

Community Safety/VCS Commissioning Pilot Update

Background

During 2016/17, £25,000 of the additional £50,000 (agreed by Executive Members during this time period, increasing the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) commissioning funds from £20,000 to £70,000 p.a.), was ring fenced to support Community Safety priorities, and specifically work to support vulnerable perpetrators and victims of anti social behaviour (ASB), offering early intervention and prevention support via commissioning of the VCS, with the aim of proactively seeking to address some of the underlying causes.

In responding to the above, we subsequently embarked on a Community Safety Partnership/VCS pilot piece of work, which included the appointment of a p/t Resident Support Officer for 12 months (based in the HBBC Community Safety Team), to provide intensive one to one support for victims and perpetrators of ASB, with part of this remit to identify gaps in support provision, which the VCS could potentially respond to, for this client group.

The post holder worked very successfully with a small caseload of clients on an intensive basis, between December 2017 – February 2018, but was subsequently successful in securing a permanent job at this time. It has therefore given us the opportunity to re-evaluate at this interim time period.

This 3 month period has revealed the following:

- The main gaps in service provision where the VCS would be well positioned to respond, is in relation to early intervention/support to mitigate the escalation of mental health issues, and provision that helps to raise aspirations/self worth leading to meaningful engagement, volunteering, employment, etc. (Our broader VCS commissioning arrangements enable commissioning to support the delivery of these themes)
- This post has seen some success, but it is felt that this post would not provide sustainable change within a reasonable timeframe, to make it financially viable.
- It is felt that there are other current priority community safety issues where this funding could be used to commission the voluntary sector, to provide regular youth diversion activities in a key hotspot locations across the Borough in both urban and rural areas

However, a recommendation is yet to be agreed and will be subject to the agreement of the VCS Lead Members, Cllr Mike Hall and Cllr Maureen Cook, who represent the local authority on the VCS Commissioning Board. It is important to emphasis that the remaining funds of £20,474, associated with this pilot project will remain ring fenced within the VCS Commissioning pot.