



## ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

18 JULY 2024

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>SINGLE FRONT DOOR FOR VOLUNTEERING</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH</b>

### REPORT SUMMARY

This report provides an update to the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on the current Single Front Door for Volunteering service commissioned by Public Health.

The report provides an overview of the service, its performance to date and how the service will continue to evolve moving forwards.

The service is currently funded via the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), awarded by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, and distributed by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

The report, and the work described, supports the central vision of the Wirral Working Together Plan 2023-2027 to work with partners to promote fairness and opportunity for people and communities in Wirral and delivers against priority 5 within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Create a Culture of health and wellbeing, listening to residents and working together.

This report affects all Wards within the borough and is not a key decision.

### RECOMMENDATION/S

The Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee is recommended to note the information contained within this report and acknowledge the work that the service is undertaking with residents in the borough.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

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

- 1.1 To provide an update to the Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee on the Single Front Door for Volunteering service commissioned by Public Health.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 No other options were considered.

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Volunteering is critical to vibrant and resilient communities. It provides opportunities for participation, fosters a sense of belonging and builds pride in place. Research has identified the benefits of volunteering to individual volunteers' physical and mental health and reduced mortality risk.
- 3.2 Volunteers are a huge asset to Wirral, across a wide range of local organisations. In particular volunteers often take on roles across the Community, Voluntary, Faith and Social Enterprise (CVFSE) sector. These roles range from informal roles that do not require training, which are often undertaken on a one-off or casual basis, to more formal roles where a regular role is taken and training is provided.
- 3.3 The local CVFSE sector has developed a Coming Together Strategy which outlines their aspirations for working together as a sector with the wider Wirral system. A key element of the strategy is how volunteers and potential hosts for volunteers are supported effectively and appropriately.
- 3.4 The Council's approved UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Phase 1 Investment Plan sets out a priority to support impactful volunteering and/or social action projects in order to develop social and human capital in local places. Encouraging volunteering within Wirral improves people's health and wellbeing, enables more social connection, increases community spirit, and enhances people's feelings of purpose and belonging.
- 3.5 A central organisation to deliver a co-ordinated approach for volunteering in Wirral was needed to support both individuals looking to volunteer, and organisations wishing to engage volunteers. A tender process was undertaken in July 2023 and Wirral Community Voluntary Service (Wirral CVS) were awarded the contract.
- 3.6 Wirral CVS was awarded the contract by the Council in October 2023 to provide a single point of contact for volunteering. The contract supports the development of Climate Champions, a Green Grants Programme, support for the Borough of Culture programme and wider support to the sector.
- 3.7 The contract contains a number of priority activities including:
- A Green Grants Programme made up of small (£1,000), medium (up to £5,000) and large (up to £15,000) grants for local groups and organisations to support Green and Blue Infrastructure (Land and Water) or Social Action projects to promote people to engage in environmental and food projects. The programme

attracted in excess of £400,000 worth of applications. There are 25 successful projects across Wirral who will share £87,000 to improve local communities.

