

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

PERFORMANCE, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 MARCH 2019

REPORT BY HEAD OF HOUSING AND HEALTH

COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY SERVICES FOR EAST HERTS: 2018/19
PERFORMANCE AND PRIORITIES FOR 2019/20

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

- East Herts Council provides funding to Community Voluntary Services (CVS) which acts across East Herts and Broxbourne. The council's funding only supports activities in the East Herts.
- The funding is supported by a Service Level Agreement (SLA) signed each year between the council and CVS. This report presents CVS's performance in 2018/19 to the end of February 2019.
- The report goes on to outline the key priorities for the 2019/20 SLA. Members are invited to comment on the performance to date and raise issues for consideration when finalising the upcoming year's SLA.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PERFORMANCE, AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: That:

(A)	the performance of Community Voluntary Services (CVS) for Broxbourne and East Herts, as it relates to East Herts only, is considered,
(B)	the Head of Housing be requested to explore, at the next SLA review meeting in April 2019, any issues raised by members,
(C)	the proposed priorities for the 2019/20 service level agreement (SLA) between the council and CVS are considered, and

(D)	the Head of Housing be requested to consider any issues raised when finalising the 2019/20 SLA.
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1.0 Background

1.1 Community Voluntary Services, CVS, for Broxbourne and East Herts is an organisation based in the district which provides a range of services to local voluntary groups, a number of which are funded by East Herts Council.

1.2 There is currently a three year funding settlement in place covering the council's 'base funding' provided to CVS. This 'base funding' primarily covers training and support for voluntary groups in the district. CVS receives separate funding streams from the council to support its work on promoting community transport and running the Dragon's Apprentice programme.

1.3 The three year 'base funding' settlement runs until 2019/20, with the funding being:

- 2017/18 = £15,225
- 2018/19 = £15,453
- 2019/20 = £15,685.

1.4 In return for this funding, the council puts in place a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with CVS which is annually reviewed and amended. The SLA is outcome-focused and is monitored by the council on a quarterly basis.

2.0 Report

2.1 This report presents to members of the Performance, Audit and Governance Scrutiny Committee CVS's performance to date against the 2018/19 SLA. While it is recognised that the final annual picture is not yet available, it was felt beneficial to report to members close to but before the financial year end so as to afford members the opportunity to give views about the coming year's SLA before it is finally agreed.

Performance against the 2018/19 SLA

2.2 Essential Reference Paper B gives CVS's performance to the end of February 2019.

2.3 The wide range of support and advice provided to groups in East Herts is evident and, indeed, even before the final year end position is known, it can be seen that a number of key targets have already been met. Of note:

- 18 different local groups have received face-to-face support regarding funding and governance issues against a target for 2018/19 of ten, with another eight receiving email/telephone support. The vast majority of groups supported are new to CVS, suggesting that year-on-year CVS is reaching out further into the local community rather than simply supporting an established cohort of groups
- the council requires that CVS hold a main, annual conference and an annual general meeting as well as other similar, though smaller events throughout the year. The council has set a target of at least 25 local groups participating in these events; so far this year 37 local groups have taken part
- the report shows that CVS continues to provide practical support for local groups in the form of meeting and storage space in Ware and Stanstead Abbots.

CVS's geographic reach within the district

2.4 The council also requires CVS to report on where the groups they support are based and/or operate in East Herts as the council is extremely keen to see the services it is funding having a benefit across the district. The council wished to see a wider geographic spread of beneficiaries in 2018/19 as compared with 2017/18 when this was first monitored. The tables below indicate CVS's geographic reach year-on-year.

