

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

DATE: 20th November 2017

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community & Resources

SUBJECT: Community Development Service – 2016/17 Annual Report

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 2016 to 31st March 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATION: That:

- 2.1 Members consider and comment upon the report.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Community Development activity helps support 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 wide range of community initiatives to help tackle strategic objectives and community needs. To this end, Officers have both a strategic and neighbourhood role in co-ordinating support to respond to community concerns and aspirations and create cohesive neighbourhoods which are participative and vibrant, with a strong sense of community connectedness.
- 3.2 The Community Development service was re-structured in April 2016. This involved the absorption of the Area Forum project delivery role and the creation of new Community Development & Projects Officer posts to provide a combined role for joint delivery of Community Development and Local Area Forum support. The restructure resulted in a reduction in the number of staff hours to provide these services from 185 hours per week to 144 hours.
- 3.3 The new combined role provided for effective and inclusive community engagement with Council departments and services and the delivery of a range of community initiatives, whilst also supporting Local Area Forums

to help provide a mechanism for Councillors to respond to community needs and aspirations and to help meet strategic priorities.

- 3.4 Members are advised that the service has endured a continuous period of reduced staffing resource due to resignations from post, long term illness, maternity leave and difficulties recruiting to vacant posts. For the full 2015/16 operational year the service operated with only 26% staffing capacity which significantly impacted upon service delivery.

4. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 The Community Development & Project 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 advice and guidance around committee structures, financial arrangements, policies and regulations which need to be developed and observed and assisting in delivery of community 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's doing and proactively seeks engagement.
- Generates connected communities, activity brings residents together and creates a sense of belonging facilitating community resilience.

- 4.2 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 the External Funding Team. 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.

- 4.3 A performance framework is in place for community development activity. The table below sets out the Service's performance for 2016/17:-

Total number of volunteers	300
Number of groups worked with	61
Number of people benefiting from activity	8700
Number of events/initiatives supported	10
Funding secured from CD intervention	
From external sources	£101,512.00
From internal sources	£18,037.00
TOTAL FUNDING	£119,549.00

4.4 In 2016/17, for every pound it cost to provide the Community Development Service a further £0.68 was levered into the borough to support community groups and initiatives. This figure is lower than has been achieved in recent years, however, it must be recognised that levels of funding levered into the Borough can fluctuate greatly. Factors influencing this include; the amount of funding available to be bid for, the volume of community led initiatives seeking funding, the size and scale of projects and the timeframes for realisation of bids translating into funds being drawn down. It is also worth noting that in previous years a number of substantial funding bids were approved. Furthermore, in 2016/17 a combination of reduced officer capacity and supporting the delivery of Area Forum projects impacted upon the Team's ability to support external funding bids.

5. GRASS ROOTS DELIVERY

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

5.1.1 Broadheath, Ditton, Hough Green & Hale

Halebank Youth Centre – Support has been provided to the trustees and committee of this group who volunteer to operate the management of the community facility. Support ranges from ensuring that the day to day running goes smoothly to support with longer term action planning and organisation of events.

Friends of Quarry Court - on-going support provided to this group to improve life for all residents. CD support has enabled successful funding bids resulting in developing a community garden and making improvements to enable residents to feel safer.

Hale Village Hall – working in partnership with External Funding support was provided to support an area forum application to ensure that the complete re-build of the village hall was able to proceed.

Dovedale Court Residents Association – support was provided to the group to assist with some environmental improvements and with a successful area funding application.

5.1.2 **Appleton, Kingsway & Riverside**

Catalyst - A significant amount of support has been provided to this group alongside the External Funding team to ensure the museum can remain financially secure. Their funding plan has been updated for the next three years and Community Development continues to take a key role in the Funding Sub Group.

Mottershead Memorial Statue - support was provided to this group to carry out a consultation that was a fundamental part of a Wren application. The success of this consultation resulted in £50k being granted by Wren to enable the statue to be realised which will be unveiled in 2018.

