



**WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

**Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework  
Review 2016-2019**

## Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019

### Introduction

This report encompasses the highlights from the commissioned organisations during the period 2016-2019.

### Performance Monitoring

From a contract monitoring perspective the council are looking at consistent delivery of a high-quality, value-for-money services to our community. This is achieved by working closely with our partners so they can deliver the KPI's set out in the Service Level Agreement and bespoke service specification.

The frequency of partnership meetings are on a quarterly basis and an end of year review, with additional meetings where required.

### Organisations

Watford Council funded four Voluntary Sector organisations and four Community Centres;

<b>Voluntary Sector Organisations</b>	<b>2016-2019</b>
Watford Palace Theatre (WPT)	£870,690
Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	£731,076
Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT)	£237,519
Shopmobility	£109,377
<b>Community Centres</b>	
Holywell Community Centre	£230,040
West Watford Community Association	£103,005
Orbital Community Centre	£218,895
Meriden Community Centre	£216,477
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,717,079</b>

## Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019

### VOLUNTARY SECTOR

#### WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (CAB)

CAB is located in the Advice Centre next to St Marys Church and aims to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and improve policies and practices that affect people's lives. The organisation provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities.

Watford CAB's business model relies heavily on volunteers and the 'in-kind' economic market value of work carried out by the volunteers during this period is as follows;

2016-2017 - £468,919	2017-2018 - £530,268	2018-2019 - £484,041	<b>Total £1,483,228</b>
----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	-------------------------

#### Outcomes set in the Service Specification;

1. Appropriate mechanisms in place to provide a culturally sensitive service at both the main bureau and outreach locations
2. Ensure that service delivery is sensitive to the needs of disabled users
3. Service users receive support and advice in an appropriate and timely manner
4. Users have a better understanding, knowledge and ability to access the appropriate advice

The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period

		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
<u>1</u>	Total throughput – in person and by telephone	4,275	4832	4373
<u>2</u>	Total full advice appointments	1857	1933	2001
<u>3</u>	Total turnaways	1149	1180	1193
<u>4</u>	Number of unique telephone calls unanswered	1644	1960	2230
<u>5</u>	Total no of food vouchers given	315	433	578

\*Please note 'turnaways' do not mean that the client was not seen, this reflects the number of people who were unable to be seen the same day and either returned following day, telephoned or in some cases the information has been available on line

\*\*Calls unanswered has been a concern however an arrangement is now in place with Adviceline partners (10 local Citizens Advice services in Hertfordshire and Citizens Advice Head Office) whereby unanswered calls can bounce to another office, which enables an increase in the number of Watford residents able to get assistance.

## Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019

### The top 4 issues dealt with by the CAB were;

Benefits	Debt	Housing	Employment
----------	------	---------	------------

### The challenges faced by Watford CAB

Funding	Homelessness and debt	Increased demand	Employment	Shortage of space at the Advice Centre to accommodate a growing number of volunteers
---------	-----------------------	------------------	------------	--

### Opportunities and areas of development

Improved Advice line	More volunteers	Greater 'co-working' with partners	Broad range of non-core activities such as pension advice, consumer advice etc
----------------------	-----------------	------------------------------------	--

### Key Projects

#### Employability Skills Project

To engage young people who are not in education or training in volunteering activities, to help them develop skills and experience.

Provide opportunities for young people to grow in confidence and skills to succeed and thrive in the workplace	Provide practical support and assistance to young people in accessing employment.
--	---

#### Homelessness Intervention Project

A specialist service for rough sleepers being provided in partnership with CGL Spectrum, Citizens Advice, Herts Young Homeless and New Hope.

The aim of the project is to prevent rough sleeping and homelessness. The team provides legal and financial advice, drug and alcohol misuse support, mental ill health prevention and wrap around housing support
---

**Achieved:** The project workers engaged with 363 rough sleepers during 2018/19

**Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**

**Disability Benefits Advice Project**

Ongoing - Funding: £10,500 from Hertfordshire Community Foundation / Rowlandson Trust

This project helps clients to access:

Disability benefits form filling support	General welfare benefit and tax credit checks	Appeals, requests for revision and mandatory reconsideration requests
--	---	---

**Achieved:** Helped 119 clients with disability benefit related issues last year and raised £394K of income on behalf of these clients.

**Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**  
**WATFORD PALACE THEATRE (WPT)**

Watford Palace Theatre commissions and produces plays from a range of new and established writers. The theatre is also funded as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) by Arts Council England.

Throughout the year WPT have continued their ‘mission’ to be a centre of excellence: creating and providing great stories that entertain, provoke and inspire, on stage and in our streets.’

**Outcomes set in the Service Specification;**

1. Retained participation of wide range of current engaged users in theatre and arts activities at the Palace Theatre and community venues
2. Maintained and increased participation of non-engaged users in theatre and arts activities at the Palace Theatre and community venues
3. Arts and culture partners work collaboratively to strengthen the arts and culture offer in Watford
4. The commissioned organisation becomes more sustainable and demonstrates robustness and future resilience

**The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period;**

		<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b><u>1</u></b>	Total reach	448,777	192,060	129,253
<b><u>2</u></b>	Total attendance	87,658	93,335	80,851
<b><u>3</u></b>	Total engagements (Participant Sessions)	11,724	9,702	9,438
<b><u>4</u></b>	Number of participatory sessions (PT) – community hires and workshops	650	702	812
<b><u>5</u></b>	Number of Watford residents	47,157	49,030	70,208
<b><u>6</u></b>	Total no of participants in outreach activities	12,002	10,009	10,497

The reason for the high reach in 2016-2017 was due to WPT being involved in the ‘Big Events’ programme, Imagine Watford, The Big Beach, The Big Screen, The Big Sports Day, Diwali on the Parade, and The Big Skate to name a few. Some of these events did not continue beyond this date, subsequently leading to a decline in total reach.

There was also a reduction in youth theatre classes and the expiry of some contractual relationships with touring companies which came to an end simultaneously, having a negative impact on the overall audience reach. WPT are in the process of negotiating new contractual arrangements with independent producers, which will contribute to an increase in audience reach in the forthcoming months/years.

### **Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**

2018 was a celebratory year for Watford Palace Theatre as they turned 110 years old. An autumn production was an all-female MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING set during the battle of Britain. As WPT's 110th anniversary production, WPT invited audiences for a special birthday performance. The audience was invited to attend in 1940s period costumes, join in with swing dancers and partake in Much ADO themed 'Beatrice' and 'Benedick' cocktails. The Front of House and Café areas were dressed for the duration of the run to reflect wartime Britain, complete with sandbags, bunting and a Home Guard recruitment stall.

#### **WPT Strategic objectives:**

1. Strive for Excellence – increase the quality, impact and diversity of work produced
2. Think Local and be Diverse – develop work for local audiences and further diversify the audience and participant demographic
3. Be financially resourceful, resilient, sustainable and entrepreneurial - Significantly increase and diversify contributed and earned income for long term organisational resilience
4. Participate & Take Part Be collaborative and creative in the promotion and audience development - Develop a stronger relationship with the community to promote and provide opportunities to participate

**Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**  
**SHOPMOBILITY WATFORD**

Shopmobility Watford is a national scheme which loans manual and battery powered wheelchairs and scooters to anyone with a mobility problem. This service is free of charge and has been since it started in 1993. There are many case studies expressing the need for this service and how it has become a life line for many users allowing them the freedom to get around the town and socialise.

**Outcomes set in the Service Specification;**

1. Increased participation by people with physical mobility problems to access services in Watford town centre
2. Increased participation by Watford residents
3. To become more sustainable and demonstrate robustness and future resilience

**The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period**

		<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b><u>1</u></b>	Total throughput	6,306	5,925	9,916
<b><u>2</u></b>	% Number of Watford Borough residents	42.2%	51%	53%
<b><u>3</u></b>	Total no of volunteers	46	40	35
<b><u>4</u></b>	Total no of volunteers who are service users	18	13	15
<b><u>5</u></b>	New users / Registrations	409	435	544

The decrease in numbers during 2017/2018 has been as a result of the Town Centre works which impacted on the footfall as customers were saying that it was difficult to get around and it was easier to shop elsewhere until the works are complete. This was raised with Watford BID.

