

ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

Joint Strategic Committee
4 December 2018
Agenda Item 9

Key Decision [~~Yes~~/No]

Ward(s) Affected: All

Community Works and our Third Sector - two years on

Report by the Director for Communities

Executive Summary

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide:

- an update for Elected Members on the progress of our contract with 'Community Works', which is an infrastructure support organisation who have been working with Adur and Worthing's Voluntary and Community Sector since July 2016.
- the Committee with information about developments across West Sussex to align the work of all the voluntary sector infrastructure organisations and future changes to the West Sussex County Council funding process.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Joint Strategic Committee note the report, the positive impact that Community Works is having on our local communities and the work taking place around infrastructure support in West Sussex.

3. Context - the purpose and role of Community Works

- 3.1. To set the scene, imagine you're a small voluntary group in Shoreham or Durrington. Where can you go to get free, impartial, accurate, professional and trusted advice? Community Works can help with just that, and this report is to explain more about how they do this, and much more - and why it is so important.
- 3.2. Community Works is a key partner across across Adur and Worthing and is providing invaluable support to the Councils as we seek to deliver a number of commitments aligned to develop our 'Social Economies' and 'Leadership of our Places' in the Councils' corporate strategy, *Platforms for our Places*.
- 3.3. Community Works is a registered charity. Following a merger of four charities in Brighton and Hove it was incorporated in its current form in 2013, but has been supporting voluntary and community action in Brighton and Hove since 1999. In 2016, Community Works successfully tendered for the Adur and Worthing Councils' contract to provide infrastructure support for voluntary and community organisations. In July 2016 they began operating their service from Worthing Town Hall.
- 3.4. Community Works is commissioned by Adur, Worthing and West Sussex Councils. The current contract is valued at £119,414 and runs until 31st March 2020.
- 3.5. Historically referred to as a Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) and now commonly known as an infrastructure support organisation, Community Works give voluntary and community sector organisations the help, leadership and platform they need to make a difference to local lives. They help groups to learn and understand from best practice the techniques and activities that support success. Community Works provides a voice for the whole third sector and creates the support structure and networks that help people and organisations to make best use of their time.
- 3.6. Fundamentally, Community Works' role is to develop, enable, support and promote local voluntary action. They work with a wide range of organisations and individuals, from voluntary and community groups, to volunteers, businesses and public sector bodies; anyone who wants to

give their time, expertise and energy towards shaping and improving Adur and Worthing.

3.7. How does this look on a day to day basis for the group in Shoreham or Durrington? They might want to know how to recruit volunteers, find new specialist trustees, fundraise for new equipment, need advice on deciding when to become a formally constituted group or what type of legal set-up to adopt. They may have an HR issue, need business, planning or legal advice about a lease or contract, or want to shout about a new initiative they've tried. They can;

- phone and meet Community Works for 121 support and advice
- look on their website for up to date expert information
- attend a network to meet peers, exchange ideas and be connected with other helpful resources
- receive and add copy to their newsletter
- be mentored or indeed, be a mentor
- receive training in complex areas such as GDPR
- be introduced to other key partners or agencies

3.8. Community Works are a membership organisation and these members are instrumental in steering Community Works' direction and work. Members feedback informs and shapes the services they provide. However, groups don't have to be a member to access support but in doing so gives them [additional benefits](#) such as priority for events and access to shared contact lists. To date, there are 160 unique organisations who are members of Community Works in Adur and Worthing. Regardless of being a member or not, Community Works is open to all any group can pick up the phone to them and gain the support they need.

