

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

**DATE:** 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Communities

**PORTFOLIO:** Neighbourhood, Leisure & Sport

**SUBJECT:** Community Development Services

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an annual report on the Community Development service delivery for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

Members consider and comment upon the report.

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Community Development supports the creation, development and sustainability of independent local community groups. This generates the capacity for effective and inclusive community engagement with council departments and services thus enabling the delivery of many hundreds of community initiatives to tackle strategic objectives and community needs. The Community Development team have both a strategic and neighbourhood role in co-ordinating partnership support to respond to community concerns and create cohesive neighbourhoods which are participative and vibrant with a strong sense of community connectedness.

## 4.0 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The team consists of six members of staff including one Senior Officer. The Community Development Officers are neighbourhood based and work to the Area Forum patches. They work alongside community groups helping them develop their skills and knowledge to support community action. This often involves advice and guidance around committee structures, financial arrangements, policies and regulations which need to be developed and observed and assisting in delivery community action. Community development is the only role that has this as its core purpose. It strengthens local belonging and addresses inequalities. It provides a conduit between communities and the public sector which fosters a relationship that:-

- Promotes a strong sense of place - local services really matter to how people feel about where they live and their overall satisfaction.
- Understands and targets local priorities – community concerns drive community initiatives and improvement in their neighbourhoods.
- Communicates what the Council's doing and proactively seeks views
- Generates community respect – activity brings residents together, intergenerational work in particular has had a significant impact in breaking down perceptions between young and old in communities resulting in people feeling safer.

Funding has increasingly become core to the Community Development role, particularly in this current economic climate. The service co-leads on providing funding market places with colleagues in External Funding. These events are always popular with many enquiries for follow up support in accessing funding. This has been a useful mechanism to link with groups who are not receiving on-going community development support.

- 4.2 A performance framework is in place for community development activity. In 2013/14 the Service's performance indicators can be seen below with comparative data from the previous operating year:-

	<b>2013/14</b>	2012/13
Total number of volunteers	991	929
Number of groups worked with	65	135
Number of people benefiting from activity	14,624	12,152
Number of partners involved	82	89
Number of events/initiatives supported	47	27
<b>Funding secured from CD intervention</b>		
From external sources	£160,547.00	£205,309.54
From internal sources	£127,840.00	£116,713.50
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>£288, 387.00</b>	<b>£322,023.04</b>

- 4.3 In 2013/14, for every pound it cost to provide community development, a further £1.30 was levered in to supporting community initiatives. Levels of 'levered in' funding has fluctuated over the years. In the previous operating year the figure was £1.38, however the current economic climate, with greater competition on grant funding, will have affected this.

## 5.0 GRASS ROOTS DELIVERY

Ward Members receive quarterly briefings and annual reports on Community Development activities across the Borough. Below is a snapshot to give a flavour of neighbourhood activity extracted from the Annual Reports.

### 5.1 Broadheath, Ditton, Hough Green & Hale

- **Halebank Youth Club** – A large amount of support and guidance has been provided to this committee as they were all newly elected at the AGM. The advice has included ensuring that the group fulfil their

responsibilities, have adequate policies and procedures and that their finances are managed effectively.

- **Hale Village Hall** – Consultation was carried out in partnership with the management committee and External Funding in relation to the BIG lottery bid that is being worked on to make improvements to the centre.

## 5.2 Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside

- **St John's Church** – Support has been provided to assist the church to extend their community hall that is a valuable asset to local groups. This has included writing a business plan, ensuring policies and procedures are in place. Support has also resulted in funding applications being successful so that their heating system could be upgraded.
- **Widiwig Denettes** – Ongoing support has been provided to this group that has gone from strength to strength and has over 60 girls engaged in physical activity. With advice and guidance the group has received nearly £12,000 from various grants.

## 5.3 Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View

- **Lunts Heath Primary School** – worked with school to access Area Forum funding to enable them to install an outdoor classroom as part of the wider improvements to the playground.
- **Widnes North Residents Association** – supported this group as they decided to dissolve the group. It was a sad day for the group but they felt they had run their course and achieved all that they could and it was important that they were supported to dissolve correctly and ensure that matters, particularly their assets, were dealt with appropriately.

