



Communities Select Committee
21 November 2013

Half-year outcomes-based performance report on Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector infrastructure in Surrey

8

Purpose of the report: Policy Development and Review

(i) To provide the Committee with 2013-14 half year outcomes-based performance information for Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) infrastructure organisations in Surrey co-commissioned by the County Council, Districts and Boroughs and Clinical Commissioning Groups; and

(ii) To update on the County Council's funding intentions for VCFS infrastructure organisations for 2014/15.

Introduction

1. There are over 5,700 VCFS groups in Surrey. Infrastructure organisations enable these groups to run effectively by providing access to a range of targeted advice and support services. The County Council is committed to ensuring there is a strong VCFS infrastructure in place to support a vibrant and active civil society in Surrey.
2. The Communities Select Committee was last updated at its 16 January 2013 meeting about the development and implementation of a new outcomes-based performance management framework for VCFS infrastructure the link to the report is as follows, <http://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=172&MId=217&VeR=4>
The intention of the new framework is to provide a greater focus on outcomes for Surrey residents, particularly the vulnerable, and evidence of beneficial impacts. The new arrangements were introduced in April 2013. The new framework has garnered interest from a number of local authorities, in recognition that it is breaking new ground.
3. This report provides the Committee with, for the first time, timely performance information about the local Councils for Voluntary Service (CVSs) and Surrey Community Action. The data is presented in the form of a 'scorecard' following a format similar to how the County Council presents its own performance

information. The information has been gathered both through quarterly returns from the infrastructure organisations and a new County Council survey of all frontline VCFS groups in Surrey.

4. This report also provides an overview of the indicative funding profile for infrastructure groups for 2014/15 for information.

2013-14 half year performance information

5. The performance framework was co-designed with commissioners in Districts and Boroughs and health, infrastructure organisations and frontline VCFS groups to reflect delivery of the agreed outcomes (attached at **Annex A**), rather than outputs or processes. Commissioners explicitly challenged themselves to ask only for data that would be used, and that was integral to the infrastructure organisations' own performance management. This was to ensure that the reporting remained proportionate and to minimise reporting burdens.
6. There are three performance scorecards attached at **Annex B**. The first is a summary of Surrey-wide performance information relating to volunteering and capacity building support (outcomes 1, 2 and 3). It provides a composite picture of the performance scorecards of each of the eight local CVSs.
7. This scorecard is composed of two sources of data. The top section focuses on quarterly reporting on volunteering activity that takes place through volunteer centres located in each CVS. Data collated shows the number of volunteering opportunities, how many volunteers were referred and placed, how long it took to place a volunteer, the demography of the volunteers and the sectors in which they volunteered. This is information that is already collected by each volunteer centre. Further analysis of the volunteering data is provided in paragraphs 13 – 16.
8. The second element of this scorecard reflects the results of a new annual survey of the users of infrastructure organisations – the frontline VCFS groups. It was designed to reflect best survey practice and with a focus group of VCFS organisations to ensure it was easy to use and relevant. The survey was publicised and circulated widely across the sector through a range of media from Summer 2013. By the closing date on 14 October, 654 frontline groups had responded comprising 11.5% of the sector. This is a significant return rate and enables conclusions to be drawn with some confidence. Further analysis of the annual survey results is provided in paragraphs 17 – 19.
9. The second scorecard has Surrey-wide performance information relating to how well the VCFS understands needs of Surrey residents and how effectively the sector is able to influence strategic decisions (outcomes 4 and 5). The data source for this information is the annual survey.
10. The third scorecard is the half year performance scorecard for Surrey Community Action. It is the organisation's own assessment of work undertaken and the impact this has had, particularly in relation to the delivery of outcomes 4 and 5.
11. Taken together, these scorecards present a rich picture of the impact that infrastructure organisations are making in Surrey in delivering better outcomes

for VCFS groups and residents. The evidence is available not only for commissioners, but also for the organisations' trustees and managers, to support and drive effective and efficient delivery.

12. This information is being shared with the Committee, partners in District and Borough Councils and Clinical Commissioning Groups, infrastructure organisations, and made publicly available through the County Council's website in line with the Council's commitment to openness and transparency. In addition, the individual performance scorecard for each of the eight local CVSs has been sent to the Chairmen of each of the organisations and will be discussed with trustees and partners at a meeting in early December. Following that discussion the individual scorecards will be published on the Council's website.

Analysis of volunteering data

13. Volunteering is a core element of local CVS functions, and one that is pivotal in fostering social capital and ensuring better outcomes for the communities of Surrey. CVSs have provided two quarters of data from April 2013. Some CVSs were unable to provide the full returns in quarter 1, however for quarter 2 most information has been provided and is reflected in the scorecards.
14. The intention is to build this performance information up over the course of the year, to provide both baselines and an understanding of trends. With only a half year of volunteering data available, caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions and identifying trends from the scorecards. It does however provide management information to help to identify where performance is stronger or may be weaker, and potential areas of best practice.
15. Analysis of this half year volunteering data shows:
 - In total, the eight local CVSs placed 1072 volunteers in the first half of 2013/14 through their volunteer bureaux. This was augmented by another 800 volunteers who participated in one off corporate events.
 - Conversion rates of 'volunteers registering to volunteers placed' and 'volunteering opportunities to volunteers placed in those opportunities' varied significantly across the two quarters. In quarter 1, four volunteers registered for every one volunteer placed and there were 10 volunteering opportunities for each volunteer placed. Those ratios improved significantly in quarter 2. This will be an area to monitor in future for developing trends.

