

TITLE OF REPORT: **Performance Monitoring: Infrastructure support to the voluntary and community sector in Gateshead**

REPORT OF: **Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment**

Summary

This report has been prepared by Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS) to reflect on the services they provided over the last 2 years to Gateshead's voluntary and community sector in accordance under the auspices of the Agreement it entered into with the Council in June 2016. It also looks ahead to the new contract it has with the Council and some of the key issues facing the sector.

Context

1. Following the closure of GVOC In April 2016, the Council entered into an Agreement with NCVS for the provision of support services to the voluntary and community sector in Gateshead. The Agreement covered an initial period of 12 months, but was further extended several times, until it concluded on 31st July 2018.
2. Following a competitive tendering exercise the Council carried out in conjunction with Newcastle City Council, Newcastle CVS were awarded a 3-year contract to cover the provision of infrastructure support services to, which commenced on 1st August 2018
3. The report attached at Appendix 1 has been provided by NCVS and reflects on the various activities and support that has been provided over the last 2 years and looks at some of the key issues and challenges facing the VCS in Gateshead. The report forms part of the 6-monthly performance and monitoring cycle associated with the Agreement and will continue as one of the requirements of the new contract.

Recommendations

4. Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
 - Comment on the attached report with reference to the performance and activities delivered by Newcastle CVS.

Anthony Alder ext. 3880

Infrastructure support to the voluntary and community sector in Gateshead : Looking Back, Moving Forward

Background

In May 2016, Newcastle CVS was invited to provide interim voluntary and community infrastructure support and representation to organisations in Gateshead, following the demise of GVOG (Gateshead Voluntary Organisation Council). Since that time, Newcastle CVS has provided a full service in Gateshead which finished on 31 July 2018 with a new contract starting in August 2018.

The purpose of this report is to give information on what has been provided previously, the current / future contract, key issues for the sector, and to answer any questions.

Service provided from 2016-2018

In line with the Gateshead Council process, there has been formal contract performance monitoring, monthly meeting with commissioning officers and reports every six months to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The annual performance reports are attached as appendices to this document.

During this time there has been:

- Delivery of the contracts, exceeding targets (see Appendix 2)
- Active engagement in the Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board, Gateshead Health and Care System Board, Deciding Together/ Delivering Together and other health initiatives
- Publication of Gateshead specific reports '*Doing Good in Gateshead*', '*GaN Canny*' and briefings
- Development and active delivery of OurGateshead, with promotion and marketing
- Active engagement in the Gateshead Awards
- Active engagement and dissemination of information on Gateshead Thrive/ Anti-poverty work
- Involvement in 2017/18 and 2018/19 Gateshead Council budget processes, including dissemination of information, organising meetings, writing a full response
- Regular meetings with councillors and Gateshead Council officers and partners active in Gateshead
- Extension of all written and digital materials to include Gateshead
- Development and delivery of the Gateshead Voluntary Sector Leaders Group
- Attendance and (appropriate) involvement at Gateshead Council committees, events and initiatives
- Development of the Blue Stone Consortium, formerly the Gateshead Commissioning Exchange and Newcastle Consortium, to take on the Public Health England contract for Well Newcastle Gateshead.
- Engagement with funders e.g. Community Foundation (Tyne Wear and Northumberland) and Big Lottery highlighting the lower levels of investment in Gateshead.

Service provided from August 2018 to July 2021

Newcastle CVS has been successful in tendering for the infrastructure support contracts in Gateshead and Newcastle for the next three years (with an option to extend). It is important to note there are significant differences between the contract previously delivered and the new contract. The main difference being if a voluntary or community organisation now contacts Newcastle CVS and wants advice and support on setting up an organisation, governance, running an organisation and funding and sustainability, they are now referred to the Gateshead Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering Team, apart from some specific areas of work. Previously Newcastle CVS offered a holistic service.

