

Report on the Community Action Bradford and District to the meeting of Bradford East Area Committee to be held on Thursday 17 October 2019

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Subject:

Community Action Bradford and District

Summary statement:

This report will provide the Bradford East Area Committee with an overview of work undertaken across the area. The Area Committee will be requested to provide feedback.

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Portfolio:

Neighbourhoods and Community Safety

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report will provide the Bradford East Area Committee with an overview of work undertaken across the area. The Area Committee will be requested to provide feedback.

1.2 Community Action leads and manages this grant. It covers 5 strands

- VCS Information
- VCS Voice and Influence
- VCS Engagement, Support and Development
- Volunteering
- Active Giving

Community Action delivers strands 1 and 3 (strand 3 with WYCAS and Locality), with the other strands delivered by a range of partners: CNet, CoEMO, Equity Partnership and Equality Together (strand 2); Volunteering Keighley (strand 4) and Volunteering Bradford (strands 4 and 5).

This report highlights the outcomes that we have achieved as reported in our regular quarterly monitoring. Information for Strand 3 can be shown as what we have achieved at constituency level (due to how the information is recorded), but other strands this is not possible and we provide outcomes at a district level to show how the grant is spent.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 **Strand 1: VCS Information** – this area of our work provides reliable and accessible information to groups and other interested stakeholders in the most effective way possible. This includes:

- Supporting the DIVA Bradford database, making core contact details available to other relevant partners, including Bradford Council.
- Maintaining the bfunded website which provides important information on funding available to groups
- Maximising self-serve for groups through social media, website and Briefing Bradford

During the first quarter of 2018/19 the information team spent time talking about pooling newsletters to send to the sector. Briefing Bradford (BB) and Hotpicks were successfully launched. These are both fortnightly publications; BB is a full newsletter covering all aspects of this grant and Hot Picks appears in the intermediate weeks highlighting any urgent items or reminders. From the start the click through rate was excellent. Circulation continued to go up with each publication and at present we reach in excess of 1640 readers per edition.

Community Action continues to run the bfunded funding information service for the district reaching hundreds of organisations every year. The bfunded annual summary 2018/19 can be found on www.bfunded.org.uk

In summary we provided:

- 154 news items researched/ distributed. 38 funding events promoted.
- The email community funding news email list remained stable at 680.
- 143 additional people followed funded on Twitter (from 978 to 1,121 followers in 12 months).

The Information team has received further funding to update DIVA. Although the DIVA update project was due to finish by the end of March 2019, it has been extended by 6 months.

Appendix 1 shows the statistics relating to the information presented in this report, as well as other outcomes achieved such as the promotion of the People Can brand and development of the Community Action website.

2.2 **Strand 2: VCS Voice and Influence** – this involves representation for local voluntary organisations and community groups, developing relationships between the public sector and the VCS, engaging with diverse organisations and groups and developing opportunities with Public and private bodies. This includes:

- Supporting the Assembly and Forum structure
- Supporting equalities work, an important element of the Assembly and Forum structure.

Appendix 2 shows the number of people attending the Assembly Forum meetings:

- Community Economic Forum
- Equalities Forum
- Health & Wellbeing Forum
- Safer Communities Forum
- Young Lives Bradford Forum

As well as the regular forum meetings, the Assembly Steering Group meets quarterly, a meeting of the Chairs of the Forums and other voluntary sector partners. The new Assembly Chair is the CEO of the Cellar Trust, was appointed as Assembly Chair in Autumn 2018. The Assembly Chair says that she is keen to develop leadership in the VCS and to strengthen voice and influence in key decision making.

Other meetings highlighted in Appendix 2 include the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) engagement. The Assembly understands that the most effective communication of Voice depends on being able to ensure that the forums reflect as far as possible the full range of the communities who live in Bradford District. Holding a 'Your City, Your Voice' event was felt to be the most useful first step. The event was designed and organised to bring together both current assembly members and people from relevant grassroots community groups.

The stated purpose of the event was to identify actions to increase the number and range of voices from BAME communities on the Bradford District Assembly and its Forums so that the Assembly is able become an even greater influence for positive change.

