

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

DATE: 21st September 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Community Development Service Annual Report for 2019/20

PORTFOLIO: Community & Sport

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the operational delivery for the Community Development Service for the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATION: That Members consider and comment upon the report.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Community Development service helps support local community groups or organisations with their formation and facilitates the delivery of community led initiatives and activity. The team also have a combined role in managing Area Forum projects delivery; enabling Elected Members to respond to community concerns and aspirations. The combined role generates effective community engagement with Council departments, services and partner organisations and contributes to building resilience in Halton's communities.

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

4.1 The Team's Officers are neighbourhood based. They work alongside community groups to support them to develop their skills and knowledge to promote community action. This often involves providing advice and guidance around committee structures, financial arrangement, policies and regulations which need to be developed and observed and assisting in delivery of community action. This is the only role that has these functions as a core purpose. Community Development activity strengthens local belonging, addresses inequalities and 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 residents feel about where they live and their overall satisfaction.

- Understanding and targets local priorities - community concerns drive community initiatives and improvements in their neighbourhoods.
 - Communicates what the Council is doing and proactively seeks engagement.
 - Generates connected communities to create a sense of belonging and facilitating community resilience.
 - Generates community respect and civic pride through 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.
- 4.2 Seeking out funding opportunities and securing successful bids has become increasingly core to the Community Development and Project Officer role; which is particularly important in the current economic climate. A performance measurement framework is in place for Community Development activity. The Table below shows the Service's performance against each indicator for 2019/20 compared to the previous year.

	2019/20	2018/19
4.3 Total number of volunteers	330	303
Number of groups worked with	101	71
Number of people benefiting from activity	6,987	2,563
Number of events/initiatives supported	12	13
Funding secured from CD intervention		
From external sources	£281,650	£527,696
From internal sources	£40,603	£68,547
TOTAL FUNDING	£322,253	£596,243

In 2019/20, for every pound it cost to provide the Community Development service, £2.20 was levered in to support community groups and initiatives.

5. GRASS ROOTS DELIVERY

- 5.1 The following section provides some examples of groups that the Community Development (CD) Team are working in partnership with or across the borough and also examples of some of the projects that they have helped to deliver

5.1.1 Broadheath, Ditton, Hough Green & Hale

9th Rainbows – Support with funding bids to provide a residential experience for the group members.

Friday Friends – Help for a group setting up to support elderly people and those with dementia and their carer's at Ditton Community Centre

St Michael's with St Thomas Church - Provided funding advice and support for the church to renovate their community room. Just over £39k was secured from Virridor.

5.1.2 Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside

Widnes Bowling Club – supported the club to source funding to enable them to provide a Christmas panto and party for children in the local area.

Fortuna Female Society – Range of support provided from supporting a number of successful funding applications to advice on planning events and consultation.

Catalyst - Support via participation in their Funding Group – bids submitted, support with consultations and paperwork reviewed.

5.1.3 Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View

St Luke's Church: Worked alongside External Funding Team to support the Church with a variety of funding bids; including advice on required consultation to improve community facilities at the Church.

Halton View Action Group – Work with this existing group included looking at their current governance arrangements and providing advice to ensure it was fit for purpose. Also helped identify and address areas where their policies and procedures were missing.

5.1.4 Grange, Heath, Halton Brook & Mersey

Years Ahead – Support was provided to source £4k for the arts program that this group provides. A number of changes within the group also led to support being provided to new committee members.

Buddhist Temple - Worked alongside External Funding Team and with Runcorn Historic Society to source almost £8k for the reinstallation of historic sewer gas lamp and information board. Further support provided for the development of a peace garden and new temple.

Unlock Runcorn – Support provided to help develop communal garden space within their compound with funding of £1800 secured. Supported the Regeneration Team to provide further support with the development of the 'Unlock' project as a whole.

5.1.5 Halton Castle, Norton North & South, Windmill Hill

Murdishaw Matters - provided advice and guidance to this newly established group on governance and relevant policies and procedures. Once established, the group secured a Community Development Starter Grant.

Creative Health Initiatives (CHI) – Worked closely with this organisation as they took on the café in Phoenix Park. As well as providing regular,

general day to day advice, support was also provided on a number of funding applications totalling over £100k.

