

TOURISM, COMMUNITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**Thursday, 30 November 2023**

REPORT TITLE:	THIRD SECTOR COMMISSIONING AND COMMUNITY, VOLUNTARY AND FAITH SECTOR (CVF) SUMMARY UPDATE REPORT
REPORT OF:	ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT SUMMARY

This report has been produced in accordance with the agreed work programme and following a request from the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee for a six-month update of spend and activity on the Community, Voluntary and Faith (CVF) Sector and 3rd Sector commissioning.

The Wirral Plan 2021-2026 sets out the Council and partners vision to secure the best possible future for our residents, defined by the community prosperity we create and supported by our excellent people and services. The associated work of the CVF and Third Sector assists in the implementation of the five key themes within that plan:

- Sustainable Environment
- Brighter Futures
- Inclusive Economy
- Safe and Pleasant Communities
- Active and Healthy Lives

This matter affects all wards. It is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee is recommended to note and comment on the six-month update report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 To enable the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee to consider a update of activity, procurement, and commissioning of CVF and the 3rd Sector undertaken by the Council within the past six month.
- 1.2 The March 2023 meeting of the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee received an interim position statement in regards to the above and made the following recommendation,

Resolved – That the summary report be considered as an interim position statement and a further update report be presented to Committee within 6 months to build on the work of the Health & Wellbeing board around local infrastructure and to;

A) Respond to concerns around VCSE organisations' capacity to evidence need and how we aim to support them with streamlined processes.

B) Specify the circumstances when grant funding may be preferred over commissioning services or contracts.

C) Outline the decision processes on grant funding to the VCSE sector, in order to;

- ensure any measures of the intended benefits are established in advance.
- evaluations against these measures are proportionate to the funding value.

D) Clarify how risks associated with VCSE funding are considered at a corporate level.

- 1.3 This report is being considered by the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee in accordance with section 6.2 (b), of the constitution, which charges the committee with community engagement, incorporating the Council's approach to equalities, inclusion communities, neighbourhoods and the voluntary and charitable sector, community wealth building and social value.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 No other options were considered as part of this report.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The contribution and partnerships that the CVF sector make to improving the lives of Wirral residents are valued and long standing.

- 3.2 The CVF sector is dynamic, diverse, and varied, and there is a wide range of CVF activity taking place right across the Borough, enabled in part by a complex range of Council support including grants, commissioned services, voluntary activity and partnership working. Investment by the Council also results in significant additional income generated by the CVF sector. Many of the CVF groups are required, as part of their contract agreement, to actively seek additional funding through grants, philanthropists, and funders to increase the capacity of community-led activity.
- 3.3 CVF activity cuts across the whole Council and is helping us to deliver on a wide range of Council priorities – including support to children and families; adult social care and public health; environmental sustainability; safe and clean neighbourhoods; economic growth, skills and employment. This complex and rich picture means there is no one single contract or model of performance framework, and this Committee report therefore illustrates just some of the current landscape.
- 3.4 Members raised several concerns at the March 2023 Committee which are addressed below.
- 3.5 VCSE organisations' capacity to evidence need and how we aim to support them with streamlined processes.
- 3.6 Specify the circumstances when grant funding may be preferred over commissioning services or contracts.
- 3.7 Outline the decision processes on grant funding to the VCSE sector, in order to;
 - ensure any measures of the intended benefits are established in advance.
 - evaluations against these measures are proportionate to the funding value.
- 3.8 Clarify how risks associated with VCSE funding are considered at a corporate level.
- 3.9 As part of addressing some of these issues, work is underway to enable a more strategic and co-ordinated approach going forward. This includes the extensive review of CVF commissioning and infrastructure, initiated by the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) in March 2021, and since then reported regularly to the HWB. This work will assess requirements and inform any future commissioning model.
- 3.10 The partnership working and joint development work outlined above has re-affirmed the complex and wide-ranging interrelationships between all parties, including the council, in trying together to provide the best support to residents. There are interfaces between the council and the sector across almost the entire range of activities the council does to varying degrees and at all levels within the council. Clearly, there are parts of the council structures, both organisational and political which are core foundation areas in the work the council does alongside and with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector. However, all parts of the council have a

contribution to make, from the high-level strategy development and implementation, through matters such as contracting and commissioning, to small scale day to day operational support from the council.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD REVIEW

- 3.11 The outcome of the current review will help understand Council spend across the CVF sector and inform a shared vision, a set of joint principles for recommissioning and appropriate levels of investment, innovative ways of procurement and performance monitoring.

In the interim, Wirral CVS was awarded an initial twelve month contract in May 2023 to assist the Community, Voluntary and Faith (CVF) sector with co-ordination and implementation of the Coming Together Plan. Key elements of the contract include supporting the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, supporting the delivery of the neighbourhoods programme and supporting small groups to grow and flourish.

