

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

**DATE:** 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Community and Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Neighbourhood, Leisure & Sport

**SUBJECT:** Community Development Service

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

### 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide an annual report on Community Development service delivery for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

### 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 a plethora 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 aspirations and create cohesive neighbourhoods which are participative and vibrant with a strong sense of community connectedness.

### 4.0 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The team currently consists of six members of staff including one Senior Officer which equates to 4.4 FTE. The team has reduced resources in line with the Council's efficiency agenda. The Community Development Officers are neighbourhood based and their work programme is aligned 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 as well as 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 2014/15 the Service's performance indicators can be seen below.

	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Total number of volunteers	788	991
Number of groups worked with	128	133
Number of people benefiting from activity	15,895	14,624
Number of partners involved	71	82
Number of events/initiatives supported	48	47
<b>Funding secured from CD intervention</b>		
From external sources	£348,739.00	£160,547.00
From internal sources	£167,387.00	£127,840.00
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>£516,126.00</b>	<b>£288,387.00</b>

- 4.3 In 2014/15, for every pound it cost to provide the community development service, a further £2.04 was levered into the borough to support community groups and initiatives. Levels of 'levered in' funding has fluctuated over the years. In the previous operating year the figure was £1.30 but it is worth noting that there were a large amount of funding bids this year to bodies such as Wren and the Big Lottery Fund. Bids translating into funds coming into the Borough can involve lengthy timescales and have peaks and troughs as the trend over the last two years indicates.

## 5.0 GRASS ROOTS DELIVERY

The detail below provides some examples of projects and groups that the team are working with and alongside across the borough.

## 5.1 Broadheath, Ditton, Hough Green & Hale

- **Breaking Common Ground** – Co-ordinated workshops in Hough Green and Halebank with local residents and partners to look at how their communities could be a better place to grow older in. An action plan was developed and CD is supporting the residents to work through this and implement the suggestions.
- **Dovedale Court Residents Association** – this group developed from the Breaking Common Ground event in Hough Green and has been a real success. CD provided support to get the group set up and established with the correct paperwork and the group achieved a lot in a small space of time.

## 5.2 Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside

- **Catalyst** - A huge amount of support has been provided to this group alongside External Funding so that the museum can get back on track financially. Grant applications totalling approximately £95k have been submitted with £43k been granted so far.
- **D'Ukes of Halton** – this project started as a Wellbeing Enterprises initiative and came to an end after 6 weeks. Those attending wanted it to continue so CD supported the group to enable this to happen including a starter grant of £150. The group have gone from strength to strength and are planning to record some of their music and develop a website.

## 5.3 Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View

- **Farnworth Primary School** – support was provided to the school to help them in sourcing funds so that they could present historical documents about the school to their community.
- **Halton View Action Group** - CD support this group, particularly to keep them updated on what is going on within their community and across the borough and to make sure they are aware of consultations/workshops taking place relating to the issues that are important to them.

## 5.4 Grange, Heath, Halton Brook & Mersey

- **Change the Grange** – CD worked very closely with the Police and Crime Commissioners office to co-ordinate this participatory budget programme. Local residents and groups were supported to apply for funding for projects that would have a positive impact on their community. It was also the residents that decided how the money should be spent and chose which projects they wanted to see happen. In total £30k was spent in the Grange area.

- **Grangeway MUGA** – with a new residential development directly next to the MUGA at the back of the community centre urgent action was required to address issues related to the close proximity of the new residential dwellings to the MUGA. CD worked alongside the Ward Councillors and consultation was carried out to ensure that the proposed measure of higher fencing was agreeable. Funding was sourced and the new fencing has recently been completed.

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

- **North Cheshire Railway Users Group** – CD has supported this group to co-ordinate and plan a spectacular event to commemorate WW1. They were advised on all aspects of the event including Health & Safety, risk assessments, fundraising, promotion, volunteer management, catering and communication. The event was a huge success and over 600 people were involved and subsequently Runcorn East station won the Cheshire Best Kept Station Youth Challenge Award acknowledging the work carried out by the local schools and young people co-ordinated by Halton Borough Council and NCRUG.

**Halton Village Millennium Green** – this group were planning an event as well as advising on all aspect of event planning CD also supported them to source funding so that this family fun day could be free to all those who attended.

#### 5.6 Beechwood & Halton Lea

- **Halton Lodge Residents Association** – CD supported residents to set up an association as there was little community activity in the area. CD has assisted at meetings, attended estate walkabouts and supported recycling/clean up events along social landlords. CD has also acted as a mediator between other local groups when tensions arose.
- **Haddocks Wood Allotment Association** - CD worked alongside this group to support them to complete an Awards for All application for nearly £10k so that they could install a compost toilet on site so that they could attract more families to get involved with growing and harvesting.

#### 5.7 Daresbury

- **Daresbury District Heritage Society** – work started by pulling together individuals from the four separate parish councils of Moore, Daresbury, Hatton & Preston Brook to organise some WW1 commemorations. This has resulted in a successful £10k grant from Awards for All for the independent group now following advice and guidance from their CDO.

## 6.0 SERVICE EVALUATION

6.1 A service evaluation is carried out annually assisted by the Council's Customer Intelligence Unit. The evaluation was conducted in April/May 2015 achieving a 67% response rate.

