

## **North Northumberland VCS Network Meeting December 2018**

### **State of the Sector Workshop**

#### **Activity 1**

Your organisation over the last three years:-

#### **Demand for Services**

**20** increased (10 paid and 10 volunteer led)

#### **Capacity to Deliver Services**

**8** increased (5 paid and 3 volunteer led), **6** same (3 paid and 3 volunteer led), **5** decreased (3 paid and 2 volunteer led)

#### **Number of Services Provided**

**17** increased (10 paid and 7 volunteer led) **2** same (1 paid and 1 volunteer led)

#### **Total Income**

**4** increased (2 paid and 2 volunteer led), **3** same (2 paid and 1 volunteer led) **1** same /decreased (volunteer led) and **7** decreased (3 paid and 4 volunteer led)

#### **Sense of Financial Security**

**4** increased (2 paid and 2 volunteer led), **5** same (3 paid and 2 volunteer led), **6** decreased (3 paid and 3 volunteer led)

#### **Summary**

Demand for services has increased for all organisations and whilst more groups have increased capacity to deliver, similar numbers have made no change or have had a decrease in capacity to deliver. Consequently nearly all groups have increased the services they provide and only two organisations provide the same level of service. However, only a few organisations have managed to increase their total income with over a third stating it had decreased. Subsequently, only a few organisations felt that their sense of financial security had increased, with more considering it had decreased or was the same.

#### **Top three challenges over the next two years for:-**

#### **Your organisation**

#### **Table 1**

- Getting the numbers to keep increasing
- Fund raising and operational costs

- Keeping the service available (sustainability)

#### **Table 2**

- Funding/ training/sustainability
- Capacity – staff and volunteers
- Skills – recruiting volunteers with right skills for service

#### **Table 3**

- Recruiting trustees and succession planning
- More transparency around service delivery and needs being addressed
- Accessing 'core' funding, sustainability

#### **Other challenges**

Remaining as inclusive as possible (access, cost, transport etc)

#### **Table 4**

- Funding
- Venue space
- People i.e. both staff and volunteers. Getting enough qualified and experienced people.

#### **Other challenges**

Transport / Geography / Logistics. Communications / advertising

#### **Table 5**

- Recruiting trustees and volunteers and keeping them
- Increased competition
- Diversification of funding streams, income streams changing

#### **Summary**

The key themes in terms of challenges to organisations over the next two years are focused on funding, recruiting staff and volunteers with the right skills and ensuring sustainability of organisations.

#### **Top three challenges over the next two years for:-**

#### **Beneficiaries/the people you work with**

#### **Table 1**

- Getting the volunteers / GDPR
- Funding to keep all things running as needed
- Making the policy fit for local use

## **Table 2**

- Brexit
- Rising costs – living, transport- isolation, fuel, housing – rent, availability
- Access to services – loneliness/ isolation – additional risks/challenges – vulnerability – fear of engaging.

## **Table 3**

- Affordability
- Access – physical (older) – transport - IT
- Diluted services

## **Table 4**

- Finances – benefits etc.
- Transport – cost and availability
- Care and support – cost and availability

## **Other challenges**

- Getting the right information from the right people, especially palliative care and health information. Distant families

## **Table 5**

- Community tensions between community leaders
- Village attitudes
- Competing priorities

## **Summary**

The key themes in terms of challenges to beneficiaries/ the people you work with include affordability, rising costs and access to services.

## **Top three challenges over the next two years for:-**

### **Voluntary and Community Sector**

#### **Table 1**

- Funding
- Risk
- GDPR

#### **Table 2**

- Rising demand for services, impact on staff well being
- Less funding/cuts across services – knock on affect on voluntary sector
- Separation between sectors due to more to do in less time. Additional pressures = less time to coordinate support.

### **Table 3**

- Funding and sustainability
- Cooperative and collaborative partnerships ( respect, place at the table, recognising similarities and differences/ valuing
- Voluntary effort and ageing population. Encouragement of younger people.

### **Other challenges**

- Moving the goalposts

### **Table 4**

- Weight of expectation on third sector when public budgets are being cut
- Funding
- Older volunteers with fewer younger volunteers to replace them.

### **Table 5**

- Access to funding opportunities
- Overlapping priorities – competing with each other
- Statutory agencies constantly piling on pressures. Their needs for saving pushed to parish council and voluntary organisations

### **Summary**

The key themes in terms of challenges to the voluntary and community sector include access to funding, increased pressures of time and expectations re service provision, recruiting younger volunteers and collaborative working.

### **In what ways do you feel the VCS Assembly can support you with issues and concerns?**

#### **Table 1**

- More information about the VCS Assembly
- Connect with VCS in North Northumberland
- What services are available
- Communication

#### **Table 2**

- Promoting the benefits of volunteering

#### **Table 3**

- Being heard – locally, regionally and nationally
- Making a case for sustainable funding
- Recognition of the value of the VCS

- Enhancing mutual understanding between the VCS and public sector
- Promoting the sector
- Raising the profile
- Recognising for west and north huge rural issues, rural proofing
- VCS is included in Borderland and Combined authority.

#### **Table 4**

- Encourage development of a locally based way of working in partnership with both small, local charities and bigger national charities. Bigger charities sometimes dominate.

#### **Table 5**

- Collaboration i.e. funding streams/access to funds. Improve working together not competition
- Keep the needs of VCS high profile with statutory services
- Improve communication back to the VCS at local level

#### **Summary**

The key themes in terms of the ways the VCS Assembly can support organisations include promoting and raising the profile of the VCS, having a voice, increasing mutual understanding, communication with the sector and improving partnership working.