

Joint Report of the South East Area Leader and Chief Officer of Voluntary Action Leeds

Report to East (Outer) Area Committee

Date: Tuesday 15th October 2013

Subject: Strengthening relationships between the Outer East Area Committee and the Third Sector

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Crossgates and Whinmoor, Kippax and Methley, Garforth and Swillington, Temple Newsam		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

There is a need to strengthen strategic relationships between the Area Committee and the Third Sector; currently there is an engagement with individual organisations and networks (e.g. Healthy Lives Leeds and Young Lives Leeds) but not the sector as a whole.

In July 2013, a councillor from the South East spoke at an event designed to launch a Third Sector Network for the South East Area, Third Sector Leeds Goes Local. The support of the Area Committee is sought for the direction of travel and the next steps in this work.

Recommendations

The Area Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the content of the report;
- b) Support the work being done to strengthen links between the Third Sector and Area Committees
- c) Discuss and agree key initiatives outlined in 3.4 for the Area Committee and Third Sector Leeds (TSL) South East to take forward aimed at strengthening their relationship and better meeting the needs of local communities through collaboration.

1 Purpose of this report:

- 1.1 Update the Area Committee about recent developments regarding work with the voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sector. Throughout the report these will be referred to as the Third Sector.
- 1.2 Seek members support for the direction of travel outlined in this report.
- 1.3 Present key initiatives for the Area Committee to discuss and agree regarding how to strengthen their relationship.
- 1.4 Seek approval for the recommendations.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The Third Sector in Leeds and more specifically in the Outer East Area is well developed. Across Leeds it's estimated to comprise of over 3000 organisations (of which about half are registered charities). Between them these organisations have around 20,000 paid employees, over 50,000 unpaid volunteers and a turnover of approx £400 - £500 million.
- 2.2 The underpinning rationale and principles of partnership working between the Council and the sector are set out in the Compact for Leeds (**Appendix 1**). It sets out 7 principles to guide public sector and third sector working relationships. It was launched in June 2010 and approved by the Council's Executive Board in the autumn of 2010. The Compact for Leeds is being refreshed to ensure its continuing relevance.
- 2.3 The Council's total investment in the sector is over £100 million per annum. Despite recent reductions in the Council's budget, it is still a very significant part of the mix of service delivery. The ConnectLeeds database developed by a partnership led by Voluntary Action Leeds identifies over 400 organisations with their main base in the South East area. In Outer East there is a wide range of provision from neighbourhood networks providing services to older people; residents associations, community groups, sports clubs and faith based organisations. Some of the organisations based in the area serve a much larger area. The spread is not even; the sector is much less visibly present in some communities than in others. It should be noted that a significant number of city wide organisations also provide services to the South East.
- 2.4 It is important to acknowledge that it is difficult to maintain up to date information about the sector. There is a huge amount of change as larger organisations adapt to the changing funding environment, and as smaller ones grow, develop and sometimes decline. By working together, councillors, officers and infrastructure organisations such as (VAL) can improve their knowledge of trends and developments both locally and citywide and ensure a vibrant, diverse, and valued Third Sector into the future.

Support services for the Sector

- 2.5 VAL is based in Hunslet. It is the largest support and development organisation in the city, created following the merger with Leeds Voice in October 2011. It provides a wide range of services including networks and forums, volunteering development services including a city centre volunteer centre at the Great George St One Stop Shop, small groups development; commissioning support, fundraising, a comprehensive training programme, room and equipment hire. It works closely with other support and development organisations. Some like the West Yorks Community Accountancy Service are co-located with VAL at Stringer House; and others such as Leeds Community Foundation, Volition, Leeds Older People's Forum and Equality Leeds (formerly Leeds Racial Equality Council) are based in the city centre.
- 2.6 Support and development services are going through a period of significant change. The Transform Leeds programme funded by the Office of Civil Society has provided an opportunity to review their effectiveness and raise their game to meet the challenges that the sector faces. The Council is considering how its investment in support and development services can be deployed to ensure the best value for money possible for the city.

Third Sector Leeds.

- 2.7 The partnership between the Council and the sector is well developed at the city wide level. TSL is recognised as the formal channel of representation at this level. It is the alliance that brings together key networks and forums, support and development organisations and some of the larger organisations in the city. Voluntary Action Leeds provides the secretariat function for TSL.
- 2.8 TSL is engaged with the partnerships structure, comprising the five strategic partnership Boards, (Children's Trust, Communities Partnership, Health and Well Being Board, Housing and Regeneration Board, Sustainable Economy and Culture Board); and the Safer Leeds Executive. The Third Sector Partnership brings together representatives of TSL with Council Directorates, the NHS and other partners to work together to maintain and develop a thriving third sector in Leeds. The Third Sector Partnership is chaired by Councillor Adam Ogilvie, supported by Councillor Christine Macniven and a lead Director.