Shopmobility were pleased to receive a donation of £5000 for a second year from Watford BID. Thanks to fundraising, Small Grants Fund, donations and the sale of equipment, they have been able to improve the fleet. This includes a large selection of wheelchairs and battery powered scooters.

Shopmobility also offer a Long Term Loan Scheme for lightweight manual wheelchairs for Adults and children.

2018/2019 increase was due to KPI 1 being updated to include:- *if the same person attends twice in one week, they should be counted as 2 visits, not just 1.*

At a recent AGM it was mentioned that moving forward, focus would be on Sustainability and Marketing. They expressed that whilst the service is free of charge and recognising that around 50% are non-watford users, this is still bringing money to our town. They acknowledge that they need to find additional ways to raise funds or they will find themselves in financial difficulty longer term. I am working closely with the team at Shopmobility and the council will help/advise them as best we can.

**Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**  
**WATFORD & THREE RIVERS TRUST (W3RT)**

Watford and Three Rivers Trust deliver a wide range of services and work with local authorities, public service providers, businesses, community groups and individuals so that everyone can make a contribution to improving their community. W3RT provided support to groups on areas such as business planning, reviewing applications, providing model documents, helping with registrations. They also deliver more complex projects including integrated training for staff and trustees, facilitating meetings and strategic planning.

W3RT was formed in 2012 from Watford Council for Voluntary Service (CVS), which has been serving the community since 1973 and they are based in Holywell Community Centre.

**Outcomes set in the Service Specification;**

1. Voluntary and community sector organisations are better equipped to run their organisations and build resilience and sustainability
2. The voluntary and community sector interests and concerns are represented to achieve a better outcome

**The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period**

		<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b><u>1.</u></b>	Number of CVS member organisations	421	504	549
<b><u>2.</u></b>	Organisations receive business planning advice	72	42	93
<b><u>3.</u></b>	Organisations receive support on fundraising	53	113	396
<b><u>4.</u></b>	Successful fundraising applications	4	8	3

It was decided towards the end of this commissioning framework that all KPI's would be reviewed, in the case of W3RT these KPI's did not reflect the actual work that was being undertaken by W3RT. As part of a renewed focus, WBC and Watford CVS have established a "liaison group" to meet regularly through the year and discuss needs, priorities, partnership working. This is led by Bob Jones, Chief Executive Officer and the new CVS Lead, Emily Douse.

CVS were working with several websites, Bob wanted this streamlined and a new website has been created [www.w3rt.org](http://www.w3rt.org)

Memberships were also reviewed and a new structure implemented August 2019.

A successful Lottery Bid on the Loneliness project which is a 3 year programme has started and includes 2 staff members. It links together existing work for older and isolated people. Website <https://www.mywellbeing.community/>

Love Radio continues with many podcasts recorded and these have been put into themed headings. E.g. Arts, Charities & Older people. Website <http://lovewatfordradio.org/>

## Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019

### COMMUNITY CENTRES

#### HOLYWELL COMMUNITY CENTRE (HCC)

Holywell Community Centre hosts a wide range of community activities and events and is set in King George V Park on Chaffinch Lane. HCC is an important venue for the local community, it is situated in the Holywell and falls under the Holywell Ward.

#### **Outcomes set in the Service Specification;**

1. A thriving and vibrant community centre that serves the needs of the local community and contributes to improved health and wellbeing.
2. Increased number of local community using the community centre.
3. Local residents, community organisations, businesses and councillors feel involved and participate actively in the development of the community centre.
4. The community centre becomes more sustainable and demonstrates robustness and future resilience.

