

SUPPORT CAMBRIDGESHIRE 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

To: Communities and Partnership Committee

Meeting Date: 21 November 2019

From: Adrian Chapman, Service Director.

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: N/a **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To report on Support Cambridgeshire achievements so far, and priorities for the next 12 months to further strengthen the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Recommendation: The Communities and Partnership Committee is asked:

- a) To note and approve the suggested amendments shown at 1.6 to the *Recommissioning of Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Support Services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough* paper, presented to Communities and Partnership Committee on 10 October 2019.
- b) To note key achievements as summarised in paragraph 2.1. and detailed in Support Cambridgeshire's Annual Report (September 2018-August 2019).
- c) To endorse the Council's priorities for Support Cambridgeshire to further strengthen the Voluntary and Community Sector for the coming year.

<i>Officer contact:</i>	<i>Member contacts:</i>
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1.	BACKGROUND
1.1	Cambridgeshire County Council recognise the vital role the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) plays in communities across Cambridgeshire, both in terms of supporting and helping to develop strong and well networked communities, and in delivering services for and alongside the Council.
1.2	In 2016, Cambridgeshire County Council replaced nine annual grants to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Infrastructure Support organisations with one combined agreement. Providers were invited to tender against a new single service specification to build the capacity of voluntary organisations, community groups and local councils, and our relationship with the sector. This new arrangement was an opportunity to have a more strategic, long term approach which reduced duplication and was more efficient and effective for all parties.
1.3	<p>The successful provider was Support Cambridgeshire, a partnership between Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations (lead), Cambridge Council for Voluntary Services and Cambridgeshire ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), who collectively deliver support as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and parish councils – To improve the lives of local communities through vibrant, dynamic and effective town and parish councils • Volunteering and social action – To promote alternative forms of volunteering and place-based social action initiatives • Voice and representation – To facilitate a better understanding of the voluntary and community sector, and deliver trained, knowledgeable representation • Information and advice – To increase the capacity of the voluntary and community sector through training, information and advice • Community facilities – To increase the contribution of well managed and sustainable community-owned facilities.
1.4	This new arrangement started on 1 st September 2016. This paper outlines Support Cambridgeshire achievements for 2018-19, and sets out priorities for the current year, 1 st September 2019 to 31 August 2020.
1.5	<p>On 10th October 2019 Communities and Partnership Committee received a paper setting out the proposed approach to tender for future Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Support Services jointly with Peterborough City Council. This was approved along with the key features proposed for the specifications.</p> <p>Committee also endorsed an extension to the current grant agreement with Support Cambridgeshire, to allow for adherence to procurement regulations.</p> <p>Officers suggested on 10th October that to allow for the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) process to be followed, the earliest expected contract start date would be 1st March 2021 which would require an 8 month extension to the contract with a value of £84,060. Whilst 1st March could be the earliest expected contract start date, it is suggested a start date of 1st April 2021 might be considered appropriate for a new four year agreement to bring it in line with financial years.</p>