Main issues

- 3.1 Third Sector Leeds Goes Local
- 3.1.1 A pilot initiative is underway between July 2013 and March 2014 to bring the Third Sector in the South East area together. The aims of the project are to:
- a) make better use of existing partnership arrangements at the area and city wide level
 - b) improve networking and collaboration within the sector
 - c) identify challenges facing communities in South East Leeds that could be tackled most effectively by strengthening partnership work with the sector.
- 3.1.2 A number of discussions have taken place recently about how the partnership between the Council and the Third Sector can be strengthened at a local level,

especially with Area Committees. Richard Jackson, the Chief Officer of VAL recently attended a meeting of Area Committee Chairs in the South East on the 24th May 2013. Some of the issues which were identified include:

- a) Sector attendees at Area Committees speaking from an organisational rather than sector wide perspective;
- b) The need for Area Committees to be able to access expertise in the sector more easily.
- c) Communication between councillors and the sector, especially activity not directly supported by the Area Committee.
- d) The need to get meaningful consultation and involvement from the sector in key developments.

Wellbeing Funding and the Third Sector

3.2 South East Area Support Team has recently undertaken a piece of work looking at the added value of well being funding. The table below shows an element of this work around the added value that Wellbeing funding brings to Third Sector activity within the South East Area.

2012/13	Number of projects supported	Would not have gone ahead without Area Committee Funding	Council Led	Public Sector Partner Led	Third Sector Led
Outer East	58	44	40	6	12
Inner South	31	22	14	8	9
Outer South	24	13	9	7	8
Total	321	242	165	52	104

It is also relevant to note that almost a third of the £4.85 million of matched investment during 2012/13 is from In Kind volunteer time (£1.4 million).

3.3 TSL and the SE Area Leader worked together to design and deliver an event on Monday 22 July – ‘Third Sector Leeds Goes Local’. The event was attended by over 40 people from across the sector. Councillors Angela Gabriel and Paul Truswell talked about the role of Area Committees and Neighbourhood Improvement Boards and outlined the challenges facing the Council. David Smith and Adrian Curtis described the support available to the local Third Sector from support and development organisations and the strategic role played by TSL. Five challenges for collaboration were identified:

1. The integration agenda for social care
2. The health inequalities gap
3. The need for the Council to work with local communities to bring about behaviour change e.g. to improve the cleanliness of public spaces

4. Reducing the number of young people not in education, employment or training
5. Development of an approach to the Council's asset base.

3.4 Initiatives to Strengthen the Relationship between the Area Committee and Third Sector

3.4.1 Area Committee members are asked to discuss and consider the following key initiatives:

a) Build on current collaboration of local commissioning of the Third Sector and establish an 'intelligent commissioning' arrangements that aims at ensuring the third sector organisations are prepared to engage with local commissioning arrangements in the relevant timescales.

b) The Area Committees receive an annual update report from TSL regarding Third Sector activity and impact within their area of responsibility. This report would provide a 'State of the Sector' within the locality, aimed at facilitating a greater understanding of the services and support the Third Sector can offer but also what changes in delivery are occurring.

c) A third sector lead organisation is identified to work alongside Area Committee Leads for:

- Children's Services
- Environment and Community Safety
- Health and Wellbeing and Adult Social Care
- Employment, Skills and Welfare Reform

d) The Area Committee and TSL work together to ensure relevant and effective Third Sector involvement on the following groups is maintained:

- Environmental Sub Group
- SE Welfare Reform Group
- South East Leeds Debt Forum
- Community Centres Sub Group
- Children and Young Peoples Group

e) Third Sector support and development providers work in mutually supportive arrangements with the Neighbourhood Improvement Officers (funded by Inner South and Outer South Area Committee) aimed at working together to develop community capacity within priority neighbourhoods.

f) In order to further the impact and value added of Wellbeing funding, the Area Committee should consider setting a target for percentage increase in the number of third sector led projects delivered through this fund.

3.5 A further meeting of the TSL South East Area Network will take place on Tuesday 26 November 2013.

3.6 A roll out of the 'TSL Goes Local' initiative into the other areas of Leeds has been agreed. It will occur over the six months of this pilot project with the target of establishing networks in other areas by the end of March 2014.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 40 Third sector organisations attended the event on 22 July and were supportive of the work being developed by TSL and the Area Leader with support from VAL as the TSL Secretariat. The Director of Commissioning for the South East Clinical Commissioning Group was also present and supports the initiative.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 Third sector organisations represent the whole range of communities of interest in the area. Improved third sector networking supports better understanding between them.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The work contributes to the achievement of the headline indicators in the City Priority Plan, especially those set out in respect of Best City for Communities.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 There is no additional expenditure involved; the pilot project described in the body of the paper is being carried out within existing resources. It is important to acknowledge the time committed to the initiative by VAL, the Council, the NHS, Health for All, Groundwork and all those who attended the event as participants.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 There are no legal implications to the council in the advancement of improved relationships and ways of partnership working with Area Committees.

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There is no risk to the council in the advancement of improved relationships and ways of partnership working with Area Committees.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The pilot project being undertaken in the South East by VAL will give a lead in the city to improving the partnership arrangements between the council locally and the third sector. It will focus effort on key challenges that need a third sector contribution to significantly improve the quality of life for local communities.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Area Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the content of the report
- b) Support the work being done to strengthen links between the Third Sector and Area Committees

- c) Discuss and agree key initiatives outlined in 3.4 for the Area Committee and Third Sector Leeds (South East) to take forward aimed at strengthening their relationship and better meeting the needs of local communities through collaboration.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 No background papers.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for inspection on request for a period of four years following the date of the relevant meeting. Accordingly this list does not include documents containing exempt or confidential information, or any published works. Requests to inspect any background documents should be submitted to the report author.