Ruby Stars Morris Dancers – Advice and guidance was provided to this group regarding governing documents to ensure that the group were fit for purpose and adhering to relevant policy and procedures.

5.1.3 **Birchfield, Farnworth & Halton View**

Widnes Historical Society – support was provided to this group to carry out some promotional work to promote the group and encourage new membership. A successful area forum application enabled them to produce leaflets and invest in some new display material.

Moon Meadow – community development support facilitating action planning to ensure clear objectives and plan for moving forward with appropriate funding applications.

Operation Shield – liaised with the Police and Community Safety to support an area funding bid to enable properties to be forensically marked with synthetic DNA to deter theft and burglaries in all wards in the forum.

5.1.4 **Grange, Heath, Halton Brook & Mersey**

Canal Boat Adventure Project – support was provided for an area forum so the group could host an intergenerational street party to celebrate the Queen's Birthday.

Wicksten Drive Alleycats – support provided to this group to improve the gated alley behind residential properties. The group received an area forum grant to purchase necessary equipment and materials to improve and maintain a community outdoor space; they were also given support to plan a launch event.

St John's Church Hall – supported group to ensure an area forum application could be progressed to improve storage and lighting for the church hall.

Keep Britatin Tidy Clean Up Weekend – processed an area forum application to enable the local community in partnership with Waste Management to take part in a skip scheme co-ordinated with the national initiative.

5.1.5 **Halton Castle, Norton North & South, Windmill Hill**

Friends of Windmill Hill Primary School – Community Development provided support to get the group set up and established with the correct paperwork and to ensure that the group knew how to operate effectively.

Friends of Trinity Church – worked with the church to complete a successful funding application to Wren for £16k to improve paths and disabled access. The third party funding contribution was provided by the Area Forum.

Murdishaw Community Centre – support to the Directors to seek investment in the community centre and provide community events at Summer, Halloween and Christmas all of which are well attended and sell out in advance.

Windmill Hill – support to the Big Local partnership assisting with event planning, developing the Friends of Windmill Hill School and developing a feasibility for an integrated health & wellbeing hub.

5.1.6 **Beechwood & Halton Lea**

Beechwood Community Centre CIC – Community Development continue to support the Centre Manager with funding applications and development of activities. The centre has been well supported by the Area Forum with the building benefiting from an extension, refurbishment and café space.

Palace Fields Park – Community Development undertook extensive consultation to enable this facility to be funded and following on from this planned and facilitated the official opening of this community facility.

5.1.7 **Daresbury**

Daresbury District Heritage Group – Community Development worked alongside this group to support them with an Area Forum application to purchase display materials so their research can be shared with the local and wider community.

Preston Brook Pre-School – the group was supported to complete a successful Area Forum application to purchase essential new equipment and materials for the children.

6. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

- 6.1 The Community Development service administers Starter & Development Grants for community groups. In 2016/17 the budget was significantly reduced, hence the grants programme was not actively promoted. As such, only one group was supported; Wednesday Woollies, who were provided a grant of £240 to deliver training to the group.

7. AREA FORUM PROJECTS

- 7.1 As detailed in paragraph 3.2, as of April 2016 Community Development and Project Officers also managed Area Forum project applications and delivery. Area Forum money can often help to lever other funding into the borough as match funding; for example third party contribution for Wren applications.
- 7.2 An annual report on Area Forums will be presented to Corporate Services PPB in January 2018, which will provide details of expenditure, match funding, evaluation and case studies. Summary details of expenditure are provided below.
- 7.3 The Projects funded through the Local Area Forums are wide and varied, and have been categorised into a number of key areas, which are listed in the following table:-

	Healthy Halton	Environment & Regeneration in Halton	Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton	Children & Young People in Halton	Safer Halton	Total
AF1	5	13	1	1	0	20
AF2	4	9	2	4	2	21
AF3	1	8	0	0	3	12
AF4	5	13	4	9	1	32
AF5	3	7	1	7	1	19
AF6	2	4	2	2	0	10
AF7	0	2	1	2	0	5
TOTAL	20	56	11	25	7	119
%	17	47	9	21	6	100

- 7.4 The projects funded through the Area Forum contribute to one or more of the Council's priorities as detailed in the table below. The priority of Environment and Regeneration in Halton can be seen to account for 47% of the funding allocated.

