



**WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL**

Commissioning Framework Year 1 Review 2019-2020

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Commissioning Framework Year 1 Review – 2019-2020

Introduction

This report encompasses the highlights from the commissioned organisations during the first year of a four year commissioning framework agreement, covering the period 2019-2020.

Performance Monitoring

From a contract monitoring perspective the council are looking at consistent delivery of 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 Service Specification.

The frequency of partnership meetings are on a quarterly basis and an end of year review. Additional meetings take place when required.

Organisations

During this period Watford Borough Council funded Five Voluntary Sector organisations and four Community Centres;

Voluntary Sector Organisations	2019-2020	
	Management Grant	Accommodation & Lease Grant
Watford Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	£204,190	£39,500
Watford Palace Theatre (WPT)	£244,844	£0
Shopmobility	£36,459	£0
Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT)	£79,173	£0
Watford Pump House Theatre (WPHT)	£12,886	£0
Community Centres		
Holywell Community Centre	£76,680	£21,000
Orbital Community Centre	£72,965	£25,000
West Watford Community Association	£23,415	£4,300
Meriden Community Centre	£72,159	£19,750
TOTAL	£822,771	£109,550

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VOLUNTARY SECTOR

WATFORD CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (CAB)

CAB is located next to St Marys Church and aims to provide 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.

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

		2019-2020
<u>1</u>	Total throughput – in person and by telephone	5,158
<u>2</u>	Total full advice appointments	1,804
<u>3</u>	Total turnaways	820
<u>4</u>	Number of unique telephone calls unanswered	2,676
<u>5</u>	Total no of food vouchers given	368

*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 was addressed as a concern and the council have been informed that an arrangement is in place with Adviceline partners (10 local Citizens Advice services in Hertfordshire and Citizens Advice Head Office) whereby unanswered calls can bounce to the next available bureau.

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 was £541,786.

The top 3 issues dealt with by the CAB were;

Benefits	Debt	Housing
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The following are some key projects managed by the team;

1. Disability Benefits Advice Project

Provided support, advice and assistance to clients claiming disability benefits on areas such as Employment Support Allowance, Personal Independence Payment and Disability Living Allowance. They also advise clients claiming Universal Credit who have limited capability for work.

The project also enabled specialist training in disability benefits to a number of volunteers.

Achieved: The project managed over 400 cases during the year and raised £394K of income on behalf of these clients.

2. Homelessness Intervention Project

The Rough Sleepers Intervention Team incorporates specialist services for rough sleepers, being provided in partnership with CGL Spectrum, Citizens Advice Watford, Herts Young Homeless and New Hope. This project aims to prevent rough sleeping and end homelessness.

The Intervention Team provides legal and financial advice, drug and alcohol misuse support, mental ill-health prevention and wrap around housing support. The team provide generalist advice and information across a range of issues including legal, homelessness, housing, benefits check, grants application, employment, family, immigration, form filling for all issues, benefit appeals, income maximisation, debt management, and referral for free advice from local family solicitors.

Achieved: This project managed 572 appointments

3. Universal Support Help to Claim

The Help to Claim Service at Citizens Advice Watford is funded by DWP. The majority of people need help in making their initial claim which is done either by phone, face-to-face, and online through webchat. CAB provide support, advice and assistance to assess eligibility for the benefit and its appropriateness to the client's circumstances.

Achieved: This project helped 486 clients

Major challenges for Watford CAB

1. Volunteer Recruitment
2. Financial Issues
3. Premises

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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;

		<u>2019-2020</u>
<u>1</u>	Total reach	100,269
<u>2</u>	Total attendance	75,732
<u>3</u>	Total engagements (Participant Sessions)	10,997
<u>4</u>	Number of participatory sessions (PT) – community hires and workshops	613
<u>5</u>	Number of Watford residents	42,051
<u>6</u>	Total no of participants in outreach activities	9,030

WPT have been working hard to develop strong partnership relationships with local businesses.

Working with Orbital Community Centre to deliver free drama sessions once a week.

An application was successful for additional funding from the Royal Opera House Bridge to further develop the Digital Resources Pack. *(this is the next iteration of the Watford Young Filmmakers Festival which is now aimed at a wider age range of young people and county wide to reflect the year of culture).*

The Producing and Marketing team launched a new digital programme Palace@home. Palace Youth Theatre sessions and Community Choir can be done virtually using Zoom.

