

COMMUNITY MOBILISATION UPDATE

Committee – PEOPLE & PLACES ADVISORY COMMITTEE – 3 OCTOBER 2023

Report of: Chief Officer People & Places

Status: For Comment

Also considered by:

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report and presentation on the community mobilisation work that has been carried out across the District.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Council Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer(s): Kelly Webb, Ext. 7474 & Yulia La-Kruz Ext 7149

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee

To consider the update of the Community Mobilisation work.

Reason for recommendation:

To keep Members updated on the work of Community Mobilisation in the District.

Introduction and Background

- 1 Through KCC Helping Hands funding we received £50,100 for a full time post to deliver Community Mobilisation for 15 months.
- 2 Yulia La-Kruz was seconded to this position and started in April 2022 to 30 June 2023. We were then successful in the UK Prosperity Fund to keep this post until 31 March 2025
- 3 Through Portfolio Holder briefings we engaged with how members and the Leader of the Council envisaged for this role, to help the community to help them themselves
- 4 Our main aims for this work were to
 - Have an online Community Platform
 - Gain more volunteers
 - Help the community deliver local projects
 - Help the community get connected
- 5 Over the past 15 months, as part of Better Together we have collaborated and spoken with many local people to understand what actions and activities people want to undertake in and for their community and how the wider community could be involved. These valuable conversations, alongside seed-funding and project support, will now be reviewed and developed into a focused strategy and action plan that we hope will, over the next few years, result in stronger, more mobilised and engaged residents within local communities.
- 6 When communities come together, they have the power to do extraordinary things. Better Together builds on the 'hands on' projects that people created during the pandemic in their own neighbourhoods and is helping to:
 - Provide practical support, skills development, networking and capacity building to individuals and new/existing community groups to enable new initiatives and groups.
 - Develop physical community hubs and an online community portal.
 - Provide an online local directory of services and community toolkit
 - Help and improve the number volunteers in the District.
 - All this information can be found on www.bettertogethercommunity.org.uk
- 7 In partnership with IMAGO, Better Together has organised and hosted a calendar of Volunteer Fairs across the District. On average we have had:
 - Nearly 80 visitors attend each event
 - Over 45 stallholders in attendance.
 - Provided support and advice
 - Recruited in excess of 200 volunteers recruited to local organisations across the District

- Recruited 3 volunteers for Better Together
 - More Volunteer Fairs organised for 2023/24
- 8 We have run projects such as Lets Cook, Shed Project, Grow a Healthy Swanley and recruited a young volunteer
- 9 We launched the Community Mobilisation Grants in March 2023 and will be in place until end 2025 as part of UKSPF funding. It supports individuals and new/existing community groups by enabling practical support, such as skills development and capacity building, alongside local activities and events.
- 10 The grants are split into 2 groups
- Up to £1k revenue funding**
- Supporting community-led projects addressing local priorities, ideas and fostering a sense of local pride
 - Over 30 applications received, with 15 projects funded from Round 1.
- Up to £500 support grants**
- Consultancy support in partnership with NCVO providing help with setting up a new voluntary or community group, guidance in setting up a constitution, membership, accounts, policies and training support.
- 11 There are a number of initiatives coming up over the future
- Communications Plan / promote online Community Hub
 - Community Mobilisation Grants 23/24 & 24/25
 - Growth Gurus community hub project in Swanley
 - Employment and skills sharing support hubs
 - Better Together community volunteering and mentoring programmes
 - Pop Up Better Together hubs established in rural areas
 - Community survey – empowering communities
 - Staff Ideas – action the delivery plan
 - Cost of Living resident events and support to set up groups and activities
 - Support for people with disabilities to establish networks and pursue projects.
 - Listening events with Silver Sunday network to harness ideas and support people as they come together to organise activities
 - Evaluate Hello Lamppost pilot
 - Funding Information Fairs - 28 September, Rickards Hall; Edenbridge and 4 October, Fawkham and Hartley
- Volunteer Recruitment Fairs

Other options Considered and/or rejected

Key Implications

Financial

None

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

Equality Assessment

There are no negative impacts – the annual report applies to all.

Net Zero Implications

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the council's ambition to be Net Zero by 2030. There is no perceived impact regarding either an increase or decrease in carbon emissions in the district, or supporting the resilience of the natural environment]

Community Impact and Outcomes

Community Mobilisation is based upon the actions delivered by Sevenoaks District Council, partner agencies and other stakeholders. It also reflects community needs identified through local data.

Conclusions

1 This presentation highlights the work of the Community Mobilisation Officer

Appendices

Background Papers

Name and title of chief office in Bold i.e.

Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer – People & Places