

Report of the Assistant Director

PRESENTATION BY THE VICTORIA CENTRE

1 Purpose of report

To introduce the presentation by the Victoria Centre relating to the work the Centre carries out in support of the council's priorities.

2 Executive summary

None.

3 Appendices

None.

4 Proposed action:

4.1 The committee is invited to RESOLVE to note the presentation, and;

4.2 The committee is invited to discuss issues relating to the work of the Victoria Centre and identify any matters it RECOMMENDS be reported to relevant policy committees for their attention.

5 Background

This presentation forms part of the general programme for the Partnerships and Performance Committee, reviewing the work of partners.

6 Discussion

6.1 The committee receives presentations from organisations who are either funded by the council, or who play an important part in the life of the borough.

6.2 Each presentation gives members an opportunity to learn more about the organisation and its impact on the borough. After the presentation there is a chance to ask questions of the presenter.

6.3 If any items of significance arise, members may wish to request a further report from a relevant officer or make a recommendation for action by a policy committee.

6.4 As part of the current voluntary sector funding arrangements, the council gives support for hub-based community services supporting newly arrived or minority ethnic communities. The council has a contract with Victoria Centre to fulfil this brief.

6.5 The main contract aim is the provision of accessible community facilities and services with an emphasis on enhancing the wellbeing of people from newly arrived or ethnic minority communities within the Borough of Wellingborough.

6.6 The specification is based upon the following requirements:

- To provide a safe, affordable and welcoming space for local community groups, especially those from minority communities, to form groups, meet, and hold events, increasing social inclusion and community engagement.
- To promote & provide, either directly or indirectly, a variety of easily accessible resources for individuals on a range of local welfare, social inclusion and leisure services to enhance the wellbeing of residents, particularly those from minority communities who struggle to access universal services.
- To encourage people to participate in community, social and volunteering activities and take up an active role in the local community.
- To actively seek to increase external funding to allow the development of new projects or enhanced service provision that meet the needs of existing or potential service users, either singly or in partnership.
- To work with local partners to help to reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, and fear of crime.

6.7 The contract has a value of £11,326 per annum and runs until 31 March 2021, with an extension in principle until 31 March 2022.

6.8 Additionally, during 2020-2021 the Victoria Centre has been a joint partner with Glamis Hall leading the 'One Wellingborough' project in response to the covid 19 pandemic and supporting the council's community resilience hub by providing low level support to communities such as help with shopping, medication collections, welfare calls and food provision.

7 Legal powers

The Local Authorities (Alternative Arrangements) (England) Regulations 2001 empower the council to establish one or more overview and scrutiny committees. Whilst the council no longer has a designated overview and scrutiny committee, the Partnerships and Performance Committee has been given the role of reviewing and monitoring the performance of council services and services provided on behalf of the council by external bodies. A local authority may invite persons other than members or officers of the authority to attend meetings of such a committee.

8 Financial and value for money implications

The provision of contracts with the voluntary and community sector help the council to meet its strategic needs, such as the reduction in numbers of homeless, helping people back into work and the reduction of benefit claims.

9 Risk analysis

There is a risk that if contracts are not delivered as intended, outputs will not be met. This is mitigated by regular reviews, and presentations to committee.

10 Implications for resources, stronger and safer communities, and equalities

Strategic contracts with the voluntary and community sector contribute towards the council's priorities, offering support in the community to help individuals and communities to help themselves.

11 Author and contact officer

Gill Chapman, Principal Community Support Manager.

12 Consultees

None.

13 Background papers

There are no background papers to this report.