## 5.4 Grange, Heath, Halton Brook & Mersey

- **Todger Jones Statue Appeal Group** – Played a vital role in supporting this group to source over £40,000 to enable the statue to be erected. Much of the work revolved around the consultation for the bids.
- **The Shaw Development Group** - Provided support and advice to the partnership of community groups looking at community and management of the old drill hall including advice on many aspects of the Localism Act, particularly the Community Right to Bid process.

## 5.5 Halton Castle, Norton North & South, Windmill Hill

- **Murdishaw Project Group** – support and co-ordinate the group alongside the centre, partners and the board for directors to provide a programme of events and activity at Murdishaw Community Centre.
- **Village Life** – supported this new social group to establish and advised on policies and procedures. Also supported the group to plan their first event, a barn dance for all local residents to promote community spirit.

## 5.6 **Beechwood & Halton Lea**

- **Beechwood CIC** – provided in-depth support to this organisation as they transferred from a private members club to a Community Interest Company. Support was provided on funding applications, meetings, partnership engagement, project planning and consultation.
- **Keep Britain Tidy** – supported this partnership project to achieve the Gold KBT award. CD support involved promoting community clean-up day and developing a 'Friends Of' group and also membership of the steering group.

## 5.7 **Daresbury**

- This area has four parish councils, Daresbury, Moore, Preston Brook and Sandymoor. Community Development support continues to facilitate the parish council involvement in area forums and funding advice and guidance, in particular around heritage and commemoration of WW1 has been provided.

## 6.0 **SERVICE EVALUATION**

6.1 A service evaluation is carried out annually assisted by the Council's Customer Intelligence Unit, the evaluation achieved a 45% return rate. The responses demonstrated:-

- 98% of respondents stated Community Development support has made a difference to their group\*
- 81% of respondents rated the service as excellent and 17% as good
- 100% of respondents would recommend the service to other groups

*\*The other 2% said they didn't need any help*

Open comments were received for a number of questions and a snapshot of responses is provided below:-

## 6.2 **Did receiving help from the Community Development Team make a difference to your group?**

Due to the financial pressures small charities like ourselves are experiencing, having someone like Karen to support us and to share her skills and knowledge is vital to our sustainability.

Adele has made herself available to advise us and help us comply with the various guidelines a support group needs to know about. We would not have become a formal group without her assistance. Her advice is straight forward and easily understood. The funding advice she has offered us has made a great deal of difference to the future of our group and we will always remain very grateful to her.

It helped us continue by providing funding till we were able to support ourselves. I received valuable advice about setting up treasurer account,

constitution etc. I had no experience what so ever, the team were always available to answers queries.

The support we have had has meant a great deal to our group, especially around the setting up of a committee and the funding opportunities. The input from CD has meant that we have been able to apply for funding to buy a laptop which has resulted in the group becoming more independent and self-sufficient.

We have been able to make massive improvements at the community centre - allowing the centre now to be used hourly by the whole extended community. Without the help of the community development team the community centre would without question now be closed and in all probability be demolished

With the support of the CD team we have successfully applied for funding and this has enabled us to offer the girls opportunities to try new things and to attend camps and residentials, all of which are building their skills for the future and encouraging the girls to continue in Guiding.

**6.3 What do you think was most helpful about receiving help from the Community Development Team?**

Having Gill Watson guiding us through all the processes of all the legalities of setting up a Voluntary Group and always being contactable.

It is reassuring to know that we can consult with the team on problems arising so that we can stay on the straight and narrow. Such as the issue of public liability insurance, which is now in place.

It's the general feeling of being supported and being listened to and taken serious, especially being a small local third sector and up against challenges with tendered nationals.

A story in the local magazine (Inside Halton) brought us five new members, just as our numbers were declining. Thank you Adele.

The community team knows how and where to source the things we need, from contacting individuals to applying for funding. They are always easily contacted for any questions and help.

Giving clear advice on the running of the group in a way normal people can understand and to know that if we get stuck we can contact them for help.

Building a better community.

The team know the community well and they have worked with the projects and know us so they are able to offer help and advice when we have need them.

