

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting: 24 November 2016
Report of: Head of Corporate Strategy and Client Services
Title: Review of the Community and Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework 2013-2016

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 This report provides a summary of:

- Background information to the commissioning framework
- Oversight and governance arrangements
- Financial information
- Performance against the SLA, KPI's and headline results
- Understanding the social value and outcomes of the last commissioning framework investment

1.2 This report is to provide information and advise elected members on the performance of the Community and Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework during 2013-2016

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2.0 **Background information**

2.1 The Commissioning Framework is the council's mechanism that sets out the priorities for a range of leisure and community services which were delivered by commissioned voluntary and third sector organisations during 2013-2016 on behalf of WBC. The aim of the framework is to ensure a robust approach to commissioning the voluntary and community sector to deliver services in areas considered to be district council responsibility and based on evidence of current or emerging need(s) within Watford.

2.2 The services commissioned are:

Infrastructure support to the voluntary and community sector – delivered by

- Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) aka council for voluntary services
- Mobility scooter and wheel chair services – delivered by Watford Shopmobility
- Advice services – delivered by Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)
- Arts and culture services – delivered by Watford Palace Theatre (WPT)
- Small Grants Fund – administered by the WBC Client Services Team

The authority also provides a management grant to support the following council owned community centres across the borough:

- Holywell Community Centre – managed by W3RT
- Orbital Community Centre – managed by YMCA
- Leavesden Green Community Centre – managed by Watford Community Housing Trust (WCHT)
- Meriden Community Centre – managed by Watford Football Club Sports and Education Trust (WFC Trust)
- West Watford Community Association (WWCA)
- Centrepont Community Centre – currently managed in-house by WBC

2.3 The council has a long standing and positive working relationship with the local voluntary and third sector organisations and it deploys a significant proportion of its budget to support a number of them in a variety of ways. The council has invested £2,891,347 over the three year period of the second commissioning framework 2013-2016 (Appendix 1 – 3 year budget profile 2013-2016). The new commissioning framework commenced 1 April 2016 and will end 31 March 2019.

3.0 **Oversight and governance arrangements**

3.1 The quality of services commissioned by the council are monitored by the Corporate, Leisure and Community Client Services Team on a regular basis and should the services be considered below the quality expected or the need for the service reduced then the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the organisations commissioned will enable the council to de-commission or reduce funding as appropriate.

3.2 As part of the new oversight and governance arrangements going forward a joint 'Risk Register' between the borough council and the different commissioned organisations has been developed and will be monitored and reviewed on a 6 monthly basis.

3.3 A rolling programme of reports and presentations to Portfolio Holders and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is being agreed to ensure that elected members and leadership team are kept informed and updated regarding the progress and the performance of the new commissioning framework.

4.0 **Financial information**

4.1 The funding for the commissioning framework is met through existing resources. The current budget envelope for 2016/2017 is £980,270 and is a stand still budget and opportunities for efficiencies will be identified by the commissioned organisations going forward. Appendix 1 details the three year funding provided to the different organisations during 2013-2016. The budget for the commissioning framework is subject to the council's annual budget setting process and any requirements to make savings or provide growth will be dealt with as part of this process.

5.0 **Performance against the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and Key Performance Indicators (KPI)**

5.1 Each of the commissioned organisations has a SLA and bespoke service specification which details the KPI's and additional information required by the council e.g. information relating to equalities of service users. Appendix 2 details the performance of the individual organisation against their SLA and KPI's during the period 2013-2016.

5.2 **Headline results during 2013-2016**

- CAB – economic value of volunteers = £775,470 & 16,535 contacts with service users
- Watford Palace Theatre total attendance = 574,981
- Shopmobility users = 7,693
- W3RT has 398 members from the voluntary and community sector
- Holywell Community Centre total attendance 82,978
- Orbital Community Centre total attendance 112,502
- *Leavesden Green Community Centre total attendance 17,427
(** not all usage figures recorded correctly during year 1& 2*)
- West Watford Community Association total attendance 25,374
- Meriden Community Centre total attendance 49,766
- Centrepont Community Centre total attendance 14,471
 - **Total attendance across the community centre network 302,518**

6.0 **Workforce of the commissioned organisations**

6.1 An analysis of the commissioned organisations workforce detailed in Appendix 3 identified that 206 people are employed across the nine organisations. The information from the organisations also identifies that 266 volunteers have been recruited and are delivering key frontline services. The CAB and other organisations estimate that the in-kind economic value of volunteers is estimated at £326,427 pa (Appendix 4) and 84 Trustees are on the different management committees.

- 6.2 The addition of the major contracts employees (388, SLM/Everyone Active: who operate the leisure centres and 89 HQ Theatres: who operate Watford Colosseum) takes the total workforce being employees through WBC contracts and the commissioning framework to 1033 people.

These areas directly contribute to the new council corporate priorities:

2. Champion smart growth and economic prosperity

3. Provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities

6.3 **Clubs and activity programmes across the Commissioning Framework**

The facilities provide an important social meeting point which adds to the overall health and wellbeing of the community. Appendix 5 (sports club database) details the 148 different activities and clubs which use the buildings and include informal adult education, sports, music and session for older adults.

6.4 **Understanding the social value and outcomes of the Commissioning Framework investment**

The voluntary organisations, community centres and the Watford Palace Theatre provide a network of venues across the borough which plays host to a number of sports clubs; activity programmes and provides advice and support to local residents.

- 6.5 During the period 2013-2016 the council has invested almost £3 million pounds of revenue funding to the community and voluntary sector organisations as part of the commissioning framework. The challenge for all local authorities is the ability to understand and measure the return on investment and enhanced social value that sustained funding for the voluntary and third sector can have in terms of a positive impact on the long term community wellbeing of local residents.

6.6 **Next steps is measuring the long term outcomes of the Commissioning Framework**

The council is currently working with UK-Active (a not-for-profit body comprised of members and partners from across the UK active lifestyle sector, their vision to get more people, more active, more often) to develop a study brief to research and understand the impact and outcomes of the commissioning framework investment.

The different themes will cover the following areas:

- Leisure centre management contract – operated by Everyone Active (2 leisure centres and a athletics stadium)
- Theatres – the Council supports 2 facilities in the Town. Watford Colosseum through a contract and Watford Palace Theatre through a grant as part of the Commissioning Framework
- 6 community centres across the borough
- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Council for Voluntary Services (W3RT)
- In-house Sports Development activities
- The Social Value of commissioning and contracting

7.0 **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - 3 Year budget profile of commissioning framework 2013-2016

Appendix 2 – Individual KPI's of commissioned organisations

Appendix 3 – Overview of workforce of commissioned organisations

Appendix 4 – CAB economic value of volunteers

Appendix 5 – Sports club/user group database of commissioned organisations