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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

		<u>2019-2020</u>
<u>1</u>	Total throughput	11,526
<u>2</u>	% Number of Watford Borough residents	5,870
<u>3</u>	Total no of volunteers	31
<u>4</u>	Total no of volunteers who are service users	19
<u>5</u>	New users / Registrations	556

Shopmobility were pleased to receive a donation of £5000 from Watford BID. As a result they have been able to increase and service the fleet ensuring all equipment is in good working order.

As the service has always been free of charge and with challenging times and costs continuing to increase it has been acknowledged that they need to find additional ways to raise funds or they may find themselves in financial difficulty longer term, as a result they recruited a new office manager, who is focused on fundraising, giving talks at events, submitting funding applications and looking at ways to cut costs.

A recent analysis of the statistics showed:

- 50% of users are non-watford residents
- 100% of users had a disability
- 68% Female / 32% male usage
- 84% of users during this period where white British/white other background

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SURVEY RESULTS

- 97% of people said the service was Excellent – *feedback was helpful and polite staff, offered blankets and shopping bags to help users*
- 37% of people had access to the internet – *this will form part of a marketing plan to reach out to those without access to social media*
- 33% use the service weekly – *rely on service from a social perspective and having the ability to get around the town*
- 37% use the service more than once a week – *rely heavily on the service so they have more social interaction*
- 87% found the service easy to access – negative comments were *difficulty parking and poor signage*

The business model relies heavily on volunteers and the market value of work carried out by volunteers during this period was £92,360.

The team had many celebrations during 2019-2020 with 5 volunteers receiving 5, 10, 15 & 20 year awards for supporting Shopmobility.

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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 provide support to groups on areas such as business planning, accommodation, reviewing applications, digital support, helping with charity registrations. They also deliver more complex projects including integrated training for staff and trustees, facilitating meetings and strategic planning.

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

In 2019 we updated the KPI's as it was felt the ones we had did not reflect the actual level of performance from W3RT, therefore in order to get a better picture of the varied workload and officer time, we used a new template as below.

This is broken down into 3 areas:

- Light Touch Support – (0-3 hours)
- Medium Touch Support – (4+ hours)
- Bespoke Support – (A day+)

The results for 2019/2020 are as follows:

Performance Measures	Total 2019-2020
1. Number of charitable organisations in Watford	398
2. Watford Number of CVS members	15
3. Emerging groups	37
4. Light touch support (One off, Less than 3 hours)	245
5. Light touch support hours	306
6. Light touch query types	
a) Funding	62
b) Volunteers	17

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c) Accommodation	6
d) Partnership working/Increased Visibility	38
e) Maintaining/expanding service delivery	2
f) Developing Skills/training	11
g) Digital capabilities	4
h) Governance/Quality Assurance	15
i) Business models / Strategic planning	21
j) Other (inc. Signposting, policies, accounting, impact, PAYE, recruitment)	141
7. Medium touch support (4+ hours)	57
8. Medium touch support hours	165
9. Medium touch query types	
a) Funding	5
b) Volunteers	4
c) Accommodation	4
d) Partnership working/Increased Visibility	15
e) Maintaining/expanding service delivery	1
f) Developing Skills/training	14
g) Digital capabilities	0
h) Governance/Quality Assurance	11
i) Business models / Strategic planning	10
j) Other	11
10. Bespoke support (Intense Contractual Agreement/possible use of consultants)	33
11. Bespoke support hours	771.5
12. Bespoke query types	

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a) Funding	6
b) Volunteers	1
c) Accommodation	2
d) Partnership working/Increased Visibility	7
e) Maintaining/expanding service delivery	2
f) Developing Skills/training	8
g) Digital capabilities	
h) Governance/Quality Assurance	8
i) Business models / Strategic planning	2
J) Other n(inc. accounting, policies, setting up, agreements, accounting)	9

As part of a renewed focus, WBC and Watford CVS established a “liaison group” to meet regularly through the year to discuss needs, priorities, partnership working and any current and emerging concerns.