Conversion	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
Registrations : placements	4 : 1	1.5 : 1
Opportunities : placements	10 : 1	6.5 : 1

- The demographic profile of volunteers (gender, ethnicity and age) diverges notably from the Surrey population profile. Women are more prevalent as volunteers than they are represented in the population; people from black and ethnic minorities and younger people (under 45s) appear to be volunteering in greater proportion to the Surrey population that these groups make up (although this data is not complete).

16. Further work is underway to identify national benchmarking data to enable comparisons with national best practice.

Analysis of annual survey results

17. The response to the annual survey by frontline VCFS organisations has been significant (654 individual groups). Table 1 indicates what percentage of respondents had used the services of each of the infrastructure organisations. Table 2 shows the income levels of the VCFS groups that responded. This is broadly in line with the make up of the sector in Surrey, with the significant majority being small or micro organisations (income under £100,000 per year).

TABLE 1

Infrastructure organisation used	Response percent	Response count
Reigate & Banstead Voluntary Services	5.2%	34
Surrey Community Action	8.7%	57
Tandridge Voluntary Service Council	13.8%	90
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	6.1%	40
Voluntary Action in Spelthorne	8.3%	54
Voluntary Action Mid Surrey	3.8%	25
Voluntary Action South West Surrey	11.9%	78
Voluntary Support North Surrey	6.1%	40
Woking Association of Voluntary Services	8.0%	52
Another non-CVS organisation	6.4%	42
My organisation has not used any infrastructure in the last 12 months	21.7%	142

TABLE 2

Annual income levels	Response percent	Response count
Micro (£0-10k)	38.0%	142
Small (10 – 100k)	30.5%	114
Medium (100 – 500k)	17.1%	64
Large (500k plus, combined 500k-5m and over 5m)	14.4%	54
Skipped question		280

18. Initial analysis has highlighted some headline results from the survey:

- 71.9% of the respondents had used the services of either a local CVS or Surrey Community Action in the last year.
- A number of the services provided by the CVSs are well known and well used, for instance volunteering recruitment, funding sources and CRB checks. However, there are low levels of recognition and use of others, for instance business planning and financial management support.

- Where respondents had used CVS services, there are high levels of satisfaction with the support provided.
 - There are opportunities for CVSs to do more to support VCFS groups to develop business plans. 35% of organisations stated they did not have a business plan in place; there are low levels of awareness and use of this CVS service.
 - Most organisations are very positive about their future; 95% are certain or very confident that they will be in existence next year. The significant majority are also highly confident about finding and applying for sources of funding.
 - The VCFS groups collectively estimated that they benefited from 865,539 volunteering hours over the past year, which if paid for would equate to approximately £5.5m in staff time.
 - The larger the organisation, the greater the awareness of current and future sector needs, based on evidence. Larger organisations are also much more likely to participate in consultations.
 - Across all VCFS groups, regardless of size, organisations were more engaged with and able to influence local government than central government
19. Further analysis of the survey is underway. This will include, if appropriate, follow up work with groups within the VCFS where the response rate was low, for instance larger organisations and organisations in particular areas, and those that responded but do not use CVS services and the impact this has on them as an organisation.

Surrey Community Action

20. Surrey Community Action is primarily working to support the VCFS in Surrey through the delivery of outcomes 4 and 5. This entails ensuring the sector has an evidenced-based understanding of needs, is able to respond effectively by adapting services and innovating and is informed by and informing partners in the public sector.
21. The organisation's scorecard is attached at **Annex B**. It outlines the actions undertaken and impact made over the first half of the year. It also includes the plans in place to address the gaps and opportunities identified in the annual survey and Surrey Community Action's research undertaken earlier in the year.

Communities Engagement Team and Community Foundation for Surrey

22. The Communities Engagement Team (CET) and Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS), both funded by the CEO, have reported on delivery of the outcomes outside this performance framework. This is due to the nature of their infrastructure activity and in order to be proportionate to the scale of the funding provided, which is £35,000 per annum for CET and £15,000 per annum for CFS.

23. A large part of the CET work is based on linking organisations and community cohesion. Over the year they have worked with District and Borough Councils, the Police, different faiths and communities in setting up faith forums, improving understanding of faiths and community issues and targeted campaigns and events to meet a wide variety of local social needs.
24. The small grant that the Community Foundation for Surrey receives from the CEO goes toward their core funding. The outcomes they deliver are far reaching and of a wide scope, often targeting the most vulnerable people in Surrey. Over the last financial year over 250 grants were distributed worth over £600,000 to community and voluntary groups in Surrey. The grants they provide help support and strengthen local communities.