Local knowledge and obvious passion and care about the community which was transferred onto our groups.

Sensible advice and genuinely interested, committed and supportive staff

Gill is very knowledgeable about funding and has been a great asset to me giving me the confidence to successfully complete the forms with positive outcomes. This has been done with great patience and good humour.

Having someone like Richard who is so willing to give assistance 'face to face' in a relaxed and friendly way.

#### 6.4 **If you could improve one thing about the service offered what would this be?**

On the whole respondents couldn't think of any improvements but there were a couple of suggestions/comments:

- Better interaction on twitter or FB social media platforms by Community Development Team
- Improvements to the time taken to approve grants\*

*\*We have no control over external grant programmes but we do aim to turn around our grant streams within 6 weeks.*

#### 7.0 **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**

The Community Development service also administers grants for Starter, Community Development and Voluntary Youth grants.

**14** new groups were supported with start-up grants of £150.

**15** existing groups were supported with their project/group costs.

**14** young people were supported with bursaries of £250.

**12** voluntary youth groups were supported with their project/group costs.

A breakdown of this expenditure is below:-

#### **Starter Grants & Community Development Grants**

<b>GROUP NAME</b>	<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>GRANT AWARDED</b>
<b>Starter Grant</b>		
Crafty Kids	Start Up Costs	150.00
Friends of Naughton Fields	Start Up Costs	150.00
Village Life	Start Up Costs	150.00
Widiwig Denettes	Start Up Costs	150.00
West Bank Angling Club	Start Up Costs	150.00
Art Zone	Start Up Costs	150.00

Kingsway Parents Group	Start Up Costs	150.00
Hale Art Group	Start Up Costs	150.00
West Bank Stay & Play	Start Up Costs	150.00
Naughton Fields Garden Club	Start Up Costs	150.00
Friends of Quarry Court	Start Up Costs	150.00
The Wellbeing Choir	Start Up Costs	150.00
Halton Fibromyalgia Support Group	Start Up Costs	150.00
Castlefields Community Project	Start Up Costs	150.00
Simms Cross PTA	Start Up Costs	150.00
<b>TOTAL Starter Grant</b>		<b>£2250.00</b>
<b>Development Grant</b>		
HASCAS	Training	400.00
Knights Community Singers	New Equipment	150.00
Halton Village Millennium Green	Family Fun Day	400.00
Halebank Youth Club	Bingo Equipment and promotion	265.00
Warrington Road Family Group	Food Safety Training	400.00
Umbrella Halton	Promotional Material	200.00
Art Unlimited	Art Material & Equipment	400.00
Runcorn Family History	Transcribing and scanning equipment	399.98
Crafty Kids	Arts and Craft Materials	400.00
Hough Green Millennium Art Project	Theatre Production Costs	295.00
Halton Village Short Mat Bowling	Equipment	400.00
North Cheshire Rail Users Group	WW1 Event	200.00
Runcorn and District Historical Society	Display Boards	400.00
Bambinos	New Play Equipment	400.00
<b>TOTAL Development Grant</b>		<b>£4709.98</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£6959.98</b>

### Voluntary Youth Grants – Group & Bursary Grants

GROUP NAME/INDIVIDUAL	PROJECT	GRANT AWARDED
<b>Bursaries</b>		
Bursary	Personal Development	£250.00
Bursary	Personal Development	£160.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Performing Arts	£250.00
Bursary	Mai Thai	£250.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00

Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Personal Development	£250.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Personal Development	£250.00
Bursary	Angling	£250.00
Bursary	Musical Theatre	£250.00
Bursary	Music, Drama & Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Personal Development	£250.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
<b>TOTAL Bursaries</b>		<b>£3660.00</b>
<b>Youth Development Grant</b>		
1 <sup>st</sup> Halton Scout Group	Adventure Activity	£250.00
OATS Science Club	Equipment	£474.76
Weaver Scout Active Support	Swimming Gala	£355.00
IGNITE Youth Church	Summer Camp	£600.00
Halton Ambassadors Majorette Troop	Equipment & Materials	£600.00
HTTK	Music Project	£600.00
Camp Project Wales	Outdoor Activity	£600.00
Moorfield Junior Bowls	Equipment	£600.00
Simm Cross PTA	Equipment	£600.00
9 <sup>th</sup> All Saints Brownies	Equipment	£409.92
5 <sup>th</sup> All Saints Guides	Equipment	£566.92
<b>TOTAL Youth Development Grant</b>		<b>£5656.60</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£9316.60</b>