In March 2019 the Bradford District Assembly Conference, “Shaping the Future” took place at Bradford City Football Ground. This was a joint event, uniting the VCS, Local Authority, Bradford District Care Trust and other NHS colleagues. Over 200 delegates from a diverse range of groups, sectors and organisations came together to share information and discuss key issues.

The event featured an information marketplace, with a number of VCS organisations and Community Partnership representatives displaying information about the work they carry out. This enabled smaller specialist groups, in particular those supporting communities of interest, to promote their work and raise the profile of their community. It also provided an opportunity for partners to be involved in the Infrastructure Review, focusing on what the VCS needs from infrastructure, and how it can be delivered.

2.3 **Strand 3: VCS Engagement, Support and Development** – this supports general advice related to funding, governance, marketing, dissemination and gathering of information, good practice, evaluation and tendering. This includes:

- Provision of training to include the development of skills, effective use of resources and community accountancy
- Strong generalist offer of support to groups – particularly new and emerging groups
- A named Voluntary Organisation Support Officer (VOSO) within each constituency area who can provide support to groups

As the grant only offers a limited number of hours per group, we charge for services for both more specialist areas of support (eg charity commission online registrations) and for larger established groups (eg Away Day facilitation, bespoke training). Any charges are re-invested into the organisation so that smaller and start-up groups can still receive support free of charge

Over the past year our Training Team has worked with Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL), developing a joint training plan, which was launched in September 2018. The purpose of this joint approach is because across the UK training provision for the VCS is disappearing as more organisations struggle to balance their books. Both Community Action and VAL were seeing a reduction in attendance so sharing our programmes and jointly running courses where possible has meant both districts are able to continue to offer this service. The number of courses run fluctuated throughout the year but improved with the joint programme with VAL. In 2019/20 we will look to introduce a greater range of personal development courses alongside our organisational development programmes.

Funding from other sources: The grant from the council enables us to draw down funding from other areas to supplement our Training Programme. In the past year, due to financial pressures at Bradford College Adult and Community Learning funding (ACL) came to an end. However, Community Action delivered a full programme of training to VCS to help them manage their records on DIVA (supporting the group to advertise and self-promote) funded by Bradford City and District Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). We were also commissioned by the CCGs to deliver bespoke training to Patient Participation Groups (PPG), which we delivered from September 2018 to March 2019. Because the training was well received we have been commissioned to deliver further sessions through to 2021. We also delivered free Cyber Security Training, funded through a NAVCA grant.

VOSOs continued to support groups across Bradford & District. Appendix 3 provides more detailed information relating to the Bradford East constituency. However, VOSOs also supported groups through:

- Big Advice Day in May 2018
- Day Opportunity Grant support
- Community Network Events in each constituency

VOSOs continue to support the Transformation Programme, devised by Bradford Council in partnership with the voluntary sector in Bradford. Partners in the programme are Bradford Council, Arise Yorkshire, Participate, Community Action and CNet. The programme is developed from the Community Building Grants process that took place during 2016/17. The premise is that there are a number of community buildings and other hub organisation in the voluntary sector across the Bradford District that have a sustainable future but need an injection of advice, expertise or finance to help them increase their sustainability. The rationale is to be strategic in identifying groups that could benefit from a transformative input rather than an open grant process to subsidise the groups' ongoing activity. For example, a group could register as a charity where it has not previously done so and consequently receive mandatory 80% rate relief.

The Voluntary Organisation Support Officers are visiting identified groups and assessing them with a health check to identify the kind of inputs the group could benefit from. This is similar to the way in which the Community Building Grants operated. These assessments are then taken to a panel meeting every two months where the panel decide what action and support can be offered to the group. Support can be offered through the Voluntary Organisation Support Officer team and other voluntary sector support agencies. The funding put forward by the council has recently been matched by Power to Change and the Community Fund (aka Big Lottery Fund) is also interested in the outcomes with a view to matching this in the future.

The Community Led Local Development CLLD programme started in mid July 2018. It covers the wards of Manningham, City and Great Horton. Community Action has been asked to use VOSO support as match funding. We mention this here because it has had an effect on the amount of work we can do in other areas outside of the wards in this project.