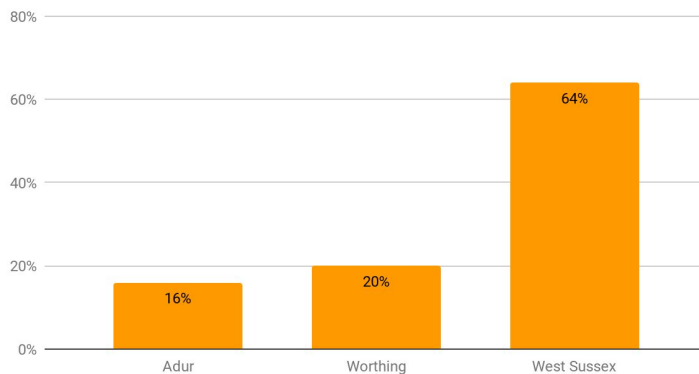
3.9. There is also the strategic element - Community Works have a number of thematic networks and elect representatives. These people not only help update other groups about what is going on, but also act as a wider voice to help influence change. In Adur and Worthing they have networks that focus on Children and Young People, Trustees and Leadership, Health and Wellbeing, Volunteering Co-ordinators and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people (BAME) and new topics are always in development.

The local impact of Community Works



“The support of Community Works has been invaluable in helping us to successfully secure funding from Sussex Community Foundation, West Sussex County Council and Worthing Community Chest, all of which we received news of in a 24 hour period! They helped us look objectively at our bids and really focus on the key points that would help a funder understand what we do and the value we offer the community.”

Where A&W Members of Community Works operate



500+ groups reached



262

Groups have been supported with 121 advice



42

Learning Opportunities



60

Organisations have had their volunteering ops advertised

- 3.10. Since 2016, Community Works have reached out to over 500 groups in the area and have provided support to over 262 unique groups via 1 to 1 support, events, network, training, mentoring and membership. They have organised 42 learning opportunities which have included funding, safeguarding and governance. In this time, they continually shaped their service and delivery plans in response to need. Over 60 organisations have had their volunteering opportunities advertised by Community Works with over 109 volunteers receiving tailored support. They've also improved and updated their [Volunteering Platform](#).

But it's the stories that encapsulate better how Community Works helps:

Monks Recreation Ground

The Rampion Fund was prioritising Lancing/East Worthing applications, so Community Works supported Lancing Parish Council's request for help with their funding bid. As a result of our feedback, they were able to secure £50,000 from Rampion for groundworks for the redevelopment of the site. Where they had consulted with local people to find out what they wanted, we were able to help them show this in their bid.

"I would highly recommend the service provided by Community Works to any community organisation writing grant applications. [\[Read A Funding Bid\]](#) Community Works understood our needs exactly and went above and beyond in helping us secure a £50,000 grant for our play area, pavilion and open space. The feedback we received in regard to our application was clear and the expert advice was invaluable to our success," said Helen Plant, Clerk, Lancing Parish Council

The project is seeking further funding from elsewhere to implement newly designed facilities and they have used Community Works' events to speak to funders/platforms: SpaceHive and Reaching Communities. They also approached Sports England. Following the funders' feedback, Community Works has talked to the project about using a professional bid writer and linked them with an Officer at the Councils for larger infrastructure funding.

Worthing Counselling Centre

This group provides low cost counselling in the Worthing area. Established for 33 years and BACP accredited, it has a team of 20 counsellors. It is a registered charity and aims to promote counselling as widely as possible for individuals and communities that might not usually be able to afford it. Community Works was approached by the newly-appointed co-ordinator for support around fundraising and development. This included development support towards three funding applications, all of which were successful:

- £4,637 from the Sussex Community Foundation for subsidised counselling and work on the website, social media and leaflets
- £1,500 from Worthing Community Chest towards premises
- £1,504 from West Sussex County Council Community Initiative Fund towards replacement of furniture, equipment and soundproofing

3.11. Voluntary and community groups are a vital component, but easily underestimated, in our society. The recent Civil Society Strategy stated "A healthy, independent and influential civil society is a hallmark

of a thriving democracy. Charities and social enterprises - the social sector - are the core of civil society.”