- A Climate Champions Programme which will train 20 volunteers with the knowledge or access to knowledge on climate change themes. The volunteers will share advice and tips to help enable and inspire community action and resident lifestyle change regarding climate. Champions will also provoke discussion about climate change and listen to the barriers faced by communities in taking climate action, acting as a link between the Council and residents. 12 of the 20 volunteers have been recruited and their training is ongoing.
- Both the Wirral and Liverpool City Region volunteering portals, which are connected at an administrative level, are live and actively accepting both volunteering opportunities and prospective volunteers. The Wirral Portal is facilitated by Wirral CVS and there are currently 460 volunteers registered in Wirral and since December 2023 there have been 111 new volunteer opportunities added. We are actively working with organisations to increase the wider use of the platform for volunteer management and recording.
- The next phase of development on the Wirral Portal will be to launch the branded mobile app to allow volunteers to record their hours independently. This app will be further developed to include portable vetting and barring checks using new technology which updates services to notify relevant organisations of any changes.
- Wirral CVS is now able to offer Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks to offer both individual volunteers and organisations a consistent experience. This platform allows organisations to request DBS checks for their volunteers (currently free of charge) and a fee payable option for staff checks.
- The Volunteer Manager Forum continues to be a useful resource for those with responsibility for managing volunteers to come together to discuss issues, get support and to inform this programme. The volunteer managers have developed a training programme for the rest of the year. This will include core training such as First Aid, Health & Safety, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Dealing with Aggression, Lone Working, and Safeguarding, and will expand into other areas. There will also be specific training for volunteer managers, many of whom have taken on this role in addition to, or in place of, other roles within their organisations.
- A Trustee Support Network is also in development and from that we are expecting to develop a further training plan to upskill and increase the confidence of existing trustees and potentially work with prospective trustees to ensure they understand the role and the responsibilities.
- DWP Volunteer Fairs have been facilitated and will continue throughout the year particularly supporting people who are moving from legacy benefits to provide opportunities to get supportive experience that will improve their employability or to help identify their strengths.

- 3.8 Activity will increase over the next quarter as various programmes start delivery and increased communications will drive both organisations to increase opportunities, and volunteers to register.

#### **4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The funding for this contract is provided through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. A revenue allocation of £413,481 is provided to fund the contract with Wirral CVS via the UKSPF Phase 1 allocation. £86,541 of the total allocation is ringfenced to deliver Green Grants in line with UKSPF priorities.
- 4.2 A Grant Funding agreement is in place between the Council and the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority regarding the UKSPF Phase 1 allocation. Match funding is not a requirement of the programme and funding needs to be defrayed by 31 March 2025.

#### **5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The current contract was commissioned in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations and the Council's Contract Procedure rules.

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

- 6.1 Staff are employed by Wirral CVS as part of the contract arrangements and will deliver services until the grant funding ceases

#### **7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

- 7.1 Any reduction in the level of funding associated with the UKSPF or a change in priorities identified in relation to the Grant conditions, may result in necessary action to withdraw or reduce funding.
- 7.2 Consideration has been given to potential risks and, where possible, steps have been put in place to minimise risk. With regard to contract performance, effective contract management and monitoring has been adopted to minimise the risk of poor performance, and a series of performance indicators are included as part of the contract.

#### **8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 The services described within this report are designed based on, and respond to, findings from a range of insight, including research conducted with local communities throughout the last year and through working with the Community, Voluntary and Faith sector forum and wider CVFSE Sector in Wirral.

#### **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The 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.

- 9.2 The Equality Impact Assessment has been reviewed and checked for this decision. The EIA can be found at the following link: <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments> Title - EIA Single Front Door for Volunteering.

## **10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Part of this programme involves providing Green Grants to local CVFSE sector organisations to support local action against climate and environment challenges.
- 10.2 The contract also enables the delivery of Wirral's Climate Champions programme, training local volunteers to support residents in taking climate action.

## **11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 This report highlights the fact that Volunteering is critical to vibrant and resilient communities. It provides opportunities for participation, fosters a sense of belonging and builds pride in place.
- 11.2 A well organised and efficient central organisation to deliver a co-ordinated approach to organise impactful volunteering and/or social action projects will develop social and human capital across Wirral.
- 11.3 The additional money that this funding provides will improve the health and social outcomes of some of the borough's most vulnerable residents. This funding will allow trusted, third sector organisations to increase the capacity of their services and support those communities and residents most in need.

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## **APPENDICES**

N/A

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Wirral CVF Coming Together Plan  
<https://democracy.wirral.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=50107113>

- Levelling up our communities: proposals for a new social covenant:  
<https://www.dannykruger.org.uk/sites/www.dannykruger.org.uk/files/2020-09/Kruger%202.0%20Levelling%20Up%20Our%20Communities.pdf>
- Officer Decision Notice- Single Front Door for Volunteering

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

<b>Council Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Economy, Regeneration and Housing Committee - UK Shared Prosperity Fund	7 December 2022