



## HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

31 MARCH 2021

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>WORKING WITH THE COMMUNITY, VOLUNTARY &amp; FAITH SECTOR</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report outlines a proposed approach to working with the community, voluntary and faith sector to improve health and reduce inequalities as part of the broader strategic intent to work with local communities to deliver the Wirral Plan 2020 – 2025.

This matter affects all wards within the Borough; it is not a key decision.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to:

1. support the proposed approach to working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith sector.
2. establish a Working Group to oversee the approach taken to working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith sector.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1.1 To provide an outline of a proposed approach to working with the community, voluntary and faith sector to improve health and reduce health inequalities.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 The report sets out the options for consideration for working with the CVF sector.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The community, voluntary and faith (CVF) sector plays a hugely important role in Wirral, contributing to the local economy and providing a wide range of activities and services to residents that improve health and wellbeing. The sector is therefore a key partner in the delivery of the Wirral Plan and an important bridge between the public sector and local people.
- 3.2 The CVF sector in Wirral is diverse and ranges in size and purpose; from those that address the needs of 'communities of place' and work with residents in a small geographical area, to those that work with 'communities of interest' and deliver services Wirral wide and outside of the borough. These organisations operate very close to the communities they serve, are able respond quickly to emerging issues and generate ideas on how services could be delivered differently and add value to the local economy. The VCF is built on the commitment, ideas and skills of local residents and is integral to strong and sustainable communities for the future.
- 3.3 Covid has further illustrated the reach, impact and flexibility of the CVF to respond quickly to local communities. This has also seen the development of new networks bringing together over 70 CVF organisations through the Humanitarian Cell and some specific new groups focused on supporting particular communities. These build on the existing networks such as the Community of Practice and the wider CVF fora. A review of this work locally identified the following as key to the covid response:
- Trusted cross sector collaboration with open communication, information sharing and emotional support
  - A shared goal
  - The agility and speed of the sector to mobilise and flex
  - Visibility and reach of small, local organisations
  - Technology as an enabler
  - Removing constraints like bureaucratic processes
  - Utilising local intelligence

The way in which we live and work is forever changed and the health and economic recovery of the borough means that it is more important than ever to build on of these effective relationships.

- 3.4 Prior to the pandemic collaboration with, and reliance, on the sector had increased in response to the changing financial landscape within the public sector and that experienced by local people. Whilst this has resulted in innovative ways of working between sectors and fostered the emergence of locally led action in communities it has also resulted in reduced funding into the sector and increased competition for external funding and contracts. This prompted a number of workstreams including a partnership with Capacity Lab to support CVF organisations to compete in the Council contract market, the development of the Community Wealth Building Strategy and the neighbourhood approach to working with communities. Furthermore, the maturity of asset-based community development (ABCD) locally has also resulted in the emergence of new community leadership groups.
- 3.5 In recognition of the changed landscape a workshop took place in January 2020, with a range of organisations across the sector, to understand the needs and support they require to operate in this environment. This identified consensus for a new relationship between the sector and the Council and determined the following ambitions:
- The development of an ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ style agreement between the Council and the sector.
  - A desire to move towards a collective investment fund to drive outcome led, and collaborative, delivery of services by the sector, on behalf of the Council and potentially the wider partnership, moving away from the current procurement model.
  - A need to provide tailored engagement and support to the various components of the diverse CVF. This identified three broad groups; grass root organisations acting in local interest but potentially not in the contract delivery market, small and medium organisations delivering services commissioned by other organisations and community business organisations ranging from large national CVF organisations to medium sized organisations.
- 3.6 Wirral Council has historically invested in an infrastructure organisation to act as the conduit between the sector and Wirral Council as well as representing the sector in the Wirral Partnership. This contract has been delivered, by Community Action Wirral (CAW) who now operate in partnership with Wirral Chamber of Commerce. The contract tenure is due to cease in September 2021 resulting in an opportunity to develop a different approach that responds to the current landscape and needs of the sector.

#### **4.0 PROPOSED APPROACH**

- 4.1 Working with a diverse range of CVF organisations is complex and the changing landscape present both challenges and opportunities particularly in the aftermath of Covid. There is therefore recognition that a new way of working with the sector is required. A programme of ongoing engagement with the sector is proposed to further

explore how the existing partnership can be further developed. Table 1 outlines the workstreams, current arrangements and proposed next steps.

- 4.2 It is proposed that the Health and Wellbeing Board oversee this work, led by a Working Group with co-opted members representing the sector, to ensure delivery and make recommendations. Members are asked to consider the make up of the Working Group.
- 4.3 A large conference workshop in May is also proposed to enable wide involvement, across the range of CVF organisations that exist locally, in the development of this work.