- 3.12. Nationally, there are 168,000 registered charities and nearly 90% of which have an annual income below £500,000. The sector contributes around £15.3bn to the UK Gross Value Added (GVA) - more than the Arts or Agriculture. Volunteering alone is valued at £22.6bn - 47% of adults in the UK are regular volunteers. The voluntary sector is a major employer in the UK, with 880,000 working in the field - this is three fifths the size of the NHS. The third sector is a vastly undervalued wealth of support, advice, knowledge, insight and experience.
- 3.13. Locally, Adur and Worthing has a vibrant and diverse community and voluntary sector; hundreds of charities and groups help local residents to prosper, thrive, be healthy and happy - from large well established names like Guild Care to new knit-and-natter groups. The majority of these groups are running on minimal income and hugely dependent on the dedication, passion and time of fantastic volunteers. There are over 130 charities registered in Adur and Worthing but probably in excess of 750 voluntary groups who are not registered with the Charity Commission, not to mention groups that don't have their base locally but work in our communities. Their reach, experience and expertise impossible to calculate but bringing a huge wealth to our local communities - and Community Works is open to them all, as and when they may need it.
- 3.14. Embedding Community Works into Adur and Worthing has been carried out through a long and thoughtful process. A new provider into the area meant relationships had to be carefully created, respecting and building on local expertise and existing structures. The model of delivery has also had to adapt to meet the needs of the sectors in Adur and Worthing, requiring flexibility from the staff within Community Works and an understanding that the sector here is different to that elsewhere. There have been some staffing changes since Community Works began, which has created a transition gap, but this has been managed well.
- 3.15. Overall, the value to the sector and to the Councils of this contract cannot be overstated. Community Works have been valuable assets in the delivery of a number of projects as well as supporting our community and voluntary sector to flourish whilst making much needed connections across the wider West Sussex landscape.

The broader West Sussex context and changes

- 3.16. Community Works are commissioned by Adur and Worthing Councils, locally on behalf of the District and Borough, and West Sussex County Council who co-fund them (and other support organisations). In total, they receive £119,414 towards their work in Adur and Worthing and this is broken down further in this report.

Over the last three years, West Sussex County Council (WSCC) have passported their contribution through Adur and Worthing Council. Prior to this, WSCC paid service providers directly.

- 3.17. Whilst there has always been a relatively informal 'network' of the larger charities and Councils for Voluntary Services (CVS) across West Sussex, there has been a growing recognition of the need for greater strategic collaboration of the infrastructure support organisations. In the last year, Community Works have been part of the forming an 'Alliance' of these organisations. This has helped strengthen the ambition of these groups and is improving the relationships and cohesion. It is also about sharing strategic thinking and the shaping of some core issues, such as volunteering, strategic voice and influence on a wider geography.
- 3.18. WSCC have been keen to review their relationships with the sector and their funding of this work and expressed a strong desire for a more strategic, countywide voice from the voluntary and community sector in relation to their financial investment. Therefore, in late 2017, WSCC began a series of discussions with the key leads from the infrastructure support organisations and representative from the Districts and Boroughs. The focus, was to see whether a different approach could be developed that allowed for this 'strategic voice' to emerge, whilst retaining the front line operational role of the organisations in their localities.
- 3.19. The two Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) have also been involved in conversations, but as yet any financial contribution from them has not been agreed.
- 3.20. The outcome of these discussions has led to the creation of a Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure (VCSI) 'Alliance' which will be a formally constituted group, enabling the provider organisations

to develop a three-year vision of how they can work together strategically on some common issues.