Attendees include;

- Contract & Partnership Manager & Head of Leisure & Environmental Services - WBC
- Councillor Tim Williams & Councillor Karen Collett
- Chief Executive Officer & CVS Lead - W3RT
- Peter Wright – W3RT Trustee

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Watford Pump House Theatre (WPHT)

The Pump House Theatre & Arts Centre used to be the old pumping station supplying water to the Watford area. In the early 1970s the building was converted to provide a theatre auditorium which seats 124 guests and rehearsal space.

Outcomes set in the Service Specification;

1. The Pump House Theatre be commissioned to deliver arts and culture services through a range of theatre activities/programmes.
2. The Pump House Theatre plays a key role in supporting and providing community and grassroots arts and cultural opportunities for local residents and Watford communities.

The following table shows the Key Performance Indicators for this period

		2019-2020
<u>1.</u>	Total throughput	20,910
<u>2.</u>	Total number of Watford residents attending	705
<u>3.</u>	Total number of bookings/events	976
<u>4.</u>	Number of user groups – arts classes and young people / dance groups	138

WPHT worked in partnership with a number of organisations such as Cathartic, Watford Palace Theatre; Watford Museum; Community CIC; Rifco, Actors Café, Watford Writers, BBO Project; Kate Flatt; Electric Umbrella and many more.

A proud achievement was Watford Speech and Drama Festival which had over 939 participants. 90% of participants were from British Asian Families and the festival has been booked again this year.

A disabled toilet was installed which provides generous space for wheelchair /mobility scooter users.

Many great performances were held throughout the year such as Oliver Twist, Little Mermaid, Annie and the The little shop of horrors to name a few. They had over 1100 volunteers throughout the year doing a variety of tasks.

Marketing for WPHT is done via Brochures, Social Media including You Tube; Face Book Instagram and Twitter, networking, direct mailing and word of Mouth.

WPHT are working towards increasing the number of diverse groups using the centre, diversifying their board members and ensuring staff have had equalities training

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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

		2019-2020
<u>1</u>	Total attendance	38,613
<u>2</u>	No of local residents	378
<u>3</u>	No of Watford residents	697
<u>4</u>	No of 'open' community hires	1,598
<u>5</u>	No of 'closed' private hires	126

There is 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, theatre group, men's fitness, plus many more. HCC ensure they have a varied programme that will suit all age groups and abilities.

Health & Wellbeing

Health and Wellbeing remains W3RT's key priority and this informs programme development for the Centre. They work with a range of partners to deliver community health and wellbeing events, activities and services at the Centre including;

- a) Fitness and exercise - Delivered 142 sessions that successfully engaged 1250 people.
- b) Inspire All - Hosted a children's Christmas party in partnership with Inspire All. The purpose of the event was to raise the profile of the local family centre and the range of services on offer. The event successfully engaged 98 children and their parents/guardians.

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- c) National Childbirth Trust (NCT) - NCT delivered antenatal and breastfeeding classes at the Centre for a month and 11 people per session
- d) DSPL – Delivered quarterly training sessions focusing on raising awareness of Autism. Each session was attended by an average of 20 people.
- e) Hertfordshire County Council – Children’s services - Children’s services continue to host group family conferences to support local families in needs. On average they utilise the Centre to support three local families per month.

Survey

A total of 429 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) 91% of respondents agreed that their health and wellbeing had improved
- b) 88% of respondents agreed that they have been getting out more
- c) 88% of respondents agreed that they had been meeting new people
- d) 89% of respondents agreed that they had been feeling closer to other people
- e) 82% of respondents agreed that they were feeling more positive
- f) 84% of respondents agreed that they were feeling more confident
- g) 82% of respondents agreed that they were dealing with the problems better
- h) 84% of respondents agreed that they have a better understanding of what help is available locally (accessing information, signposting and referrals)

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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

		<u>2019-2020</u>
<u>1</u>	Total attendance	53,480
<u>2</u>	No of local residents	36,245
<u>3</u>	No of other Watford residents	8,845
<u>4</u>	No of 'open' community hires	2,683
<u>5</u>	No of 'closed' private hires	104

ONE YMCA youth service has been working alongside Watford Palace Theatre. Going by the name of 'Young Orbital' delivering a free drama session once a week to bring more youths to the centre to either try something new or continue with their passion for performing.

Recruited a Communications/Marketing officer who is currently working to raise the on-line profile of the Orbital Community Centre

A termly quiz night which was a success bringing in an over 200 people to the Orbital raising money for the preschools new equipment.

