

Briefing note for the CEO of Watford CVS

The Scrutiny Task Group examining the development of the new Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Commissioning Framework has requested the Chief Executive of the Watford Council for Voluntary Services to attend their next meeting on the 13th August. They would like him to provide information from his knowledge of the local and national situation in relation to a range of questions that have come up in their discussions.

The questions that they wish to have feedback on are as follows:

- What is the size and scope of Watford's VCS sector
 - How many organisations does it comprise of?
 - What different types of organisation are there?
 - How does our VCS sector compare with other similar towns?
- How is the sector being impacted on by the current economic and political situation both locally and nationally?
- Are organisations changing their ways and starting to be more collaborative and willing to share resources, jointly purchase items and services and provide services collectively?
- Are there any examples of this happening locally?
- What alternative funding streams are out there both nationally and locally?
- What successes have local VCS groups had in accessing funding streams both with and without the support of the CVS funding officer?
- Do you have information on the success of funding bids that have been supported by the CVS Funding Officer e.g. Number of organisations assisted, amount raised, from whom, etc.
- What are the key support functions needed to support the sector to thrive and be sustainable?
- What are the three main areas of support that community led organisations have been provided with by the CVS over the last 2 years?
- Does the CVS provide support to organisations who request it but who are not members and if yes how many have received support over the last 2 years?

- At an earlier task group issues were raised about the opportunities for working with Three Rivers on cross boundary funding but this has not proved possible. Are there any views as to why this has not been achievable?

The councillors would in addition like to invite a representative of an organisation who is not being funded by the Council to give their views on the local situation and feedback on the new VCS Commissioning Framework priorities and they would like the CVS to identify a representative willing to attend and give a view at their meeting on the 13th August 2012.