- 3.21. From April 2019, it is anticipated that the Alliance, District and Boroughs and WSCC will partner using a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and set of Funding Principles. The key principle regarding funding being that funds from WSCC will be paid to the Alliance and then distributed to the local existing local providers (e.g. Community Works).
- 3.22. There is written confirmation from WSCC that this new funding model and the same funding amounts will stand for 24 months, until 31st March 2021.
- 3.23. The MOU ensures that the Alliance is formally constituted, there is a Service Summary (with expectations of delivery) and all parties sign up for what is reasonably possible, with an 'opt-out' should any funding change for any of the parties. It is stipulated in the MOU that all current funding from WSCC is distributed as currently is.
- 3.24. All Councils will establish a central monitoring framework for this Alliance, with key performance indicators that are common to all. However, the individual VCSI organisations will continue to be reviewed locally to ensure that local priorities are addressed.
- 3.25. What this means for Adur and Worthing is no change to the way Community Works operates or is monitored. Financial levels will remain the same from both WSCC and Adur and Worthing Councils and the agreement for their work and the reviewing of this will remain the same.
- 3.26. The benefits for Adur and Worthing are a stronger united voice for the third sector across West Sussex, as well as shared learning across all the voluntary and community sector infrastructure support partners. The aim being to improve the local offer for all, make better and efficient use of resources and time, as well as exploit the opportunities to share best practice and learning. As cited earlier in the report, many of the third sector organisations operating in Adur and Worthing have a wider West Sussex scope so this will also add benefit to them.

4. Engagement and Communication

- 4.1. Community Works have worked sensitively in Adur and Worthing, given there were two other providers delivering a support service in the area

before them. In the coming months, we will work with Community Works to gradually increase this awareness and help drive more knowledge of the support on offer and the merits of membership.

- 4.2. Community Works will continue to work with their member and partners, making it the best support organisation it can be and helping those that need it in the right way.
- 4.3 Officers have been involved throughout the discussions with WSCC and have ensured Adur and Worthing Councils' Executive Members are aware of these changes.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1. The current budget allocation is within the base budget for both Adur and Worthing Councils and at this stage there is no known changes proposed to the WSCC allocation. Funding is set out below:

2018/19	Adur and Worthing Councils	West Sussex County Council	Total funding to CW
Adur DC	£38,470	£15,299	£52,529
Worthing BC	£38,570	£27,075	£66,885
	£77,040	£42,374	£119,414

- 5.2. The changed funding model (Community Works' receiving their WSCC money through the Alliance) does mean that our procurement in Autumn 2019 for a contract for 1st April 2020 can only be for two years and for the Adur and Worthing Councils' amount (£77,040 per annum).

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or which is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions.
- 6.2 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

- 6.3 s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the Council to do anything an individual can do apart from that which is specifically prohibited by pre-existing legislation
- 6.4 Section 1 of The Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 confers the powers on the local authority to enter into a contract with another person for the provision or making available of assets or services, or both (whether or not together with goods) for the purposes of, or in connection with, the discharge of a function by the local authority.
- 6.5 The value of the proposed procurement set out at Clause 6.2 is below the EU threshold level and the future procurement must therefore comply with the procedures set out in the Council's Contract Standing Orders relevant to the proposed expenditure.

Background Papers

[Community Works' Business Plan](#)

[Officer Decision Report to extend Community Works' contract until March 2020](#)

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Sustainability & Risk Assessment

1. Economic

Community Works is a key partner across across Adur and Worthing and is providing invaluable support to the Councils as we seek to deliver a number of commitments aligned to develop our 'Social Economies' and 'Leadership of our Places' in the Councils' corporate strategy, *Platforms for our Places*. The Councils support the local Third Sector in a variety of ways and the contract with Community Works is vital in helping local voluntary and community groups to prosper thus improving the economic value of Adur and Worthing.

2. Social

2.1 Social Value

The Community Works' contract provides immense social value by the very nature of what they do - their reason for their being is to give voluntary and community sector organisations the help, leadership and platform they need to make a difference to local lives. They work with a wide range of organisations and individuals, from voluntary and community groups, to volunteers, businesses and public sector bodies; anyone who wants to give their time, expertise and energy towards shaping and improving Adur and Worthing.

2.2 Equality Issues

Equality is at the forefront of of everything that Community Works does. The matter has been considered and no issues identified.

2.3 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

Matter considered and no issues identified.

2.4 Human Rights Issues

Matter considered and no issues identified.

3. Environmental

Matter considered and no issues identified.

4. Governance

Community Works as an organisation has good governance and there are no concerns over how they operate. They also provide excellent advice and guidance to the third sector on this area. There is regular contract management and informal meetings between staff at the Councils and Community Works.