2.4 **Strand 4: Volunteering** – focuses on encouragement and promotion of volunteering, recruitment and co-ordination

Volunteering Bradford and the Keighley Volunteer Centre provides support to groups in relation to volunteering.

Volunteers Week in June 2018 went very well, with events including a volunteer festival at City Park. 25 charities attended along with the BBC, The Pulse and BCB radio. During the first quarter there was also an older people volunteering conference with Positive Minds at Kala Sangam. To celebrate Volunteer's Week

Keighley & District Volunteer Centre held a Fun Day event. Community Stars Awards 2018 was even bigger than the previous year and moved to a new venue. There were 109 nominations and a record of number of votes cast,

totalling over 16,000 – mostly through online voting. Students from Bradford University filmed the nominees and awards ceremony.

Over the year 124 community groups got good practice support on volunteering and 12 groups successfully completed the People Can Volunteering Kitemark and received their certificates.

During 2018 to 2019 there were 370 new volunteer opportunities in Bradford & District. 3066 volunteers were assisted online and 368 volunteers interviewed. 97 new groups registered on do-it and 124 VCS groups got good practice support regarding volunteer involvement issues.

Appendix 4 gives more statistical information relating to volunteering in Bradford and district.

2.5 **Strand 5: Active Giving** – includes support for Bradford District Community Fund, Local giving and Corporate giving. This includes:

- building a stronger relationship between local business and voluntary and community organisations to develop a new resource for the sector
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- Supported the Bradford BID launch & linked to People Can Campaign.
- Act as a conduit for local business to engage with VCS groups, arranging team challenge days and brokering pro-bono support
- Employee volunteers from DriverHire worked with Dominica Association to decorate the space.
- 30 volunteers from Drive Devilbis invested over £5000 in time and resources to do a decorating and garden project at Windhill Community Centre

3. **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1 There are no other items for consideration

4. **FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

4. The programme of works outlined in this report are part funded from Bradford Council and other funding bodies. The organisation's supports a VCS with funding advice, guidance and submission. It addition, the work of the organisation supports developing the knowledge, skills and capacity of VCS organisations reach, voice and influence.

5. **RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

There are no direct risk management and governance issues. The work of the organisation overall contributes to the healthier governance arrangements of the VCS.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

There are no direct legal appraisal issues arising from this report.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Community Action Bradford & District was formed in 2017 as the merger of BCVS, KIVCA and SBVS, to support and develop the voluntary and community sector. We have a long history pre-merger and we retain values rooted in our experience of the sector and our communities. Our values have always been listening to our communities in order to empower them, we will continue as Community Action to do this; by building on these firm foundations, but with a mind to the future, we will ensure the sector remains sustainable.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Community Action supports, enables, develops, represents and informs the community in a wide variety of ways. We offer operational support in setting up and sustaining a voluntary or community group; we manage funded to offer support in finding and applying for funding; we manage DIVA Bradford to advertise job vacancies, events and room hire for your organisation; we offer a range of training opportunities for your organisation, staff and volunteers.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no direct Greenhouse Gas Emission impacts arising from this report.

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

Community Action supports a range of VCS organisations and projects which support improving engagement, social mixing and neighbourhood based priorities to meet local needs including reducing community safety issues.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

There are no Human Rights issues arising from this report.

7.6 TRADE UNION

There are no trade union implications.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

Community Action work across the Bradford district covering all Wards.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Community Action programme activities contribute to the priorities within the Area Committee's Action Plan and will impact priorities across all themes.

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

There are no implications for corporate parenting.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no issues arising from privacy and impact assessment.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

There are no not for publication documents.

9. OPTIONS

- 9.1 That the Bradford East Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report.
- 9.2 That the Bradford East Area Committee adopts the recommendations outlined in this report, with amendments.
- 9.3 That the Bradford East Area Committee decides not to accept the recommendations outlined in this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the Bradford East Area Committee notes and welcomes the information in this report.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Digital Monitoring Report
- 11.2 Forum Meeting Attendance
- 11.3 Groups supported within the Bradford East Area constituency
- 11.4 Volunteering in Bradford and District

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

There are no background documents.