Next steps

25. Work will continue to analyse the annual survey findings and to update the scorecards with quarterly performance data on volunteering. A final year scorecard will be produced for the eight local CVSs and Surrey Community Action by the end of May 2014. Subject to the Committee's agreement, a progress report will be given to the Committee at their July 2014 meeting.
26. In the meantime, the Portfolio Holder and officers are meeting with the trustees of infrastructure organisations in early December to discuss the first half year performance scorecards. The meeting is a continuation of discussions that began in June with trustees about the role of infrastructure organisations in supporting the VCFS in Surrey to adapt, develop, collaborate and thrive, while responding to the needs of residents.

<h3>Funding for VCFS infrastructure: 2014/15</h3>

27. Over the last two years, the County Council, with partners carried out a review of the VCFS infrastructure organisations. As well as ensuring funding was outcomes-based, necessary efficiency savings in line with budgetary requirements at the time of 30% were made, leading to leaner, value for money operations.
28. For 2014/15, the County Council is intending to maintain funding to VCFS infrastructure organisations at the same level as 2013/14, subject to final decision making processes through the Council's budget setting in February 2014. This is to maintain financial stability of the organisations while the outcomes-based performance framework is being embedded. Letters of indicative funding have been sent to all organisations specifying funding will remain the same as the current year. These were sent in September 2013 from the Assistant Chief Executive in order to be fully Surrey Compact compliant. A table with the funding profile is attached at **Annex C**.
29. The funding is proposed for one year only. The County Council has aspirations to move towards three-year funding arrangements, however, the funding climate for the public sector remains challenging; future funding for VCFS infrastructure will be reviewed in light of the budget available.

30. In 2014/15, the infrastructure organisations' funding is likely to be supplemented by additional funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and District and Borough Councils, both direct and support in kind such as premises and IT. The funding levels are yet to be confirmed and will be subject to the annual commissioning and budget setting processes of those organisations. County Council officers are working closely with partners to maintain the tri-partite funding arrangements and the outcome-based focus.

Conclusions

31. The County Council with all partners has successfully implemented the new outcomes-based performance management framework. By receiving data through quarterly performance reports and a robust annual survey of frontline VCFS groups, a strong evidence base is being built about the delivery of the outcomes for Surrey residents. As this develops, and areas of best practice, needs and gaps become clearer, the County Council, with its partners, will continue to work with infrastructure organisations to drive improvements in effectiveness and efficiency for the benefit of Surrey communities.

Financial and value for money implications

32. In 2012-13 funding was reduced by 25% in line with the Chief Executive Office's budget allocation. For 2013-14, further reductions brought the cumulative total to 30%, against the baseline year 2011-12. As outlined in paragraph 30, the County Council is intending to maintain funding for 2014/15 at the same level as the current year.
33. The County Council has exercised maximum flexibility to enable VCFS infrastructure organisations to work differently, reduce duplication while minimising the impact on service users.

Equalities Implications

34. Many VCFS organisations work with some of the most vulnerable people in Surrey. It is essential that effective infrastructure is in place to enable these organisations to carry out their activities with maximum impact. By co-designing the new approach and putting in place a robust and proportionate performance management framework with VCFS organisations, including frontline groups, the County Council's funding will focus more effectively on ensuring positive outcomes for vulnerable people in Surrey.

Risk Management Implications

35. By implementing an effective new performance management framework, the County Council is better able to identify areas of need, gaps or non-delivery and mitigate any associated risks by working with partners and infrastructure organisations to find positive solutions.

Implications for the Council's Priorities or Community Strategy

36. The approach for outcomes-based funding and performance management of VCFS infrastructure aligns with Surrey County Council's priorities to provide quality services, increase public value and work with partners in the interest of Surrey. Work is ongoing to improve collaboration and strategic working to ensure this funding continues to meet Council priorities.

Recommendations

That the Communities Select Committee:

- Notes the outcomes-based performance information provided for VCFS infrastructure organisations covering the first half of 2013-14.
- Discusses the scorecards and the evidence they provide of delivery of the outcomes for Surrey residents.
- Asks officers to bring a report to the Committee in July 2014 with full year performance information and analysis.

Next steps

- Further work to analyse the survey results and update the scorecards
- Meeting with trustees of infrastructure organisations in early December to discuss the performance information
- Subject to the Committee's agreement, a report to Communities Select Committee in June 2014 with full year performance information

Report contact:

Mary Burguieres, Lead Manager Policy and Strategic Partnerships, Policy & Performance

Contact details:

Mary Burguieres, 020 8541 9613, mary.burguieres@surreycc.gov.uk

Annex A: Co-designed outcomes for VCFS infrastructure

Annex B: Surrey-wide summary scorecard for outcomes 1, 2 and 3; Surrey-wide summary scorecard for outcomes 4 and 5; Surrey Community Action scorecard

Annex C: 2014/15 VCFS infrastructure funding profile