

**Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) and
Director of Adult Social Services**

Report to Executive Board

Date: 4th January 2012

**Subject: Response to the Deputation to Council by the Access Committee for Leeds
about celebrating volunteers of Leeds**

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

Summary of main issues

1. A deputation to Full Council on 16th November 2011 was made by representatives of the Access Committee for Leeds about celebrating volunteers of Leeds. This report responds to the issues raised by the Access Committee for Leeds and informs Members of the range of work that is currently taking place to support volunteers and the Third Sector.

Recommendations

1. Executive Board is recommended to:
 - note the contents of this report;
 - note the work that is taking place to support volunteering and the Third Sector, and;
 - to consider and endorse Adult Social Care's approach to ensuring that a diverse care market thrives in Leeds, where localism and volunteering are valued and encouraged, alongside a wide variety of other providers.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Executive Board with a response to the issues raised by the Access Committee about celebrating volunteers for Leeds.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The council recognises that volunteering is vital to the future of Leeds as it helps to connect friends, neighbours and communities as well as bringing considerable economic benefits. The annual value of volunteering in Leeds has been estimated to be worth over £70 million per year to the local economy.
- 2.2 Leeds have undertaken a two year campaign to support volunteering, under the Leeds Year of Volunteering 2010 and European Year of Volunteering 2011 initiatives.
- 2.3 This has been a city wide campaign and was developed as a partnership between the voluntary, public and private sectors in the city. The lead bodies are Voluntary Action Leeds and Leeds City Council.
- 2.4 The aim of the campaign has been to celebrate the efforts of people who give up their time and work to improve things in Leeds. The campaign has been recognised as a model for other cities to follow by both the UK government and the European Union and saw the opening of the new Volunteer Centre Leeds on St Paul's Street in the city centre.
- 2.5 The key successes in 2010 were :
- The first ten months of the Volunteer Centre Leeds yielded an estimated economic benefit to the Leeds economy of almost £1 million.
 - The average level of recorded volunteering in the city has increased by over 200% during the year.
 - 84% of those volunteering were workless, a sharp increase on the figures for 2009 (65%).
 - The level of corporate volunteering has increased during the year.
 - 102 events held with over 8000 people attending these.
 - 60 organisations received small grants to help them develop, celebrate or start to use volunteers.
 - Ten "themed" celebrations were held.
 - The Leeds Volunteering Kite Mark was introduced to help improve quality control in small volunteer organisations.
- 2.6 For 2011, the target in Leeds is to increase the number of recorded volunteering placements by 25%. This will be achieved through some of the following activities:
- Sustaining and developing the role of Volunteer Centre Leeds to provide volunteering opportunities and placements including outreach activities in local communities during 2011.
 - Running six volunteering themes in 2011 to promote volunteering.
 - Producing the new Leeds Involvement Strategy, which proposes a continuation of the support for volunteering and Volunteer Centre Leeds, along with a greater

focus on encouraging people to give money and to participate more in their local communities.

- Reviewing the way that organisations in the city use volunteers and develop their own employee volunteering.

2.7 The value that volunteering adds to the city continues to be of significant importance for Leeds. This work is being led and developed through The Third Sector Partnership Group which brings together health, council and third sector leaders to debate key issues affecting the city. Leeds is developing an involvement strategy that will set out our ambition to be the ‘best city for volunteering, giving and participation.’ This builds on the work that has taken place during 2011 to continue to promote volunteering, with a focus on increasing the range and number of volunteering opportunities available, as well as actively promoting employer supported volunteering in both the public and private sectors.

3 Main issues

3.1 A deputation was made to full council on 16th November 2011 by the Access Committee for Leeds asking the council to continue to recognise the important role that volunteers and carers make to the city. As well as the collaborative work that has been taking place with the Third Sector to “negate the worst of the Government cuts hitting those individuals, families and communities most in need.”

3.2 The group welcomed and thanked the council for the support provided for volunteering, but raised the challenge about whether or not there was more work that could be undertaken.

3.3 In particular, they raised their need to leave a meaningful legacy that will positively boost local volunteer capacity. There was also a strong view of the need to promote Leeds as a beacon of best practice, through developing a procurement and tendering framework that truly values and embraces the benefits and advantages of volunteer led procurement bids.

