

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

**DATE:** 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director - Enterprise, Community & Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Community and Sport

**SUBJECT:** Community Development Service

**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 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That:

2.1 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 Community Development Officers are neighbourhood based and their work programme is aligned to the Area Forum boundaries. They work alongside community groups helping them develop their skills and knowledge to support community action. This often involves providing advice and guidance around committee structures, financial arrangements, policies and regulations, which need to be developed and observed, and assisting in the delivery of 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.

Seeking out funding opportunities has become increasingly core to the Community Development role; particularly in this current economic climate. The service co-leads on providing 'funding market place' events 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>2015/16</b>	<b>2014/15</b>
Total number of volunteers	649	788
Number of groups worked with	97	128
Number of people benefiting from activity	15,852	15,895
Number of partners involved	43	71
Number of events/initiatives supported	33	48
<b>Funding secured from CD intervention</b>		
From external sources	£684,126.00	£348,739.00
From internal sources	£140,834.00	£167,387.00
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>£824,996.00</b>	<b>£516,126.00</b>

4.3 In 2015/16, for every pound it cost to provide the community development service, a further £4.31 was levered in to 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 £2.044 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 being brought 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

Detailed below are a number of examples of projects and groups that the team are working with and alongside across each Area Forum area;

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

- **Halebank Youth Centre** – Support has been provided to the trustees and committee of this group; who volunteer and take on a big responsibility for the benefit of the community. Support ranges from ensuring that the day to day running goes smoothly to support with longer term action planning and organisation of events.
- **Cherry Sutton Residents Association** – Community Development provided support to help this group set up and become established with the correct paperwork and to ensure that the group understood how to operate effectively.

### 5.2 **Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside**

- **Catalyst** - A significant amount of support has been provided to this group alongside the External Funding team to ensure that the museum can remain financially secure. Grant applications totalling approximately £346k were submitted during the period with £160k having been granted so far.
- **Kingsway Together** – Community Development, in collaboration with the Police and Crime Commissioners Office, co-ordinated a 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 to approve. In total, £20k was spent in the Kingsway area. Approved projects included a number of themed activities to improve the environmental appearance and feel of the area as well as projects that engaged young people in positive activities.

### 5.3 **Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View**

- **St Luke's Church** – support was provided to this group to carry out a consultation that was a fundamental part of a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application. The success of this consultation resulted in £52k being granted by HLF and a further successful grant of £50k to enable the restoration to take place.
- **Warrington Road Children's Centre** – support was provided to the centre to source funding so that the area to the front of the centre could be improved and provide a safe, stimulating environment for children accessing the centre.

### 5.4 **Grange, Heath, Halton Brook & Mersey**

- **Vicarage Lodge Pre-School** – support was provided to write a successful bid to 'Awards for All' for £7,500 that matched the £4,200 provided by the Area Forum so the roof could be replaced.

- **Brunswick Residents Association** – ongoing support provided to this group to improve life for all residents. Successful funding bids resulted in developing a community garden and purchasing IT equipment available to all.

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

- **Alcohol Support Group** – supported this group with capacity building and advice on governing documents to get the group established.
- **Murdishaw in Bloom** – worked with Riverside and local residents to plan and deliver this project that tackled fly-tipping, littering and encouraged the community to take up gardening.

#### 5.6 **Beechwood & Halton Lea**

- **Beechwood Community Centre CIC** – Community Development continue to support the Centre Manager through a transition period of becoming a Community Interest Company; supporting funding applications and the development of activities for the centre.
- **Palace Fields Ukulele Group** - this project started as a Wellbeing Enterprises initiative that came to an end after 6 weeks. Those attending wanted it to continue so Community Development supported the group to enable this to happen; including a starter grant of £150. The group have gone from strength to strength and now perform at many local events in the community.

#### 5.7 **Daresbury**

- **Haddocks Wood Allotment Association** – Community Development worked alongside this group to support them in completing an ‘Awards for All’ application for £10k to install a compost toilet on site to help attract more families to get involved with growing and harvesting. Also supported them to develop their site plans and community workshops.

