

Preface summary paper for voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) report to the Resident Experience Board – 22 September 2016

The report focuses on two main things:

1. The County Council commissions general infrastructure organisations to support the wider VCFS and help create a strong third sector in Surrey. The VCFS sector remains critical in supporting the Council with service delivery and improved outcomes for residents – this report looks at the effectiveness of the infrastructure organisations and the contribution they make to supporting stronger communities.
2. Many of the Council's plans and priorities rely on a strong and active volunteer base. This report secondly provides an update on the work carried out through the 'Driving Up Volunteering Project'.

Main points:

- The report demonstrates that commissioning the infrastructure organisations is effective and value for money, highlighting key areas of positive work undertaken..
- Over the last year the CVSs have engaged a total of **4,601** individuals in volunteering activity. This is an **increase from the previous 2 years**.
- The work in placing volunteers with support needs is particularly valuable, leading to real positive life changes for the individuals.
- An independent survey of users of the infrastructure organisations carried out by the County Council shows **92% of the 646 respondents** said they had used the CVSs and were **highly satisfied** with the services. These organisations recorded over **1.5million volunteer hours** and had secured over **£27.5million of additional funds** into the area, showing the added value the VCFS brings to Surrey.
- The infrastructure organisations have been pivotal in supporting and delivering key projects that help embed the family, friends and community support culture across Surrey, such as befriending, voluntary car schemes and social prescribing.
- Infrastructure organisations have made savings and adjusted their resources but sustainability remains an issue. Over this year, they are working with each other and commissioners to find further collaborations and ways of working to support further efficiencies and create a sustainable infrastructure base.
- There is some excellent work both through the infrastructure organisations and by the County Council in creating better working partnerships between the business sector, VCFS and statutory bodies. A toolkit has been developed, an online brokerage site and an event is scheduled for the end of September to facilitate this further.
- The 'Driving Up Volunteering Project' has delivered a range of activity in year 1. For example, County Council teams have provided training for the VCFS in Finance, Information & Governance, and HR through the Employee Volunteering Scheme. There has been positive feedback from this training and VCFS organisations have reported this as being really valuable.
- A successful volunteering campaign was delivered. During the campaign, the 'Be a Volunteer Webpage' was viewed **8,455** times compared to **641** in the same period the year before.
- An internal 'Volunteer Network' was established providing a forum to share best practice, resources and collaborations for services that work with volunteers.

Summary:

Looking at the performance information, it has been a good year for the general infrastructure organisations in Surrey. They have delivered some good outcomes in line with their objectives despite financial pressures and a reduced resource base. Partners from all sectors are working closely together to create a more sustainable infrastructure base in Surrey. The Council's 'Driving Up Volunteering Project' has had a good first year, with a number of successes in increasing the

effectiveness of employee volunteering and building connections with VCFS, this will be built upon this year alongside putting in place processes for the project to continue beyond the 2-year period.