The future service will include:

- Changes to the staff team - the Newcastle CVS support and development team is currently going through a programme of restructuring in order to deliver the new infrastructure contracts in Gateshead and Newcastle, within a reduced budget and offering a more generic service; in line with the contract requirements.
- Development and enhancement of networking opportunities for the voluntary and community sector, including a new Gateshead VCS network
- Delivery of a one-day event for Gateshead's voluntary and community organisations
- Newcastle CVS is currently consulting on a name change to reflect its position in Gateshead
- Newcastle CVS will change its governance structure in order that Gateshead organisations can become full members (rule change to be agreed at the CVS AGM on 12 November, to be held at St Mary's Heritage Centre, Gateshead)
- The new infrastructure service will be managed jointly across Gateshead and Newcastle by a single manager, separate workers and shared skills
- Greater engagement of external specialist providers e.g. The Media Trust, Association of Chairs etc
- Continuing development and promotion of the OurGateshead website
- Development, update and rewrite of the Gateshead Voluntary Sector Compact
- Annual key facts briefing for Gateshead
- Participation in Gateshead Council review of Information, Advice and Advocacy Services
- Engage in and respond to the Council's budget consultation process
- Development and coordination of a training programme for the voluntary and community sector. This programme to be developed in consultation with the Gateshead Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering Team
- Provision of a funding advice service to focus on raising awareness of non-public grant sources of income and revenue
- Representation of sector at key forums including the Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board, Gateshead Community Safety Board, Gateshead Strategic Partnership Steering Group and others – either directly or by supporting others.
- Ensure the breadth and diversity of the voluntary and community sector is represented and reflected
- Provision and translation of policy information (local and national)
- Responses to emergent issues
- Provision of monthly sector news and advice email

Key and current issues for the voluntary and community sector

The purpose of this contract is to develop, encourage and retain a thriving and vibrant voluntary and community sector in Gateshead. This is to support Gateshead residents with a higher quality of life with opportunities to improve their own health and wellbeing, the wellbeing of their families, friends and neighbours, and the communities they live and work in. Clearly there are many external factors which can impact on the resilience and sustainability of the sector, which are not under the control of Gateshead Council. The following are key issues:

- The impact of welfare reforms (affects users, carers, volunteers and staff)
- Increasing levels of debt and poverty (affects users, carers, volunteers and staff)
- Reduction in council support – funding through contracts, grants and capacity
- Short term contracts with multiple extensions
- NHS moving to larger (and lower value) contracts which are not economic to run
- Changes in Big Lottery Funding – levels of funding, and Reaching Communities
- Reduction in access to social care and diversion to the voluntary and community sector
- Reductions in mental health services and diversion to the voluntary and community sector
- Governance issues for volunteer trustees and management committees
- Increase in service users and carers
- More competition for grants from Trusts and Foundations
- Recruitment and retention of staff (many voluntary organisations can afford only the legal Living Wage and minimum terms and conditions of service)
- Reduction in income generation – people can't afford the fees, charges, subs etc
- Cost pressures affecting all organisations – rental, utilities, inflation etc
- Increasing levels of loneliness and isolation as formerly free / low cost public services are removed or introduce charges
- Organisations that rely on donations have a poorer population to ask

However, while facing these challenges, the Gateshead voluntary and community sector remains ambitious. GaN Canny 2018, Newcastle CVS's major survey of the voluntary and community sector in Gateshead and Newcastle found organisations continuing to develop new areas of service, projects and initiatives.

The size and nature of the voluntary and community sector makes it more flexible and responsive with GaN Canny finding a shift in thinking from "here's the budget, how can we fit in what we want to do" towards an approach that says, "here's the plan, how do we fund it?"

The creativity, flexibility and resource of the voluntary and community sector in Gateshead make it an ideal partner for Gateshead Thrive and it should be involved in a range of initiatives, not just as a service provider, but as an advocate and partner.