	Children & Young People	Community Initiatives	Community Resources & Equipment	Improved Parks	Landscapes	Pedestrian & Highway Improvements	Community Safety	Total
AF1	£150.00	£3,245.91	£25,891.46	£19,500.00	£21,490.29	£0.00	£150.00	£70,427.66
AF2	£1,997.60	£20,316.19	£5,735.68	£18,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£9,241.60	£55,291.07
AF3	£0.00	£250.00	£12,645.08	£6,000.00	£20,000.00	£6,775.50	£14,155.00	£59,825.58
AF4	£8,598.54	£11,619.66	£18,051.44	£4,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,526.31	£0.00	£44,795.95
AF5	£2,604.29	£3,775.00	£23,835.01	£0.00	£4,895.20	£6,300.00	£0.00	£41,409.50
AF6	£365.50	£0.00	£20,788.38	£8,386.52	£0.00	£2,687.53	£0.00	£32,227.93
AF7	£2,804.17	£299.18	£7,603.56	£0.00	£2,534.20	£0.00	£0.00	£13,241.11
TOTAL	£16,520.10	£39,505.94	£114,550.61	£55,886.52	£49,919.69	£17,289.34	£23,546.60	£317,218.80
%	5	12	36	18	16	5	7	100

8. STRATEGIC APPROACHES

- 8.1 Community Development continues to support the Big Local initiative on Windmill Hill; which will bring £1million of lottery investment to the area over ten years. Community Development is a key partner in the delivery of the project supporting capacity building for residents and facilitating partnership working.
- 8.2 Community Development is supporting the delivery of the Halton 'Well North' programme; which is providing investment of public health funds to help improve health outcomes. Community Development is leading on the Windmill Hill strand of the programme; the ward within the Borough identified as having the most challenging health outcomes.
- 8.3 Community Development continues to support the development of the Healthy New Towns initiative in the Halton Lea Ward; supporting partners and facilitating joint approaches. An example of this is the Changing Minds programme. Community Development led on this in May 2016 providing a month of activities in Shopping City, including information, advice and guidance on many aspects of mental health.
- 8.4 Community Development has supported the Syrian Refugee Resettlement programme in Halton developing the corporate 'Guide to Halton' document and providing local briefs for the area that each family would be residing in. The local briefs have particularly assisted families in becoming familiar with the area and its amenities and have been shared as good practice across the Liverpool City Region.
- 8.5 Community Development supports a strategic approach to community engagement in Halton at a partnership level. The service enables and facilitates Council departments and partner agencies engaging with local communities. It also supports the third sector infrastructure that provides the platform for community involvement.

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 in responding to health issues. This approach raises awareness of health issues and empowers communities to be proactive. There is joint working with Public Health on Health Improvement programmes and Community Development is heavily involved in the development of a Community Shop for Halton. As per paragraph 8.2, Community Development is also leading on the Windmill Hill strand of the Well North programme.

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. The report highlights the high level of area forum funding contributing to environmental improvements in the Borough.

11.3 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The service works with volunteers facilitating skills development in committee skills, capacity building, fundraising and consultation. Close working with the Community Centres service also provides volunteer opportunities.

11.4 Children and Young People in Halton

Community Development delivers 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.

11.5 A Safer Halton

A sense of community and community connectedness reduces residents' fears of crime where they live. Residents 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 such as police, housing associations, community wardens, etc.

12. RISK ANALYSIS

12.1 There are no significant risks associated with this report.

13. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

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

14. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

14.1 None under the meaning of the Act.