

York CVS Activity Report:

October 2018 – March 2019 for the Children, Education and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee

CVS Bi-Annual Service Level Agreement Update –25 June 2019

Background

1. York CVS is a social action organisation. This means we take steps to make positive change, challenge issues and grow new ideas which strengthen communities. Since 1939, York CVS has supported thousands of local charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises to do just this. We help them focus on what they do best - making a difference for individuals and their communities.

What do we do?

2. We have a simple framework for our work:
 - Support the sector to survive and thrive
 - Represent the sector and provide a voice
 - Deliver services with a social impact
 - Sustain our organisational strength
3. We provide practical support such as room hire and office accommodation, essential services such as payroll and HR, we design and deliver training on important issues such as GDPR. We have a 'fixed and flexible' delivery approach - 'fixed services' which groups and organisations rely on, and a range of 'flexible' responsive offers which meet need as it occurs.

4. This type of bespoke support builds strength and resilience in our sector, so local charities; voluntary organisations and social enterprises can provide and grow essential services for the communities they serve.

5. This report provides a very brief summary of highlights across the last operating year, aligned to the headings of our simple framework.

Organisational objectives	October 2018 – March 2019
<p>Support the sector to survive and thrive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We provided advice and guidance to many local charities and voluntary and community groups on a range of subjects such as funding, appropriate legal structures, policies and succession planning. In addition our HR service continues to support groups and organisations with complex and sensitive issues. Our payroll service continues to be a much needed and valued service by many groups and organisations. • Communication & Engagement - Our Voluntary Voice and York Bulletin newsletters provide regular updates on what is happening in York and also give an opportunity for organisations to share their news and raise awareness of volunteering opportunities and activity. They are distributed to over 1400 recipients. In addition, our social media presence supports the sector through communicating with key partners and colleagues. We have increased to 4,320 followers, as well as being the lead on a new service, Comoodle, which helps to support the sector through sharing 'Stuff, Space and Skills.' This year we continued to support the development of the Live Well York site and were pleased to see the formal launch in March 2019. • We continue to promote People Helping People working in partnership with others. The ESAP programme aims to support the sector to understand how we can measure social action and impact volunteering in York. This work continues. • We have provided support via our Chair, Chief Executive and HR to organisations who are facing challenges. We provided a range of advice including staffing, recruitment, employment law, funding and governance advice, as well as specific support for individuals.

Organisational objectives	October 2018 – March 2019
<p>Represent the sector and provide a voice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over the year we delivered four Forums (Mental Health, Ageing Well, Learning Difficulties and Voluntary Sector) in each quarter, attended by over 300 people from the Voluntary and Community Sector. As well as providing a space for information sharing, reviewing good practice and networking, the Forums also feed into various boards, including the JSNA Working Group, Learning Disability Partnership, Ageing Well Partnership and Mental Health Partnership. • York CVS continues to be a senior member of several key Partnership Boards including those mentioned above and the York Health and Wellbeing Board and Children’s and Adults’ Safeguarding Boards. These are important to ensure the Voluntary and Community Sector have a voice in how services are developed and run. • We were an active partner when the Care Quality Commission returned to York in November to review actions agreed during their visit in the previous year. • Our AGM in December 2018 was very well attended as we introduced our new CEO and celebrated the diversity of volunteering across York.
<p>Deliver services with a social impact</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ways to Wellbeing is our social prescribing service. The model is simple and highly effective. Our focus is on working creatively, pragmatically, and flexibly to identify non-medical options that can improve wellbeing. We draw on opportunities in the community, grants, information and advice, informal resources and peer support. We know that nationally, 20-25% of patients consult their GPs for social problems, e.g. loneliness – there is no pill to combat loneliness, but projects such as this can help connect people to their communities and this does help. GPs also benefit

Organisational objectives

October 2018 – March 2019

from the service; our recent evaluation showed a 30% reduction in GP appointments by those patients accessing the service.