OCC have a valued partnership with the NHS to help bring diabetic dietary, lifestyle and management lessons to bring awareness to those who have the condition and their families.

The core drivers have been to boost and increase operational performance, community engagement and service awareness even further within the local communities.

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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

		<u>2019-2020</u>
<u>1</u>	Total attendance	8,338
<u>2</u>	No of local residents	1243
<u>3</u>	No of Watford residents	269
<u>4</u>	No of 'open' community hires	701
<u>5</u>	No of 'closed' private hires	92

WWCA worked in Partnership with Watford Citizens Advice Bureau to deliver Scam Awareness training to local residents, which was held during the Coffee mornings.

Coffee mornings have been an important part of the programme at WWCA, it has helped bring local residents together and reduced isolation.

Worked with local developers gs8 who helped to plan and execute the installation of an upstairs toilet. This was thanks to the funding by the local County Councillor, Borough Councillors and fundraising by volunteers.

Prepared and agreed a new 4-year Business Plan and a new Fundraising Strategy with the help of Hertfordshire Community Foundation's advisors.

WWCA has a number of dedicated Volunteers and the 'in-kind' economic market value of work carried out by the volunteers during this period is as follows; 63 volunteers gave 1,020 hours of their time rate this equates to added value of £8, 894.

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MERIDEN COMMUNITY CENTRE (MCC)

Meriden Community Centre host a multitude of activities and events to suit all ages and abilities. MCC is in the Meriden Ward and is run by Watford Football Club Trust. The Centre boasts facilities such as the 3G artificial grass pitch, male and female changing rooms and state of the art gym, as well as the revamped main hall, flexible space and café

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

		<u>2019-2020</u>
<u>1</u>	Total attendance	45,808
<u>2</u>	No of local residents	5,451
<u>3</u>	No of other Watford residents	2,595
<u>4</u>	No of 'open' community hires	2,732
<u>5</u>	No of 'closed' private hires	11

MCC continue to go from strength to strength, with a focus on increasing footfall and providing a varied programme for all ages and abilities, with some sessions being free of charge.

Meriden Residents Association held a very successful Children's Christmas party at the community centre which was attended by over 200 residents throughout the day.

The centre is thriving and currently has 2,777 members. The year ended with 161 Gym Members.

A situation occurred during the year with Storm Dennis practically ripping a section of the roof which resulted in closure of the facilities. The centre's business continuity plan was put to the test that day, where MCC with approval from the council were able to arrange temporary repairs until the work could be completed fully by the council.

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Conclusion

The analysis of the data and performance against the SLA's and KPI's is positive, this last year the organisations have worked closer together following the implementation of the Commissioning Framework Partnership Meetings, whereby all commissioned organisations get together twice a year and discuss any emerging issues. Our next meeting is scheduled for 22nd September 2020 and will be focused around Community Safety.

I have received positive comments from residents regarding staff, the venues and the variety of what is on offer. Focus for the year ahead was to engage more with local residents, businesses and have regular programme reviews.

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.

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

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.

Covid Update

I worked with all organisations during the lockdown period to ensure all risk assessments were completed prior to reopening. All Risk Assessments were reviewed by the councils Environmental Health Department who offered additional advice where required.

Financially everyone has been affected by the closures and all organisations will submit accounts to the council in October 2020, where further analysis of the organisations financial position can take place.

All Community Centres are now open and working within government guidelines. It is important to highlight that with the social distancing rule, the capacity has reduced dramitcally and overall attendance figures will be affected. Organisations are looking at options to reduce timings of sessions so that additional classes can be added to the programme. Hand sanitising and hand washing facilities are available at each site and additional cleaning will take place.

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There are some sessions that are able to continue online and have been free of charge throughout the closure period however if this is to continue longer term, fees may be applied.

The whole voluntary sector closed with the exception of Citizens Advice Bureau who was able to offer online and telephone support. Throughout July/August the organisations started to reopen. Shopmobility have had to reduce the hours of operation as the majority of volunteers were in the high risk category and staffing levels were affected. They are where possible increasing the number of opening hours.

We will be monitoring the commissioned organisations closely over the next 12 months in order to review the impact of service delivery following the reopening of facilities after lockdown.