Persona Insight CIC – Supported this newly established group with the paperwork required for setting up a CIC. Also advised on possible sources of funding.

5.1.6 Beechwood & Halton Lea

Beechwood Community Centre – Ongoing support to this organisation with a particular focus on supporting with area forum application.

Runcorn Sea Cadets – Supported group with purchasing of new equipment and helped boost their membership numbers.

5.1.7 Daresbury

Sandymoor Community Centre – support with funding applications to enable the purchase of additional equipment and resources for the centre.

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

- 6.1 The Community Development Service also administers Starter and Development Grants for community groups. In 2019/20, three new groups were supported with a Starter Grant and ten existing groups were supported with a Development Grant to assist with their project/group costs. A breakdown of expenditure is set out in the Table below.

Starter Grants & Community Development Grants

GROUP NAME	PROJECT	GRANT AWARDED
Starter Grant		
Blue Sky Community Youth Group	Start Up Costs	£150.00
Murdishaw Matters	Start Up Costs	£150.00
Friday Friends	Start Up Costs	£150.00
TOTAL Starter Grant		£450.00
Development Grant		
Church Together in Runcorn	Churches Against Poverty Programme	£400.00
Eclipse Cheerleading	Kit & Equipment	£400.00
CHI	Promotional Material	£400.00
St Michael's with St Thomas	Promotional Material & Resources	£367.62
West Bank Boat Club	Kitchen Equipment	£300.00
Hillview Women's Club	Printing Material	£360.91
Murdishaw Arts Co-operative	Training Programme	£300.00

Comfort Dolls	Material & Resources	£350.00
Runcorn Community Choir	Musical Resources	£400.00
Ragheed Action Group	Equipment	£139.93
TOTAL Development Grant		£4,218.46
TOTAL GRANTS		£4,668.46

7. AREA FORUM PROJECTS

7.1 As referred to in paragraph 3.1, Community Development & Project Officers also manage Area Forum funding applications and project delivery. As well as helping to deliver activities and initiatives within local neighbourhoods, Area Forum money can often help to lever in other funding into the borough as match funding; for example, third party contribution for Wren applications. An annual report on Area Forums, which provides full details of expenditure, match funding, evaluation and case studies, is presented to the Corporate Services Policy and Performance Board.

8. STRATEGIC APPROACHES

8.1 The Community Development Service;

- Works in close collaboration with the Community Centres service to support community led activity in Council venues and provide vibrant hubs with a wide offer for local residents;
- Has provided lead support to the Community Shop initiative to secure a social supermarket in Halton. The Halton Community Shop opened in December 2019 and it was the first one in the Liverpool City Region;
- Provides support to the Council's approach for the re-settlement programme of Syrian Refugees. The service is a member of the multi-agency forum and provides local briefs for each new arrival in the Borough to assist families with orientating themselves in their new surroundings;
- Provides a strategic approach to community engagement in Halton. It enables Council departments and partner agencies to engage with local communities and supports the third sector infrastructure that provides the platform for community involvement in Halton.
- Provides support to partner organisations with assessing grant applications. This is an expanding area and examples include Riverside Housing and the WEA.

9. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Financial and Resource implications are detailed within the report.

10. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no Policy implications arising from this report

11. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL's PRIORITIES

11.1 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, and Halton happy hearts. This approach raises awareness of health issues and empowers communities to be proactive and build resilience. Examples of this are support to community gardening & allotment projects, patient support groups and liaison with the Health Improvement Team.

11.2 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. 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.

11.3 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The service works with volunteers; facilitating skills development in committee processes, capacity building, fundraising and consultation. Close working with the Community Centres service also provides volunteer opportunities. Support is also provided for adult and lifelong learning for community groups.

11.4 Children and Young People in Halton

Community Development activity benefits all ages of residents with many initiatives directly supporting children and young people or having intergenerational approaches.

11.5 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

12. RISK ANALYSIS

- 12.1 There are no significant risks associated with this report.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 13.1 There are no equality and diversity issues as a result of this report as the Local Area Forums and grant support opportunities are open and accessible to all members of Halton's community.