- **York Dementia Action Alliance** has made good progress in its task to make York a great place to live for people with dementia and their loved-ones. Due to reduced funding the staff time was limited to one day per week from August 2018 to 31 March 2019. Nevertheless, the DAA continued to support its network of over 50 public, private and third sector organisations, all working towards making York a dementia friendly city. The DAA newsletter has been a particular success, becoming a valuable (and importantly, independent) dementia information resource for the sector. YDAA ran a number of events throughout 2018/19, including working group workshops, community events in Poppleton and Chapelfields, and single-issue events. We held the inaugural York Dementia Action awards in September 2018. A highlight has been our excellent working relationship with the Local Area Coordinators, who are important partners in providing opportunities for people to gain access to information and advice, as well as raising awareness of how local ward areas can become more inclusive for people living with dementia. Throughout the year, YDAA has consulted and included people who have dementia, in line with our core principle of seeking out, listening to and amplifying the voice of people who have the disability.
- **Healthwatch York** was set up by the Government in April 2013 to help put people at the heart of health and social care services. It is designed to make sure that an individual’s voice can influence the design, delivery and review of local services. At Healthwatch York, we share people’s views and concerns about health and social care services to stakeholder organisations and providers, and provide information about local services, signposting people to the services

Organisational objectives

October 2018 – March 2019

they need both at community information stands and via email and phone. Every year we produce reports on health and care issues, which we present to York’s Health and Wellbeing Board. We make recommendations to the Board to improve the local health and care system. In 2018-19 our focus was on access to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans+ (LGBT+) experiences of health and social care services in York. We expect an update on how organisations are implementing our recommendations early in 2019-20.

- **Ready for Anything** focussed on maintaining the volunteers who are ready to act in the case of emergency in York. During the year we worked with the North Yorkshire Resilience Forum to align their newly funded Ready for Anything service with the York service. From 1 April 2019, the North Yorkshire project will include York and our involvement will continue by providing the Priory Street Centre as a rest centre as and when needed.
- **Time to Change** continued to operate this year albeit at a reduced level. This is part of a national campaign to end mental health discrimination. In York, we have focussed on raising awareness of the campaign, and enabling people with lived experience to share their thoughts and ideas. In 2019, a reinvigorated staff team will enable us to drive this project further and recruit a team of local Champions to help us deliver this work.
- **Growing Green Spaces** helps voluntary and community groups to play a vital role in sustaining York’s green spaces. We have set up projects in Hull Road Park, Rowntree Park, West Bank Park, Clarence Gardens and Glen Gardens with teams of volunteers from across the City.

Organisational objectives	October 2018 – March 2019
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Human Rights City Network continued to support the development of York as a Human Rights City. We declared York as the UK’s first Human Rights City in April 2017 where the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of York, Cllr Dave Taylor, signed a declaration, making York the first city to undertake this. • Safe Places Scheme funded by York BID this scheme officially launched in August 2018 with the aim of providing a go-to place for vulnerable people if they feel at risk while they are out and about in York. Staff in Safe Places connect them to assistance and offer a safe space to wait until help arrives. So far there are 19 registered Safe Places in York such as HSBC, York Theatre Royal, Spurriergate Centre and Lush.
Sustain our organisational strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the period we have gone through considerable staffing changes and a restructure of the organisation to bring us into financial balance from April 2019. We successfully recruited a new Chief Executive, Head of Finance, Executive Assistant, project workers for Dementia Action Alliance, Time to Change, Ways to Wellbeing, Communications and Engagement, Funding and Development, and a Deputy Chief Executive. • The Priory Street Nursery had a routine Ofsted inspection, and was graded ‘Good’ in all areas. • The Priory Street Conference Centre continues to cater for the meeting needs of a diverse range of customers from small local charities and community groups meeting in one of our small rooms to larger organisations requiring our Main Hall for a full conference or AGM. We make efforts to attract private sector clients too and they are charged a premium to the VCSE sector so

Organisational objectives	October 2018 – March 2019
	that we can keep their rates affordable.

Author: Alison Semmence, Chief Executive

Date 10/06/2019

Abbreviations

AGM- Annual General Meeting

BID- Business Improvement District

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

CVS- Council for Voluntary Services

DAA- Dementia Action Alliance

ESAP- Enabling Social Action project

GDPR- General Data Protection Regulation

GPs- General practitioner

HR- Human Resources

JSNA- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

LGBT- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender

HSBC- The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation

VCSE - voluntary, community and social enterprise