**The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period**

		<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b><u>1</u></b>	Total attendance	36,381	34,787	37,993
<b><u>2</u></b>	No of local residents	53% based on responses	276	148
<b><u>3</u></b>	No of Watford residents	87% based on responses	142	317
<b><u>4</u></b>	No of 'open' community hires	1,212	1399	1,765
<b><u>5</u></b>	No of 'closed' private hires	128	103	120

2017-2018 had some poor weather conditions and as a result sessions had to be cancelled affecting the total attendance figures.

There has been a strong focus on community activity. HCC are committed to hosting high quality programmes to engage with the local community and Watford residents as a whole. Regular community programmes include a children's breakfast and after school club, health and wellbeing programmes for older people, a youth club, children's theatre group, Karate, female only fitness, self-defence classes, Scouts group, Indoor Bowls, Pilates, men's fitness, plus many more.

## Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019

HCC ensure they provide a varied programme that suit all age groups as listed below;

Early Years (0 to 4 years)	Children (5 to 10 years)	Young People (11 to 18 years)	Adults (19 to 49 years)	Older people (50 years+)
----------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------

### Survey

A total of 221 users completed a health and wellbeing survey. As a result of taking part in activities at the Holywell Community Centre, responses were as follows:

- a) 88% of respondents agreed that their health and wellbeing had improved
- b) 89% of respondents agreed that they have been getting out more
- c) 95% of respondents agreed that they have been meeting new people
- d) 89% of respondents agreed that they have been feeling closer to other people
- e) 91% of respondents agreed that they were feeling more positive
- f) 88% of respondents agreed that they were feeling more confident
- g) 82% of respondents agreed that they were dealing with the problems better
- h) 80% of respondents agreed that they have a better understanding of what help is available locally

### Marketing

The community venues website provides information on both Holywell Community Centre and the Barn. [www.communityvenues.org](http://www.communityvenues.org)

A what's on guide booklet is also distributed and regular updates are put on social media, along with promoting the venue on sites such as Halls for hire.

## Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019

### ORBITAL COMMUNITY CENTRE (OCC)

Orbital Community Centre is a vibrant community centre with a mission to provide affordable, inclusive services to the community. OCC is in Woodside Ward and is managed by One YMCA.

#### Outcomes set in the Service Specification;

1. A thriving and vibrant community centre that serves the needs of the local community and contributes to improved health and wellbeing.
2. Increased number of local community using the community centre.
3. Local residents, community organisations, businesses and councillors feel involved and participate actively in the development of the community centre.
4. The community centre becomes more sustainable and demonstrates robustness and future resilience.

The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period

		<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b><u>1</u></b>	Total attendance	44,897	42,597	54,919
<b><u>2</u></b>	No of local residents	34,384	26,264	34,095
<b><u>3</u></b>	No of Watford residents	5,784	3,979	8,497
<b><u>4</u></b>	No of 'open' community hires	2,428	2,602	2,796
<b><u>5</u></b>	No of 'closed' private hires	98	159	164

There was a slight dip during 2017-2018 due to the loss of the Music Gym. This has now been picked up during 2018-2019, with increased attendance and additional sessions.

YMCA has gone through a considerable re-structure and expansion within the mid and senior management teams. A large element of this has been within the Operations and Enterprise fields. The core drivers being to boost and increase operational performance, community engagement and service awareness even further within the local communities.

The management changes have brought additional strategic expertise into the organisation from the Not for Profit and Commercial leisure and community sectors. This has seen the addition of a new Executive Director of Operations and Head of Enterprise who has a confident and committed approach to the ongoing development and growth of user groups and individual user engagement within the Orbital Community Centre.

Marketing & Communications resource is pivotal in OCC rapidly and effectively addressing the local-focus need and will be done through a variety of traditional, multi-media and digital platforms.

**Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**  
**WEST WATFORD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION (WWCA)**

West Watford Community Association is situated in the heart of West Watford. WWCA works towards meeting the needs of the diverse local community and host a range of community activities . WWCA falls under the Vicarage Ward.