Table 1: Location of groups receiving training from CVS

Area of operation	Number of groups	
	2017/18 - full year	2018/19 - 28.2.19 (11 months)
Hertford	5	3
Ware	4	4
Bishop's Stortford	9	2
Sawbridgeworth	-	-
Buntingford	1	1
Rural East Herts	-	1
All of East Herts	31	11
Total	50	22

Table 2: Location of groups receiving support regarding funding and governance

	Number of groups	
	2017/18 - full year	2018/19 - 28.2.19 (11 months)
Hertford	10	3
Ware	7	7
Bishop's Stortford	4	2
Sawbridgeworth	1	-
Buntingford	2	-
Rural East Herts	-	4
All of East Herts	4	7
Total	28	23

Table 3: Location of groups attending CVS events

	Number of groups	
	2017/18 - full year	2018/19 - 28.2.19 (11 months)
Hertford	4	5
Ware	11	2
Bishop's Stortford	4	5
Sawbridgeworth	5	1
Buntingford	2	1
Rural East Herts	5	3
All of East Herts	25	20
Total	53	37

The impact of CVS's work

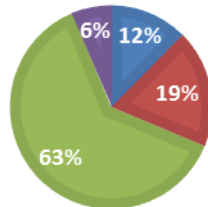
2.5 The SLA requires CVS to conduct an impact assessment among a sample of its clients each year to gain a more fine-grained picture of how its advice and support are benefitting local groups. The 2018/19 survey will commence shortly.

2.6 In 2017/18, CVS surveyed 34 of its 224 members. All those surveyed operate in East Herts. The full findings of the 2017/18 impact assessment survey are included as **Essential Reference Paper C**. Key findings include:

- when asked about 'how the previous 12 months had gone', almost two thirds (63%) of respondents said that if they hadn't worked with CVS they 'probably would not have done and achieved as much'

EXCLUDING GROUPS THAT SAID NOT RELEVANT

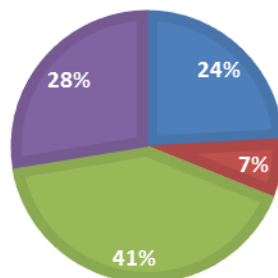
- If we hadn't worked with CVS, we probably would have done and achieved the same things over the last year
- If we hadn't worked with CVS, we probably would have done and achieved the same things over the last year but it would have been a bit more of a struggle
- If we hadn't worked with CVS, we probably would not have done and achieved as much
- If we hadn't worked with CVS, our organisation would probably have struggled to continue running



- of particular interest, when asked about the degree to which CVS had helped the group draw in funding, some 41% said they 'probably would not have got in as much money' with a further 28% reporting that without CVS's support they 'probably would not have got in any additional money at all'.

EXCLUDING GROUPS THAT SAID NOT RELEVANT

- If we hadn't worked with CVS, we probably would have got in the same amount of money
- If we hadn't worked with CVS, we probably would have got in the same amount of money but it would have been a bit more of a struggle
- If we hadn't worked with CVS, we probably would not have got in as much money
- If we hadn't worked with CVS, we probably would not have got in any additional money at all



2.7 The council has also asked CVS to develop an expertise in assessing the social return on investment. As part of this, CVS

assessed their work in Wareside. They were able to gathered detailed findings from 16 individuals who responded to pre- and post-activity surveys. Using the Housing Associations' Charitable Trust, HACT, Social Value Calculator methodology, it was found that improvements in the locality worth £108,000 were derived from just £8,000 investment. This social value improvement primarily resulted from:

- more things for young people to do
- a lower perception of crime / fear of crime in the community
- less problems with litter.

2.8 In order to roll out the benefits of this approach, CVS ran an Introduction to Social Value training session in February this year.

Focus for 2019/20 SLA

2.9 Each year, the SLA between the council and CVS evolves to reflect the council's emerging priorities and build on CVS's previous performance.

2.10 In 2019/20, it proposed that targets relating to the following areas will be included in the SLA:

- **building on previous issues**
 - holding training workshops
 - providing specific advice regarding (a) accessing funding and (b) robust governance arrangements
 - providing on-line information and support
 - delivering networking events
 - providing meeting and storage space
 - participating in partnership meetings across the district
 - surveying the impact of advice and support

- supporting groups operating in all five market towns and the district's rural areas
- **proposed new issues**
 - provision of support to groups operating in areas of the district with relatively higher level of deprivation, notably parts of Hertford, Ware and Bishop's Stortford, to dovetail with the council's priorities for community grant giving
 - a measure of efforts to reach more groups operating in Buntingford and Sawbridgeworth
 - a measure of the amount of inward investment to local groups CVS's support has yielded.

2.11 Members are invited to comment on these issues and raise any further issues that they would like the Head of Housing and Health to consider when finalising the coming year's SLA.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers - None

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