3.4 The group also requested that “we do everything possible to support our own Third Sector and enable their incredible energy, diversity and exemplar knowledge to be expressed and valued” in our procurement processes.

3.5 The group cited a recent volunteer led funding bid for Sensory Impairment Services which was not successful.

3.6 Following a review of sensory impairment services by Adult Social Care a decision was made to commission two separate services – one for deaf or hard of hearing people and one for blind or partially sighted people. A bid by a volunteer led organisation tendered for the blind and partially sighted services which is the one referred to by the deputation.

3.7 The volunteer led bid submitted a very strong application but the successful organisation scored significantly higher against the bid criteria. Both bidders, however, adopted a partnership approach involving a variety of stakeholders.

- 3.8 Volunteering has long been a significant dimension to sensory impairment services in Leeds and this was explicitly acknowledged and valued in this tendering exercise. Since the award of contract 33 volunteers have transferred to the new provider from the previous service provider. Negotiations are also on-going to explore and encourage potential partnerships between the new provider and the unsuccessful bidder.
- 3.9 Adult Social Care also recognise that small local voluntary organisations should not lose out to large national or regional charities. In recognition of this they have invested in a commissioning service to support business development, competitiveness and entrepreneurial skills of small local organisations in Leeds. This service has been highly successful and is strongly valued by the Third Sector in Leeds, serving to create a level playing field of all organisations seeking to provide not for profit social commissioning services in the City.
- 3.10 The challenge highlighted in the deputation concerning localism, partnerships and volunteering connects strongly with the newly emerging strategic vision for health and social care in Leeds. The government has issued a raft of guidance aimed at introducing engagement and co-production as key elements in the process of producing health and social care.
- 3.11 It is, therefore, envisaged that in future all services will be delivered via partnership arrangements. Provider organisations, including those in the statutory sectors of health and social care, will be encouraged to develop formal and informal collaborations and integrated services. New service models, including social enterprise and co-operatives will be supported, and ways of engaging business and commercial enterprises will be explored.
- 3.12 Issues around commissioning and procurement have also been raised as part of the review of third sector relationships which is currently taking place. This work is considering the council's approach and working arrangements with the third sector, to ensure that we can work together effectively, strategically and operationally and deliver the vision, the outcomes of the city priority plans and the council's business plan.
- 3.13 This work will consider specific actions that can be taken to strengthen and improve current commissioning and procurement arrangements with the third sector.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 The approach to volunteering has been developed as a partnership between the voluntary, public and private sectors in the city who have been involved with and led on its development.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The work highlighted in this report will ensure that the arrangements, culture, policy and practice are in place that ensures that issues of equality, diversity and cohesion are considered in relation to volunteering and the third sector and the role that they have and should play in meeting the needs of all communities.

4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The development of work to support volunteering in Leeds and the Third Sector relationships review will contribute to the delivery of the Vision for Leeds and the city priorities. The production of the city wide strategy to promote volunteering will help to deliver the vision that Leeds will be the best city for volunteering, giving and participation. The Third Sector relationships review will identify any changes to policy that may be required to enable the council and the Third Sector to more effectively deliver the city's priorities.

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 There are no implications for resources and value for money arising from this report.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This report does not contain any exempt or confidential information and is subject to call-in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no significant risks arising out of this report.

5 Conclusions

5.1 There is a range of work that is already underway that recognises and celebrates the positive contribution to Leeds from volunteers and the Third Sector.

5.2 This work continues to be a priority for the council and the issues and challenges raised by this group will be considered as part of the work of the third sector relationships review and work by Adult Social Care to ensure that a diverse care market thrives in Leeds, where localism and volunteering are valued and encouraged, alongside a wide variety of other providers.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Executive Board is asked to:

- note the contents of this report
- note the work that is taking place to support volunteering and the Third Sector
- to consider and endorse Adult Social Care's approach to ensuring that a diverse care market thrives in Leeds, where localism and volunteering are valued and encouraged, alongside a wide variety of other providers.

7 Background Documents

None.