GATESHEAD COUNCIL CONTRACT 2016/17

Indicator	Baseline Position March 2016	March 2017 Target	Outturn at Q4 (20 th April 2016 to 31 st March 2017)
Number of community groups directly engaged	109	200	321 individual groups
Increase the number of community groups accessing support for the first time	No baseline	Baseline to be established	321 individual groups
Provide advice and guidance to organisations to enable them to submit funding applications for a combined total value of between £500,000 and £1 million	£56,028	£500,000	£987,914
Number of Gateshead VCS organisations provided with funding advice	29	50	60 individual groups
<i>Increase the number of groups actively using Our Gateshead website</i>	<i>2030</i>	<i>2,250</i>	<i>No way of recording accurately how many groups use Our Gateshead</i>
Number of pages viewed of Our Gateshead website per year	66,682 website visits	120,000 website visits	128,973 website visits
Maintain and update a database of community and voluntary organisations in Gateshead	184,486 page views	300,000 page views	325,346 page views
Provide performance management reports for the Partnership Board, to include feedback from service users, emerging intelligence and progress on meeting the performance framework targets	n/a	Ongoing management	Provided on 9 th November 2016
Produce a State of the Sector report for Gateshead	n/a	1 (by December 2016)	Doing Good in Gateshead Report published in 03/ 2017
Produce and present a performance management report to the Council's Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee			Took place on 13 th February 2017
Increase number of consultation and community engagement events	0	10	14

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GATESHEAD COUNCIL CONTRACT 2017/18

Indicator	March 2018 Target	Outturn at Q4 (April 2017 to March 2018 cumulative)
Number of community groups directly engaged	150	216
Increase the number of community groups accessing support (OurGateshead) for the first time	<i>Baseline to be established</i>	64
Provide advice and guidance to organisations to enable them to submit funding applications for a combined total value of between £500,000 and £1 million	£375,000	£453,290
Number of Gateshead VCS organisations provided with funding advice	38	67 individual groups
Increase the number of groups actively using OurGateshead website	2,250	3,376
Number of pages viewed of OurGateshead website per year	90,000 - website visits	136,966 website visits
Maintain and update a database of community and voluntary organisations in Gateshead	225,000 - page views	339,663 page views
Provide performance management reports for the Partnership Board, to include feedback from service users, emerging intelligence and progress on meeting the performance framework targets	Ongoing management	We will provide reports for the Partnership Board, date to be set.
Produce a State of the Sector report for Gateshead	1 (by March 2018)	GaN Canny published March 2018, presentation made to Corporate Resources OSC 16 April 2018
Produce and present a performance management report to the Council's Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee	1	Performance management report presented to the Corporate Resource OSC 16 October 2017
Increase number of consultation and community engagement events	8	15
Councillor feedback process	<i>tbc</i>	<i>"I would like to thank you for all the help and support you have kindly provided the group over the weeks"</i>
Service users feedback	<i>tbc</i>	<i>"OurGateshead is an excellent site which allows the promotion of a range of information and services across many Gateshead communities. It serves to</i>

		<i>bring people and communities together</i>
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GATESHEAD COUNCIL CONTRACT 2018/19

Indicator	July 2018 target	Position at final report (April to July 2018)
Number of community groups directly engaged	50	63
Increase the number of community groups accessing support (OurGateshead) for the first time	21	33
Provide advice and guidance to organisations to enable them to submit funding applications for a combined total value of between £500,000 and £1 million	£125,000	£33,206
Number of Gateshead VCS organisations provided with funding advice	13 individual groups	15 individual groups
Increase the number of groups actively using OurGateshead website	750	1,099
Number of pages viewed of OurGateshead website per year	30,000 website visits	43,822 website visits
Maintain and update a database of community and voluntary organisations in Gateshead	75,000 page views	102,908 page views
Provide performance management reports for the Partnership Board, to include feedback from service users, emerging intelligence and progress on meeting the performance framework targets	We will provide reports for the Partnership Board, date to be set.	
Produce a State of the Sector report for Gateshead	0	Will be summer 2019 in line with new contract
Produce and present a performance management report to the Council's Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Performance management report presented to the Corporate Resource OSC 16 October 2017	Performance management report presented to the Corporate Resource OSC 16 April 2018
Increase number of consultation and community engagement events	15	3
Councillor feedback process		<i>"I would like to thank you for all the help and support you have kindly provided the group over the weeks"</i>
Service users feedback		<i>"Support from Newcastle CVS is helping us to see what we need to do next"</i> <i>"Help with how to link with funding and also help with setting up as a charity or CIC"</i>

		<i>"I have more understanding of funds available for our community"</i>
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