1.6	<p>Communities and Partnership Committee are therefore asked to consider the suggested amendments:</p> <p>a) The current contract is due to end on 31st August 2020 and not 31st July 2020 as incorrectly stated in 2.6 of the paper dated 10 October 2019</p> <p>b) A start date of 1st April 2021 and not 1st March as previously stated</p> <p>If agreed, the exemption waiver would be for a 7 month extension to the contract with a value of £73,560 and not an 8 month extension with a value of £84,060 as previously stated.</p>
2.	MAIN ISSUES
2.1	<p>Support Cambridgeshire's key achievements over the last year are set out in Support Cambridgeshire's Annual Report 1st September 2018 to 31st August 2019 (shown in full at Appendix 1). In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Annual State of the Sector Survey (shown in full at Appendix Two) helps to frame the work to ensure the needs of the sector and our communities are reflected in Support Cambridgeshire's workplan. There has been a 10% increase in respondents from East Cambridgeshire, with all other areas remaining consistent • Over 120 people attended formal training sessions throughout the year which included topics such as: budget and financial planning; measuring the difference you make (social impact); legal issues for volunteer managers; and designing and running a fundraising event. 91% of those who attended were satisfied with the Support Cambridgeshire training offer • 446 people attended Support Cambridgeshire network events - a 10% increase on last year. Topics included: how to work with business and their CSR models; how to market on a shoestring; how to think differently when recruiting volunteers; and how to manage and run a successful community café • Over 17,000 views of the Support Cambridgeshire website - an increase of 43% on the previous year. Feedback suggests the site is easily navigable, full of topical information and regular news feeds on the state of the sector. Funding has its own dedicated tab, as does volunteering, time-banking and added value projects in Soham and Wisbech • There were 5,860 visits to the funding portal with 506 new and registered users raising £300,000, an increase in funding of 1,164% on the previous year • The Community Facilities advice network saw a growth in case work with 269 cases during the year: 19 halls achieved Hallmark accreditation, with 2 halls achieving the highest level 3 • Support Cambridgeshire represents the sector on 10 strategic boards and numerous local place-based forums; when surveyed, 89% of VCS groups thought it was extremely important that Support Cambridgeshire represents the sector, a rise of 7% from 2018

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 102 VCS leaders are attending the commissioning and CEO forums, giving statutory partners direct access to a wide range of groups, and allowing for detailed conversations on strategy, commissioning and procurement practice • 227 delegates attended the 2018 countywide Town and Parish Council conference, representing 85 local councils • A second Local Councils Surveys of Clerks and Councillors took place in April/May 2019. The data provided will support the refresh of the Local Councils Development Plan
2.2	<p>Whilst the impact of the activities and focus is shown above and in the full report, the positive outcome to communities and residents benefiting from this support is often felt longer term. The annual report sets out a number of success stories which demonstrate where Support Cambridgeshire is reaping more immediate rewards and outcomes for voluntary and community groups, and a small number of examples include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Little Gransden have been able to raise £50k for Village Hall improvements as a result of the 'Supporting Cambridgeshire 4 Communities' funding portal, fund application training and advice, and Support Cambridgeshire funding alert. They have been supported to achieve Village Hall Hallmark accreditation which enables trustees to run their village hall well, and as a result the community are able to make good use of this community space Connecting Communities 2019 saw 90 delegates learning from keynote speakers, engaging in workshops and with external funders. The many positive outcomes include feedback from Medway Centre who, as a result of this event, have implemented a new approach which increases engagement and builds relationships between people. Warboys and District Day Centre are also progressing new initiatives with support from a participating organisation Support Cambridgeshire help groups and organisations who want to become registered charities seek funding and develop appropriate policies and procedures. One such group is Steel Bones, where support included a full review of what they wanted to achieve and their longer term needs and aspirations. As a result Steel Bones have become a Charitable Incorporated Company (CIO) and registered with the Charity Commission Safe Soulmate, a not for profit organisation committed to helping adults 18+ build a positive social life with trusted friendships in their local community, are experienced in helping adults who are diversely able (for example those with autism, physical and learning disabilities). Support Cambridgeshire have supported with free training, one to one support on funding information and advice, and support with governance, policy formation and fundraising which has resulted in a successful and vibrant new organisation with correct policies and procedures in place, and with a broader network of other organisations who are able to refer people to them.
2.3	<p>The current approach to VCS Infrastructure via Support Cambridgeshire has now been in place for three years. The Annual State of the Sector survey helps to frame the work to ensure the needs of the sector and our communities are reflected in Support Cambridgeshire's workplan.</p>