**Outcomes set in the Service Specification;**

1. Provide a balanced range of educational, recreational and sports activities that meet the needs of the local community based on local demographic information and/or evidenced need.
2. A thriving and vibrant community centre that serves the needs of the local community and contributes to improved health and wellbeing.
3. Increased number of local residents using the community centre.
4. The community centre becomes more sustainable and demonstrates robustness and future resilience

**The following table shows the Key Performance Indicator's and totals for this period**

		<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b><u>1</u></b>	Total attendance	10,624	10,784	10,220
<b><u>2</u></b>	No of local residents	1882	1,864	1,522
<b><u>3</u></b>	No of Watford residents	251	302	333
<b><u>4</u></b>	No of 'open' community hires	698	783	805
<b><u>5</u></b>	No of 'closed' private hires	41	45	38

The Centre Manager was pleased that two additional part time staff were recruited during this period, which has allowed the centre to expand its programme and achieve so much more for the benefit of the local community.

Many new sessions have been introduced, from Languages to Cookery, Art and Computing.

WWCA has a number of dedicated Volunteers and the 'in-kind' economic market value of work carried out by the volunteers for the last two years are as follows;

- 2017-2018 - £ £8,625
- 2018-2019 - £10,755

There has been some building issues with bowed doors and rotten woodwork. The council are working closely with WWCA to resolve these.

**Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**  
**MERIDEN COMMUNITY CENTRE (MCC)**

Meriden Community Centre hosted a multitude of activities and events to suit all ages and abilities. MCC is in Meriden Ward and is run by Watford Football Club Trust.

**Outcomes set in the Service Specification:**

1. A thriving and vibrant community centre that serves the needs of the local community and contributes to improved health and wellbeing.
2. Increased number of local community using the community centre.
3. Local residents, community organisations, businesses and councillors feel involved and participate actively in the development of the community centre.
4. The community centre becomes more sustainable and demonstrates robustness and future resilience.

**The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period**

		<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
<b><u>1</u></b>	Total attendance	18,627	39,448	45,502
<b><u>2</u></b>	No of local residents	859	3,335	4608
<b><u>3</u></b>	No of Watford residents	478	1,600	2067
<b><u>4</u></b>	No of 'open' community hires	927	2,134	2638
<b><u>5</u></b>	No of 'closed' private hires	6	46	21

Since the refurbishment MCC have gone from strength to strength, increasing footfall and providing a varied programme for users. New sessions have been included in the programme such as Girls only football which since it started it has gone from 6 per week to 19 per week and premier league kicks Boxing sessions for children aged 13-19 and a mental health programme for men.

The centre is thriving and currently has over 2,200 members. The year ended with 117 Gym Members.

**Marketing**

Had a host of new publicity flyers produced which are being distributed to local schools and community centres. Copies also shared with Watford Community Housing so they can be displayed on their boards in the flats. MCC continue to use Facebook to share activities and e mailing all members to update them on sessions.

**Issues**

A few incidents have been reported drug taking, break ins, in the car park and car windows being smashed. Anti-social behaviour was reported to the police and they have increased their presence around the centre. As a result of this, the issue of drug using/dealing seems to have moved on, however this is an area that they are keeping a close eye on.

## **Voluntary Sector Commissioning Framework Three Year Review - 2016-2019**

### **Conclusion**

The council recognises that the voluntary and community sector has an important role in providing services within the borough which provide many positive benefits for those who live, work and visit Watford.

The services offered by our Community Centre and Voluntary organisations links with the councils vision, values and priorities, they provide for our vulnerable and disadvantaged communities, understanding their needs and catering for them with a varied programme of activities to suit all abilities.

As a commissioning organisation it is important that the council is able to measure the expected outcomes and evaluate trends in service delivery.

It was decided that a review was to take place at the end of this commissioning framework and amend any KPI's which would be flexible to adapt to future service demands.

Financial support for the framework will be subject to the availability of funding during that period as set out in the council's annual budget setting process.