The Council has also appointed Wirral CVS to provide a single front door and co-ordinated approach to volunteering in the Borough up to March 2025. The contract is fully funded by the Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Communities & Place allocation and will deliver effective engagement and support to residents to support local CVF sector organisations.

3.12 CURRENT ACTIVITY

Alongside the current review of CVF infrastructure outlined above, extensive good practice and examples of excellent CVF partnership activity continue to take place across the Borough.

(a) Partnership Working

Over the Summer period partners worked together (including Wirral Council, Wirral Coast Guard, Wirral Park Rangers, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service and British Transport Police) to launch an initiative, called 'Openspace'. The initiative seen police officers working alongside partners to prevent serious violence and anti-social behaviour in key tourist hotspot areas, concentrating on popular parks throughout the Wirral and along the coastal areas in West Kirby and New Brighton.

In June the Council brought together pupils from across the borough, and partners including Asthma Lung UK, Living Streets, Alder Hey and LJMU, at Eureka! Science + Discovery to talk about their findings for improving air quality.

Partners pulled together in June to plan a series of events as part of a nationwide recognition of what the United Nations called the biggest post-war atrocity to happen in Europe: Remembering Srebrenica. The commemorations in Wirral were co-ordinated by the Wirral Deen Centre, Remembering Srebrenica North West and the Wirral Branch of the National Education Union, with the support of Wirral Council, Merseyside Police and other local organisations.

The Council is working with a range of local organisations as part of a newly established Liscard Partnership. The aim of the Partnership is to drive forward enhancements to Liscard Town Centre to help secure its long-term vitality and viability. The Partnership comprises a 'People' subgroup including a number of representatives from the CVF sector and is developing an action plan for activity over the next 18 months, including a late-night Christmas shopping event on 30th November.

(b) Community Asset Transfers

The council's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) approach is about giving local people and community groups greater control in the future of their area. It gives local groups the chance to lease or manage community buildings, such as community centres or village halls, and helps to encourage a stronger community spirit by bringing people from different backgrounds together to work towards a shared goal.

The Council is in the final stages of completing the transfer of former libraries in Pensby, Prenton, Higher Bebington, Wallasey Village and Irby to local groups for community and educational purposes. The Council has also agreed to transfer Brackenwood Golf Course to Brackenwood Community Golf Limited.

(d) Adult Social Care and Public Health

Adult Social Care commission the Wirral Health and Wellbeing CIC to provide a community-based offer to people who may or may not have eligible needs for support. The Wirral Health and Wellbeing CIC is comprised of 7 core VCF organisations that provide early intervention and prevention support and services which prevent, or delay people's needs increasing and requiring more intensive levels of support. People can also be referred to the CIC following a Care Act assessment. The Wirral Health and Wellbeing CIC will be developing the Single Point of Access (SPA) within the Hospital Trust to support and improve the discharge pathway for people returning to their own home in the community after a hospital stay.

Discussions will be initiated between the Wirral CVS and Wirral Health and Wellbeing CIC to ensure the VCF sector are working together to assist to deliver the outcomes of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

(e) Children and Families

In 2019, the Community Matters initiative, supported by the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Children, Young People & Education Committee, set out a 2-year plan to work with residents and stakeholders to develop a new model for community-led early intervention. The commitment of the contract to pay so far is £670,000, which will run for a period of 5 years, with the option to extend for a further 2 periods of 2 years each. In October 2021, the Policy and Resources Committee gave agreement to award a 5-year alliance contract, awarded to an alliance of established local community organisations.

The Family Toolbox Alliance gives access to a wide variety of supportive experiences – things families have said would help them to thrive. The Family Toolbox Alliance, as part of their contract agreement, are expected to actively seek

additional funding through grants, philanthropists, and funders to increase the capacity of community-led earliest help. In addition to this, the alliance will use the Family Toolbox membership mark to recruit local organisations as part of the network for children and families in Wirral.

In addition to the DSG spend and the council's budget for providing services for children, Children's Services has previously been awarded grants and frequently bids for additional money from the Department of Education and the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities as well as other sources. An example of this is the Holiday Activity Fund where the Council ask organisations who may be from the CVF sector to bid for money to run activities for children.

(f) Procurement

The Council's Social Value Policy asks that social value is considered in every procurement for a service contract or service framework agreement valued at £100,000 and above, subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Where appropriate, tender submissions are scored on the delivery of social value components at a level between 5% and 20% (determined during tender compilation) of the total tender score. The core themes utilised in consideration of social value to be delivered through procurement exercises are:

- Promoting Local Supply & Environment,
- Supporting Growth of Responsible Regional Business,
- Healthier, Safer & More Resilient Communities,
- Decarbonising & safeguarding our World.

Social Value through Planning

Wirral's Local Plan submission includes a Social Value Policy. Aligned with the timetable for adoption of the Local Plan, work is currently underway to develop the most appropriate monitoring framework to ensure that the Council has a clear approach to delivering social value through the planning process.

A review of the Council's Social Value Policy and Framework is currently underway to review options for maximising social value return.