	<p>Response to the 2019 survey was up from 2018, with 221 returns from 126. There has been a 10% increase in respondents from East Cambridgeshire, with all other areas remaining consistent.</p> <p>As a brief summary, organisations are recognising the importance of training, especially for trustees and volunteers, whilst recognising the different needs of those groups. There is a clear desire for organisations to share experiences, connect and network with each other for peer support and shared learning, sometimes by theme or in a flexible way which supports the different needs and availability of those involved.</p> <p>Organisations recognise the importance of having Support Cambridgeshire representing them at meetings and promoting and celebrating the sector. As organisations grow in size, the importance of having a trusted, impartial and knowledgeable voice at the table increases, and across all income sizes the bulk of organisations recognise that the sector needs to be championed.</p>
2.4	<p>The key delivery areas for the next 12 months for Support Cambridgeshire, which have been informed by the State of the Sector Survey 2019 and the County Council's priorities, include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More placed based approaches that complement the work of Think Communities • More added value contracts which support a sense of place and complement the work of Think Communities • Expansion of the Local Council Conference to meet the needs of delegates and partners • A contract review which will assess the Partnership's progress against the original project plans and the terms of engagement • The continued development of the CEO Network as a one stop shop for information exchange between the statutory and VCS sectors • The continued development of the Commissioning Forums to identify best practice in commissioning and procurement • A Connecting Communities Conference which examines volunteering and its impact on youth engagement • A wide and varied training offer which will include new topics based upon information received from the sector and arising out of the State of the Sector report 2019 • Three more Practitioner Forums which focus specifically on charity and business relationships (the Support Cambridgeshire 'More than a Giving Machine' series) • Further best practice sessions based upon work-stream activity which includes village hall coffee mornings and local council peer networking
3.	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES
3.1	A good quality of life for everyone
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The voluntary and community sector (VCS) supports people to have a good quality of life in a range of ways. There is evidence that community participation supports

	<p>the adoption of a healthy lifestyle and builds engagement in health and wellbeing improving initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VCS infrastructure support in building VCS capacity and to support communities that are safe, and good places to live, is a cornerstone of our early help and preventative strategies for vulnerable people
3.2	Thriving places for people to live
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VCS employs a significant number of people and contributes positively to the local economy • This affords opportunities for individuals and communities to develop skills through participating in their community which will help them within the workplace and build resilience to undertake initiatives that improve and enable independence, health and well-being
3.3	The best start for Cambridgeshire's Children
	<p>The support of the voluntary and community sector could make a real difference to the lives of children and families, providing opportunities for the whole population to succeed and to enable improved outcomes.</p>
4.	SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS
4.1	Resource Implications
	<p>The report sets out details of significant implications above.</p>
4.2	Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications
	<p>In line with Cambridgeshire County Council's Contract Procedure rule 4.7 an application for an exemption waiver will be submitted.</p>
4.3	Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications
	<p>There are no significant implications within this category</p>
4.4	Equality and Diversity Implications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence indicates that some services delivered by local people within local communities can be more successful than statutory services at reaching people who may need support • Building a strong VCS to help people help each other should therefore support more equal and diverse accessible provision locally • Through our Think Communities approach, many of our services will become increasingly more localised, so that we can meet local and individual need within each specific community context
4.5	Engagement and Communications Implications

	These are described at section 2.4.
4.6	Localism and Local Member Involvement
	The role of Members helps in contributing towards the success of a thriving local VCS. Members can connect local groups to this support.
4.7	Public Health Implications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A thriving VCS supports individuals and communities to take responsibility for their own physical and mental health. It can engage them in taking steps to adopt a healthy lifestyle and other health improving activities • Building community resilience and VCS infrastructure will impact on many of the needs identified in different Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs), including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Long term conditions ○ New communities ○ Homelessness and at risk of homelessness ○ Vulnerable children and adults ○ Carers ○ Older people's mental health ○ Substance Misuse ○ Unhealthy lifestyles

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Martin Wade
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Name of Officer: Gus De Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Matthew Hall

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes or No Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Tess Campbell

Please include the table at the end of your report so that the Chief Executive/Executive Directors/Directors clearing the reports and the public are aware that you have cleared each implication with the relevant Team.

Source Documents	Location
Support Cambridgeshire Annual Report 2018-19	https://www.supportcambridgeshire.org.uk/annual-report-18-19/
State of the Sector Survey	https://www.supportcambridgeshire.org.uk/state-of-the-sector-survey-2019/