## 8.0 STRATEGIC APPROACHES

Community Development has had a key role supporting a community led approach to Health & Wellbeing during the transition of public health to local authority delivery. The team is supporting Area Forums in developing a grass roots approach which provides a direct relationship between health service providers and local communities. This has resulted in a number of themed events in Local Area Forums delivering health checks, awareness of early signs and symptoms, information on being active for all sections of the community, etc. The team is supporting community groups in developing initiatives that tackle health challenges and empower residents to have a proactive approach to community wellbeing.

Community Development continues to support the Big Local initiative on Windmill Hill which will bring £1 million of lottery investment to the area over the next ten years. A formal partnership structure that demonstrates a community led approach is now in place with the strategic plan to inform the drawing down of the funds is being develop. This initiatives has a strong emphasis on community engagement informing priorities and objectives.

Community Development leads a Community Engagement Practitioners Forum which meets quarterly. The Forum is an opportunity for joint training, networking and identifying joint areas of work for front line officers across agencies operating in Halton.

Community Development supports Community First in the Appleton & Mersey wards alongside External Funding and Halton & St Helens VCA. Community First provides grass roots funding for community groups and voluntary sector organisations. The allocation is £33,910 over 4 years for each area, 2013/14 is the third year of delivery.

The Community Development Manager is the designated Armed Forces Champion for Halton. This requires liaison with Armed Forces units, developing strong links with veteran support organisations and ensuring policy and services meets the pledges set out in the Armed Forces Covenant.

Community Development supports a strategic approach to community engagement in Halton at a partnership level. The service enables and facilitates HBC departments and partner agencies engaging with local communities. The service also supports the third sector infrastructure that provides the platform for community involvement.

## **9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

### **9.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Community services deliver Halton's Got Talent each year engaging with hundreds of young people, signposting to culture and performing arts activities and showcasing youth hubs to increase participation. Intergenerational activity generating cohesion between young and old in communities. Grants for voluntary youth groups and bursary support provide benefits in activities being accessed and opportunities for young people being realised.

### **9.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Employment within the service areas. Volunteer opportunities and skills development in committee skills, capacity building, fundraising, consultation, etc. Support to adult and lifelong learning for community groups and neighbourhood delivery.

### **9.3 A Healthy Halton**

Community development supports a whole area approach to health and wellbeing linking appropriate partners and stakeholders to work jointly with all sections of Halton's community responding to health issues, i.e zipper club, alzheimers group, lunch bunch, Halton happy hearts. This approach raises awareness of health issues and empowers communities to be proactive. Examples of this are support to New Shoots fruit & vegetable initiative, community gardening & allotment projects, patient support groups and liaison with the Health Improvement Team.

#### 9.4 **A Safer Halton**

A sense of community and community connectedness reduces residents' fears of crime where they live, they are likely to feel a stronger sense of belonging and safety in an environment where the communities know each other, are active and there are established links to other stakeholders like police, housing, community wardens, etc. Community Development attends Tasking & Co-ordination to contribute to a co-ordinated approach.

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

Community development contributes to wider community initiatives and regeneration in the areas they are sited. There are numerous community gardening and local environmental projects across the service working jointly with key stakeholders. The service has a key role in Castlefields Regeneration which is now ten years into the programme. Delivering community development within the neighbourhoods linking into the Area Forums provides a mechanism for local people to influence improvements for their area and translate aspirations into objectives.

#### 10.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

10.1 The service has a robust performance management mechanism.

#### 11.0 **EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ISSUES**

11.1 The Community Development service is open and accessible to all of Halton's Community. The service supports both groups providing general community initiatives and those who represent marginalised sections of the community, ie. Halton Umbrella providing a network for black, minority and ethnic residents, many groups who exist to support disabled individuals and those suffering severe ill health, etc.

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

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.