**TABLE 1: WORKING WITH CVF KEY THEMES & NEXT STEPS**

<b>Workstream</b>	<b>Current arrangements</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>Timelines</b>
<b>CVF leadership with Wirral Council and wider Wirral Partnership</b>	<p>CAW commissioned representative at Wirral Partnership</p> <p>Community of Practice – regular forum with multi organisations representing all parts of the sector and with public sector input</p> <p>Humanitarian Cell – Covid infrastructure that has resulted in 70+ third sector organisations coming and working together successfully with associated sub groups e.g. Faith Sector and BAME Groups</p> <p>No CVF sector strategy.</p>	<p>Undertake review of how this interface is best achieved within changing Wirral Council governance structure changes and the wider Partnership. Consider arrangements for how this is best achieved.</p> <p>Conference/workshop with the sector</p> <p>Development of an MOU of how the Council and or Partnership will work with the sector.</p>	<p>March - May 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p>
<b>Business support for not for profit organisations</b>	<p>Support for set up and business planning, funding applications etc all included as part of current contract with CAW</p>	<p>Proportional investment of approximately £50k into the current Council business support contract to support community business and the delivery of the community wealth building strategy actions related to it.</p>	<p>Adjunct to Regen led commissioning process Jan – Sep 2021</p>
<b>Co-ordinating funding bids across the sector</b>	<p>Information on funding available and support to submit bids is currently provided by CAW.</p>	<p>Could be built into the business support contract.</p> <p>Wider consideration to all Wirral wide funding bids and coordinating these across partners to strengthen bids, avoid duplication and maximise success. Linked to Community Wealth Building Strategy.</p>	<p>See above timeline</p> <p>Longer will require strategic development and potential investment</p>

<p><b>Commissioning the third sector</b></p>	<p>Some work undertaken by Capacity Lab however this was limited by pipeline of commissioning intentions. Some solutions proposed linked to community wealth building approach.</p> <p>No comprehensive picture of current commissioning commitment across the Council into CVF sector.</p> <p>Some evidence of limited joined up commissioning.</p> <p>January 2020 workshop with the sector suggested a preference for a single investment fund to deliver a set of outcomes.</p>	<p>Ask Capacity Lab to revisit work to inform commissioning and procurement arrangements linked to Community Wealth Building principles.</p> <p>Stock take existing contracts with third sector organisations and look for opportunities to do things differently.</p> <p>Explore new models of commissioning and investment with the CVF sector.</p>	<p>April 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p>
<p><b>Volunteering</b></p>	<p>Volunteering opportunities advertised by CAW.</p> <p>Many large public sector organisations have their own arrangements for volunteering.</p> <p>There is neither dedicated resource and or an agreed approach within the Council or across the wider partnership.</p>	<p>Review required to scope of needs and determine solutions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteering needs of the borough particularly reflecting on the 'covid' experience.</li> <li>• Review options for alternative model.</li> <li>• Development of a volunteering strategy for Wirral.</li> <li>• Explore Wirral Partnership arrangements.</li> <li>• Utilise existing digital platforms or build additionality to advertise vacancies</li> </ul>	<p>Commence April 2021</p>

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 A total of £100k per annum from the Public Health grant is currently invested, alongside £37k from Children's services, into a contract for Third Sector Infrastructure support. This contract expires on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The work programme outlined within this report will inform future financial implications and any subsequent commissioning intentions which may include pooling resources across the Council and or with Partners.

## **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report, however future actions taken may have legal implications which will need to be addressed at the relevant time and any future procurement will need to be conducted in accordance with the Council's contract procedure rules.

## **7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS**

- 7.1 The work described within this report will identify any future resource requirements.

## **8.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 8.1 None identified specific to this paper which outlines an exploratory approach to inform future arrangements. Engagement from the sector will be key as well as the contribution from Wirral partners. As part of this work relevant risks will be identified related to the workstreams outlined.

## **9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 No public consultation/ engagement has been undertaken in the writing of this report. However, a key part of this programme of work has been, and will be, to engage with the many local networks to inform how the Council and sector will work together in the future to improve health. This builds on the relationships strengthened during the pandemic and the work prior to covid reviewing how we could achieve this.

## **10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity.
- 10.2 This report has no impact on equalities, however we will ensure that any associated actions meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, such actions will be subject to individual Equality Impact Assessments where appropriate.

## **11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 No direct climate implications.

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**APPENDICES**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Wirral Community Wealth Building Strategy

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date