

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

Date: 13 July 2015

ITEM 7(b)

Title: Strategy for Working with the Community and Voluntary Sector

Portfolio(s): Cabinet Member for Community Engagement

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Carole Burdis

Report from Service

Area: Corporate Strategy

Responsible Officer: Jacqueline Laughton, Head of Corporate Strategy Tel: (0191) 643 5724

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to agree a Strategy and next steps for working with the Voluntary and Community Sector in North Tyneside.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (1) approve the Better Together Strategy as set out at Appendix 1; and
- (2) grant delegated authority to the Head of Corporate Strategy in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement to monitor the Strategy.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 12 June 2015.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following priorities in the 2014/18 Our North Tyneside Plan:

Our People – including helping to make North Tyneside a great place to live, work and visit by increasing volunteering and ways that residents can get involved in their local community.

Our Place – including supporting the regeneration of our communities and ensuring we are making the best possible use of the combined resources and assets that focus on meeting agreed outcomes for residents.

Our Economy – recognising the funding Community and Voluntary organisations bring into the borough and looking to increase shared outcomes by working more closely together.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in North Tyneside is dynamic and very diverse. It covers everything from Neighbourhood Watch groups, to faith groups, social enterprises and national/international charities and everything in between. It includes 485 organisations and groups, with a further 70 operating within North Tyneside but with bases outside of the Borough. In 2013/14 the Voluntary and Community Sector had an income of over £77m, ranging from one organisation with a turnover of £18.7m to 96 smaller organisations with a combined turnover of £332,281.

Many of the organisations and groups are run by volunteers and it is estimated that almost 50,000 of the adult population in North Tyneside are involved in some form of formal volunteering (27% of the total population). The sector is also a major employer with at least 2,315 people working for a VCS organisation in 2013/14.

1.5.2 A strategy has been developed with the purpose of:

- Building additional capacity;
- Improving liaison, involvement and engagement with the VCS; and
- Decision Making.

The strategy is called the Better Together Strategy. The Strategy identifies ways of combining resources, with a particular focus on identifying the best ways of maximising the benefits for residents as part of the Our North Tyneside Plan and Creating a Brighter Future programme.

1.5.3 This work will focus on a set of agreed principles:

Accessibility: Services will be accessible to people who want to use them. All partners will endeavour to ensure that their services meet the needs of their current and future customers.

Best use of resources: Avoiding duplication and identifying ways that maximise the impact, provide value for money and result in positive outcomes, including exploring innovative and novel approaches to established and emerging issues that proactively address the causes of problems.

Community cohesion: All partners will promote collaboration and bridge building between different groups and communities.

Equality: All partners will ensure that their customers, employees and volunteers are treated with dignity and respect, and (in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010) have an equal opportunity to access services and information; are not subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation; and can benefit from actions to enhance community cohesion.

Independence: The formal independence of both the statutory sector and the VCS is recognised and encouraged as a strength.

Openness, honesty and respect: All partners will treat one another with generosity of spirit, respect, openness, honesty and transparency and will work to build trust between organisations, whilst respecting the need for confidentiality.

Partnership: All partners have distinct but complementary roles in the development and delivery of public support. We will recognise differences and identify ways that by working together we can have a greater impact.

Social Value: All partners commit to the importance of social value as a way of maximising the impact of resources and money spent in the borough.

Volunteering: All partners recognise the value of volunteering as an important expression of citizenship and essential to civil renewal. Volunteering builds skills and experience, enhances employability and creates employment, promotes social inclusion and contributes to the building of community networks and participation; high levels of volunteering are therefore an indication of healthy and active communities.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet

Option 1

Cabinet agree to the recommendations set out in section 1.2 of this report.

Option 2

Cabinet ask for further work to take place.

Option 3

Cabinet decide that they do not want to have a strategy for the way the Authority and Community and Voluntary Sector will work together.

Option one is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option one is recommended for the following reasons:

This will bring a greater level of coordination and transparency to how the Community and Voluntary Sector and the Authority work together.

1.8 Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Better Together – the Council with the Voluntary and Community Sector in North Tyneside.

1.9 Contact officers:

Felicity Shoemith, Community and Voluntary Sector Liaison Manager, tel: (0191) 643 7071

Alison Campbell, Strategic Business Partner, tel: (0191) 643 7038

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- (1) http://www.voda.org.uk/cms/assets/State_of_the_Sector.pdf
- (2) <http://www.voda.org.uk/cms/representation-a-partnership/surviving-or-thriving-state-of-the-sector-in-the-north-east>

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

This strategy aims to make the best use of existing resources. If any of the projects identified within the action plan result in a need for additional Council resources a further report will be brought to Cabinet . The local capacity grant fund referenced in Appendix 1 of the report, which provides up to £200 per ward councillor, is funded from the budget for grants to voluntary organisations held within Corporate Strategy.

2.2 Legal

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

This strategy has been discussed with the Senior Leadership Team, at Lead Member Briefing and with the wider leadership team.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Information gathered from “working with the community and voluntary sector” sessions have been used in the development of this strategy. In addition work has been undertaken with VODA and members of the Chief Officers Forum, the Social Values working group, the Community and Voluntary Sector welfare reform working group and the Credit Union working group.

2.4 Human rights

There are no human rights implications within this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The principles set out in this strategy set out how the Council and Community and Voluntary Sector will work together. This includes being clear about our responsibilities around equality and diversity.

2.6 Risk management

There are no direct risks associated with this strategy. The action plan will result in individual projects which will all be subject to a risk assessment as part of any project plan

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no Crime and Disorder implications within this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no implications identified within this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive X
- Head(s) of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Head of Corporate Strategy X