner organisations. The sessions were very well attended and will continue in 2008/09

4.9 During 2007/08 the Community Development Team carried two vacancies (one full-time, one part-time) and had one full-time member of the team on maternity leave. The team was only at full capacity for the final quarter, hence there are some dips in service delivery figures compared to the previous year however these are marginal variances.

## 5.0 **SERVICE DEVELOPMENT**

5.1 Community Development has a service level agreement with Neighbourhood Management to deliver focused community development support in the three pilot areas. The agreement has been for a two year period terminating on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.

5.2 There will be a reduction in focused support to neighbourhood management from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 however generic community development support will continue to be delivered in the three Neighbourhood Management Area's.

5.3 Intergenerational activity has become a key area of focus for community development, securing a service level agreement with Older Peoples services to support dedicated activity aimed at challenging the perceptions between young and old and provide community activity for joint participation.

5.4 Community Development has initiated a comic strip project involving young and old that will be published in the Weekly News and will facilitate the Older Peoples Empowerment Network Conference to support capacity building for the older people in the Borough.

5.5 The CPA Inspectors identified intergenerational activity as a key area of focus.

5.6 The Empowerment White Paper – 'Communities in Control' was published in July 2008. The paper provides a range of mechanisms to deliver empowerment with the constant theme of providing an environment whereby communities have more influence over decisions that impact on their communities and the services it receives.

5.7 Local Council's remain at the heart of local democracy with an emphasis on removing barriers that deter people from public office to encourage and strengthen the role of councillors.

5.8 All elements of the papers key recommendations have far reaching implications

across the council and pivotal to these elements is how we engage and involve our communities in shaping services and further empowering the community sector.

The main issues are:-

- Duty to involve
- Duty to promote democracy
- Participatory budgeting
- Duty to respond to petitions
- Councillor call for action
- Overview and scrutiny
- Empowering the frontline task force
- Ownership and asset transfer
- Role of Councillors
- Policing and community empowerment
- Community panels
- Local Neighbourhood Charters
- Single equality duty
- Comprehensive Area Assessment

## 6.0 GRANTS

6.1 During 2007/08 grants were approved by members as follows:-

### Community Development and Starter Grants

These grants are available for pump priming and the delivery of community led initiatives. In 2007 – 2008 the budget was £4,907 and 19 Grants have been awarded - **Total £4,907**

Ward	Group Name	Total Awarded
<b>STARTER GRANTS</b>		
Beechwood	9 <sup>th</sup> Runcorn Rainbows	£ 127
Castlefields	Cheeky Monkeys	£ 150
Castlefields	Friday Afternoon Club	£ 164
Halton View	Woodend Tenants Association	£ 150
Palace Fields	Crafty Crafters	£ 150
Riverside	Kingswood Forum	£ 150
Riverside	Halton User Group	£ 150
<b>COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS</b>		
Appleton	St Bede's Jubilee Group	£ 400
Borough Wide	Halton Foster Care Association	£ 400
Borough Wide	Widnes & District Horticultural Society	£ 400
Borough Wide	N.W. Cheshire & M'side Ostomy Support	£ 400
Castlefields	Castlefields Community Forum	£ 388
Ditton	St Michaels Residents Association	£ 311
Halton Brook	Four Estates Ltd.	£ 100
Mersey	Derby & Joan Club	£ 391

Palace Fields	Breath Easy	£ 350
Riverside	West Bank Community Forum	£ 236
Windmill Hill	Windmill Hill Residents Association	£ 90
Windmill Hill	Windmill Hill Residents Association	£ 400
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,907</b>

## 7.2 Voluntary Youth Organisations Grants and Bursaries for Young People

Voluntary youth grants are available to voluntary/community organisations who organise activities and initiatives for young people. The Bursaries are available to people between the ages of 13 – 18 pursuing personal development .

In 2007 – 2008 the budget was £12,226, 21 grants & bursaries have been awarded - **Total £ 12,226**

Wards Covered	Group Name	Total Awarded
<b>GROUP AWARDS</b>		
Borough Wide	Halton Access to Sport Organise camp for disabled YP	£ 900
Borough Wide	Halton Access to Media Develop Monthly Newsletter	£ 996
Borough Wide	Widnes & NW Cheshire Scouts Camp Scouting Centenary	£ 1,000
Borough Wide	Halton Speak Out Mystery Shopper Project	£ 1,000
Widnes Wards	Halton Hornets ARLFC Equipment for club house	£ 1,500
Widnes Wards	West Bank Bears JARLFC Equipment towards tour	£ 500
Widnes Wards	Athena JFC Junior kit & equipment	£ 700
Widnes Wards	8 <sup>th</sup> Widnes Scouts Group Purchase replacement tents	£ 450
Appleton & Farnworth	17 <sup>th</sup> St Lukes Brownies Replace activity equipment	£ 320
Ditton & Hough Green	5 <sup>th</sup> Widnes All Saints Guides Equipment for camp	£ 1,000
Halton Brook	Halton Brook Youth Group Trip to Brindley	£ 595
Kingsway	Kingsway Ten. & Res. Ass. Training for Bike Club vols.	£ 1,259
<b>BURSARIES</b>		
Beechwood	Camp for disabled young people	£ 50
Farnworth	Camp for disabled young people	£ 50
Farnworth	Dance School Expenses	£ 250
Farnworth	Dance School Expenses	£ 250
Hale	Shakespeare Youth Festival	£ 250
Halton View	Summer School RSC	£ 250
Heath	Compete in World Transplant	£ 250

	Games	
Norton South	Piano Lessons & Exams	£ 406
Norton South	Piano Lessons & Expenses	£ 250
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£12,226</b>

7.3 In 2007/08 the Voluntary Youth Organisation grants supported 342 adults volunteers to provide activity, which benefited 1,413 young people.

## 8.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None at this stage.

## 9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

### 9.1 Children & Young People in Halton

- Halebank Youth Club & Hale Youth Club – capacity development to both voluntary management committees enabling them to develop funding action plans and to submit applications to the Big Lottery Fund and WREN.
- Windmill Hill and Sandymoor Voluntary Youth Groups – both groups are receiving capacity development to enable them to recruit volunteers to operate youth clubs in both of these wards. Windmill Hill has been supported in providing youth focussed events in their neighbourhoods including a visit to 'Go Ape' an activity centre providing a ropes course in Delamere Forest.

### 9.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

- Widnes Rugby League Heritage Society – capacity development which enabled them to establish a local collection and exhibition at the Stobart Stadium Halton and to become incorporated as a Community Interest Company.
- Murdishaw Community Centre Board of Directors – assisting with the development of taster sessions in digital photography, craft skills and dance.

### 9.3 A Healthy Halton

- Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Care Support – capacity development and funding support gaining £ 45,000 from the Morgan Foundation.
- Halton Autistic Family Group – support to develop autistic family centre on Hallwood Park and secure funding, gaining £195,000 from the Lottery, Reaching Communities Programme.

### 9.4 A Safer Halton

- Kingswood Community Forum – capacity building support for a new residents group formed to tackle anti-social behaviour, working with the Community Safety Team.

## 9.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

- Friends of Hale Park – capacity development to facilitate a successful Heritage Lottery Fund of £643,000.
- Consultation for improving small playgrounds in Mersey Ward – in 2007/08 we carried out consultation with local communities in the Mersey Ward to enable the Landscape Division to access WREN funding to improve a number of small playgrounds in the ward.

## 10.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

10.1 None at this stage.

## 11.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

11.1 None at this stage.

## 12.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.