

Briefing paper for meeting of Redditch Borough Council District Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th October 2015

Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group Update

Background

At its last Committee meeting, held on 1st September 2015, Members considered the content of the scrutiny tracking report following the recommendations made by the Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group in July 2014.

In particular the Committee expressed concerns about the lack of progress of recommendation 4 which proposed the introduction of an Apprentice post. A briefing paper was requested outlining plans for the future co-ordination of the grants process and for the implementation of the Task Group's recommendations.

Update

The tracker has been further reviewed and an update provided under each of the outstanding recommendations dated October 2015 as per the attached table:

JUDITH WILLIS
Head of Community Services

October 2015

Voluntary and Community Sector (July 2014)		
Recommendation 6a	Dedicated space to be introduced on the intranet to share information about the work services are doing with VCS groups.	<p><u>June and September 2015 update:</u> Officers have started work with IT and the local Voluntary and Community Sector groups to ensure this space shares important and valuable information. There is currently a delay in populating this space due to a long term staff absence. This will be re-visited once the service is fully staffed.</p> <p><u>October 2015 update:</u> Due to the staffing matters outlined under recommendation 4 below, this will be actioned once a Co-Ordinator is in post.</p>
Recommendation 7a	The staff volunteering policy to be refreshed and promoted.	<p><u>September 2015 update:</u> The Staff Volunteering Policy has now been updated. Officers are in the process of considering the best way to promote this updated policy to staff.</p> <p><u>October 2015 update:</u> The policy is to be promoted and relaunched as part of a 'Time to Change' staff event during 21st - 23rd October. A part of the Time to Change initiatives, the five ways to well being are being promoted to staff, once of which is the theme of volunteering. It is recommended that once this action is completed at the end of October, it is removed from the Tracker.</p>
Recommendation 8	A new staff award to be introduced recognising the voluntary work carried out by staff.	<p><u>Previous update:</u> At the last meeting of the Committee when the tracker was considered Members agreed that this matter should be discussed further with the Chair of the Task Group to as a number of problems were identified by officers regarding the feasibility of implementing the recommendation.</p> <p>The Chair of the Task Group has been approached about this issue. She is suggesting that staff should be urged in Oracle</p>

		<p>newsletters to come forward to report the volunteering that they are involved in as part of an internal communications campaign. This could be used as the basis for nominations to the staff awards in 2015/16.</p> <p><u>June 2015 update:</u> An article appeared in the May 2015 staff newsletter encouraging staff to inform the Communications team about their volunteering experiences. Examples reported to the team may be promoted in future editions of staff newsletters.</p> <p><u>September 2015:</u> No further updates had been provided by the date of publication.</p> <p><u>October 2015 update:</u> In consultation with the Chair of the Task Group, due to the practicalities around the staff awards, it is recommended that the voluntary work carried out by staff is recognised via internal publications produced by the Communications Team. To date two articles have been published in the Oracle. It is recommended that this action is completed and can now be removed from the Tracker.</p>
Recommendation 10	A Voluntary Sector event to be held and to include a prize giving ceremony.	<p><u>June and September 2015 update:</u> Officers are planning to engage with local groups to get feedback on this type of event. Due to a long term staff absence, this work and feedback from the consultation will be provided once the service is fully staffed.</p> <p><u>October 2015 update:</u> Due to the staffing matters outlined under recommendation 4 below, this will be actioned once a Co Ordinator is in post. In the interim, conversations have taken place with the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network to potentially link this action to National Volunteering Week.</p>