CWB with the Cultural Industries Sector

Through the government's Town Deal grant the Council is supporting a number of local Community Interest Companies (CICs), charities and Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the cultural industries sector that all help build community wealth locally. Through a capital grant the Council has made over £7.4m available to local CICs and charities including Future Yard CIC, Make CIC, Open Door Charity as well as SME Startyard which supports micro businesses in the creative industries sector.

CICs are social enterprises that use their profits and assets for the public good. Decisions are made by a voluntary board representing local sector interests, rather than those of distant shareholders. Supporting the development of CICs within the

creative economy is boosting the sector locally, and, with their local support chains is enhancing prosperity and community wealth in the local area.

Recognising the challenge of enabling sustainable growth the Town Deal grant is being used by Make CIC, Future Yard CIC, Open Door Charity and Startyard to secure and refurbish local vacant and underutilised assets giving them a permanent foothold in the locality. This avoids the situation of rising demand and land values, brought about because of the thriving creative industries sector, and as a result the very organisations who have helped to establish this trend being forced out of the area. The grant is helping to create a sustainable future for the area and the organisations themselves.

(g) Merseyside Pension Fund

More money being paid out in pensions to Wirral residents means more money potentially being put back into the local economy. Therefore, the higher the value of pensions paid out; the more potential community wealth is generated.

The Merseyside Catalyst Fund was established to meet Merseyside Pension Fund's criteria of investing in projects to help deliver economic growth to the Liverpool City Region, with particular regard to environmental and social impacts. This includes upgrading the housing offer, regenerating deprived communities, and maximising the use of new spaces.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications to the recommendations of this report.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 In Commissioning Services from the CVF Sector, the Local Authority must comply with the public contract regulations 2015 and Wirral Council Contract Procedure Rules.

5.2 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places great emphasis on the role of the third sector and explicitly states that local authorities have a duty to inform, consult and involve local citizens, local voluntary and community groups and businesses. It sets out clear expectations that the third sector should be involved in designing and shaping key decisions across the country, and that the sector should be a key partner to local government in creating strong and sustainable communities.

5.3 The Council has power to provide grants to voluntary and community sector organisations under the general power of competence set out in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 This report is for information purposes and as such, there are no direct resource implications.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 This report is for information purposes and as such, there are no direct risk implications.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Meeting structures have been organised with the Director of Regeneration and Place, the Leader of the Council, the Chair of the PCN, Senior Council Officers, HWB Reference Group, and Elected Members. They will need to include other key partners represented on the HWB in due course. Any proposals will also need to align with other emerging work streams and delivery infrastructures being developed by the National Health Service and Wirral Borough Council which are currently in progress.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 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.

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report is for information only and there are no direct Environment or Climate Implications, however grants used to fund activities can have a range of environmental impacts which may help reduce carbon emissions. These include energy and water use in buildings, the purchase of goods with supply chain impacts and the generation of waste.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 By its nature, the activity identified in this report will take place across Wirral and will be based around the local public sector and community organisations active in the Borough.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Summary of Contract Spend 2022-23

Appendix 2 – Summary of Grant Funding 2022-23

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Health and Wellbeing Board 31st March 2021 Working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector

Health and Wellbeing Board 20th July 2021 Working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector

Health and Wellbeing Board 29th September 2021 Working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector

Health and Wellbeing Board 15th December 2021 Working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector

Health and Wellbeing Board 15th June 2022 Working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector

TERMS OF REFERENCE

This report is being considered by the Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee in accordance with section 6.2 (b) of the constitution, community engagement, incorporating the Council's approach to equalities, inclusion communities, neighbourhoods and the voluntary and charitable sector, community wealth building and social value.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Health and Wellbeing Board	31 March 2021 20 July 2021 29 September 2021 15 December 2021 15 June 2022
Tourism, Communities, Culture and Leisure Committee	March 2023

Appendix 1

Summary of Significant Contracts in Respect of the CVF Sector in 22/23 April - Jan

Contractual Spend with CVF/CIC Organisations

Directorate/Subject Area	Description	Contracts: 23/24 CVF funding
Adults Care and Health	Public Health Grant Contracts	£8,645,945
	Public Health- Supplementary Substance Misuse Treatment and Recovery grant	£1,832,832
	Total Public Health	£10,478,777
	Adult Social Care-Contracts	£711,381
	Adult Social Care-Better Care Fund	£1,847,892
	Total Adult Social Care	£2,559,273
Adults Care and Health Sub-total		£13,038,050
Children, Family and Education	Children's Department- Contracts	£2,217,716
Children, Family and Education Sub-total		£2,217,716
Total		£15,255,766

Appendix 2

Summary of Significant Grant Funding in Respect of the CVF Sector in 22/23 April - Jan

Grant Spend with CVC/CIC Organisations

Directorate/Subject Area	Theme	Grants: 23/24 CVF funding
Adults Care and Health	Public Health Grants	£117,750
Resources	Household Support Funding	£3,159,600
Total		£3,277,350