### 6.0 **SERVICE EVALUATION**

6.1 A service evaluation is carried out annually; assisted by the Council’s Customer Intelligence Unit. This was conducted in May when feedback on service received during 2015/16 was requested from those supported by the Team. The evaluation was circulated to 72 groups and the responses demonstrated:-

- 97% of respondents stated Community Development support has made a difference to their group
- 85% of respondents rated the service as excellent and 15% as good
- 100% of respondents would recommend the service to other groups

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

- Funding Advice & Support
- General Advice & Support
- Action Planning
- Project Development

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

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

*The officer has made available their time, contacts and great ideas to help us move forward. Introducing us to a network of people within Halton all working to making the community a better place.*

*Advice on drawing up documentation, setting up a bank account and insurance has helped us to get started on a sustainable basis. Advice on funding applications and best way to use the funding very much appreciated. Our group is growing steadily in member numbers and musical skill.*

*We had excellent advice and support for our bid to HLF (which was successful at its first submission) and again as we were becoming a fully constituted body. Since then, we have had ongoing support from them and they have attended committee meetings and discussed issues with me via email. They have also given us very useful contacts within the council. We have also received significant support from all members of Halton Heritage Partnership, several of whom work for HBC.*

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

*The most useful has to be the officer. Their knowledge, honesty and support is fantastic if it wasn't for him all that comes after that would never come to fruition.*

*Understanding of the local political network and grants available for Community projects.*

*Accurate guidance - assistance when required and the wealth of knowledge held by the team on any subject*

*The experience helped to look at the long term future of the group and to examine the way we do things with an eye on the development of what we do and how we do it.*

*Advice on grants, training session for committee members and their roles.*

*Their knowledge and understanding of bid writing and the requirements of being a fully constituted group. The ongoing support is invaluable. Without all of this, our task would have been so much more difficult and taken us so much longer.*

*On this particular project, the Community Development Team had a huge influence on it's success. There was a need for communication between several agencies and the team relayed developments on a regular basis and ensured that these lines of communication were kept open. The team are always pleasant to deal with and are extremely helpful.*

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

73% of responses either made no comment or left one to say that no improvements were required.

8 responses made suggestions for improvement. Two of these were around visibility and publicity of the team and the others were about maintaining continuity which will be in relation to the recent re-structure of the team.

**7.0 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS**

7.1 The Community Development service also administers grants for Starter, Community Development and Voluntary Youth grants. In 2015/16:-

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

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

**13** young people were supported with bursaries of ranging from £50 to £250.

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

A breakdown of this expenditure follows.

**7.2 Starter Grants & Community Development Grants**

GROUP NAME	PROJECT	GRANT AWARDED
<b>Starter Grant</b>		
Runcorn Community Choir	Start Up Costs	£150.00
Dovedale Residents Association	Start Up Costs	£150.00
Palace Fields Ukulele Group	Start Up Costs	£150.00
<b>TOTAL Starter Grant</b>		<b>£450.00</b>
<b>Development Grant</b>		
Years Ahead	Arts & Crafts Project	£400.00
Wellbeing Choir	Project Costs	£150.00
Kingsway Family Group	Parent Events	£180.00
D'Ukes of Halton	Equipment	£300.00

Umbrella Halton	Equipment	£250.00
Style Factory	Equipment	£250.00
Brunswick Residents Association	Equipment	£400.00
The 8D Association	Equipment	£400.00
Spinney Ave Pre-School	Equipment	£170.00
Weaver Community Arts	Development Costs	£300.00
Let's Go Club	Expansion Costs	£303.60
<b>TOTAL Development Grant</b>		<b>£3103.60</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£3553.60</b>

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

GROUP NAME/INDIVIDUAL	PROJECT	GRANT AWARDED
<b>Bursaries</b>		
Bursary	Guides	£200.00
Bursary	Guides	£200.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Stage	£250.00
Bursary	DoE	£250.00
Bursary	Theatre	£250.00
Bursary	Personal Development	£50.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Performing Arts	£250.00
Bursary	Personal Development	£250.00
Bursary	Dance	£250.00
Bursary	Personal Development	£200.00
<b>TOTAL Bursaries</b>		<b>£2900.00</b>
<b>Youth Development Grant</b>		
Victoria Music Group	Music Equipment	£198.00
Oats Science Club	Trip	£200.00
Crafty Kids	Craft Equipment	£600.00
<b>TOTAL Youth Development Grant</b>		<b>£998.00</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£3898</b>

## 8 STRATEGIC APPROACHES

- 8.1 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.

- 8.2 The team led on the “Your Life Your Community” event that was piloted at Upton Community Centre and which promoted a holistic approach to improving health and well-being.
- 8.3 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 meet the pledges set out in the Armed Forces Covenant.
- 8.4 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 engagement 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 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 to minimise any risks.

## 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.