The responses demonstrated:-

- 98% of respondents stated Community Development support has made a difference to their group
- 84% of respondents rated the service as excellent and 14% as good
- 98% of respondents would recommend the service to other groups

The elements of the service that were most beneficial to groups were:

- Funding Advice & Support
- Governance Advice – set up and ongoing management
- Networking and Signposting

6.2 Open comments were received for a number of questions and a snapshot of responses follows:-

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

*"It was really useful to help my group to start thinking about becoming self-sufficient, once the funding for my post ends. Karen and her colleague delivered a really good session with the group around roles and responsibilities of committee officers. Karen has also been supportive towards me and assisted with securing further funding. The group need further support at this stage to help them secure funding to cover their basic costs for next year."*

*"Helpful advice and general support suggestions for contacts and help with grant applications. This has given us the means to increase the size of our group and become more viable and sustainable."*

*"I received excellent advice on how to procure funding for a specific project and also on ways to publicise"*

*"The support and guidance of the development team has enabled the Workshop to set up a constitution and structure, enabling us to conduct our activities in a proper fashion underpinning our continued existence. The team have also provided guidance enabling the Workshop to access grant funding for the purchase of instruments and equipment, which is used on a weekly basis."*

*"Help from the community development team has been a huge benefit to our group! Initially helping with the set-up of the group! Assistance with funding and ongoing advice."*

*“The community development team has provided invaluable funding advice, done considerable work on our behalf on forms, and also wise counsel on the running of a community centre, interaction with the council and with funders.”*

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

*“The level of customer service was excellent in every way.”*

*“Prompt and efficient response to request for information. The team followed up on the help that was given. Excellent advice was given and the help that I needed was given readily.”*

*“Information, help, and ideas provided by the team was beneficial for the development of the group being able to contact the team as and when was necessary.”*

*“They are experts. They understand community development and the dynamics of community organisations. They are on our side, but honest. They have great knowledge of funding opportunities.”*

*“The expertise is second to none, no problem is too difficult. Advice is always at hand. I cannot praise your team enough.”*

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

The majority of responses were all positive in that they didn't have any improvements to suggest, or at least not in a negative way.

Any improvements that were mentioned have been summarised:-

- Better Follow up
- Better promotion
- Provide Networking Opportunities

## **7.0 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**

7.1 The Community Development service also administers grants for Starter, Community Development and Voluntary Youth grants. In 2014/15:-

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

14 existing groups were supported with their project/group costs.

4 young people were supported with bursaries of £250.

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

A breakdown of this expenditure is set out below.

## 7.2 Starter Grants & Community Development Grants

GROUP NAME	PROJECT	GRANT AWARDED
<b>Starter Grant</b>		
The Wellbeing Choir	Start Up Costs	£150.00
Fairfield Community Guitar Workshop	Start Up Costs	£150.00
Funky Tots	Start Up Costs	£144.00
Friends of Goodier Court	Start Up Costs	£150.00
D'Ukes of Halton	Start Up Costs	£150.00
ASG	Start Up Costs	£150.00
Shaw Development Centre	Start Up Costs	£150.00
<b>TOTAL Starter Grant</b>		<b>£1044.00</b>
<b>Development Grant</b>		
North Cheshire Rail Users Group		£200.00
Runcorn & District Historical Society		£400.00
St Michael's Over 50s Club	Bingo Machine	£126.00
The 8D Association	Dictaphone	£75.00
St Bede's Jubilee Club	Transport Subsidy	£400.00
Halton Village Millennium Green Trust	Summer Fun Day	£400.00
Widnes & District Horticultural Society	Equipment	£400.00
Widnes Rugby League Heritage Group	Website & Promotional Materials	£378.76
Halton Fibromyalgia Support Group	Training and Equipment	£370.40
Preston Brook & District History Group	Exhibition	£200.00
Churchill Bowlers	Insurance	£76.00
Halebank Youth Club	Training	£380.00
Hough Green Millennium Arts Project	Performance Costs	£200.00
Village Life	Christmas Tree & Decorations	£200.00
<b>TOTAL Development Grant</b>		<b>£3806.16</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£4850.16</b>

### 7.3 Voluntary Youth Grants – Group & Bursary Grants

GROUP NAME/INDIVIDUAL	PROJECT	GRANT AWARDED
<b>Bursaries</b>		
Bursary	Mai Thai Boxing	£250.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Performing Arts	£250.00
<b>TOTAL Bursaries</b>		<b>£1000.00</b>
<b>Youth Development Grant</b>		
Moorfield Junior Bowls	Equipment	£600.00
Ignite Youth church	Summer Camp	£600.00
Finesse Rhythmic Gymnastics Club	Equipment	£500.00
Crafty Kids	Art Equipment and Material	£600.00
HTTK	Food and Arts Activity	£600.00
Oats Science Club	Science Trip	£457.20
<b>TOTAL Youth Development Grant</b>		<b>£3357.20</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£4357.20</b>

### 8.0 STRATEGIC APPROACHES

- 8.1 Community Development has had a key role supporting a community led approach to Health & Wellbeing over the last two years, involved with many of the strategic groups shaping this agenda in Halton. CD has supported the transition of public health, led on developing the umbrella brand “My Halton Living Life Well” for the Health & Wellbeing board and delivered a programme of Health & Wellbeing grants. The team actively supports community groups in developing initiatives that tackle health challenges and empower residents to have a proactive approach to community wellbeing.
- 8.2 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 to draw down the funding with a strong emphasis on community engagement informing priorities and objectives. CD is leading a key piece of work in collaboration with the CCG to examine access to health care services in the long term for Windmill Hill residents.
- 8.3 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.



- 8.4 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, 2014/15 is the final year of delivery.
- 8.5 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.
- 8.6 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, it 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, support those suffering severe ill health, etc.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.