

**VOLUNTARY SUPPORT GRANT COMMITTEE held at COMMITTEE ROOM -
COUNCIL OFFICES, LONDON ROAD, SAFFRON WALDEN, ESSEX CB11
4ER, on WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2018 at 4.00 pm**

Present: Councillor H Rolfe (Chairman)
Councillors S Howell and V Ranger

Also present: Councillor E Hicks

Officers in attendance: A Bochel (Democratic Services Officer), P Evans (Leisure and Performance Manager) and S Hayden (Community Development Officer)

VG1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members noted the minutes of the meetings held on 21 and 23 November 2016.

VG2 APPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS

Organisations that had been awarded grants in 2017 were invited to provide updates on how monies from Uttlesford District Council have supported their key objectives from 2017/18 as well as identifying how funding for 2018/19 will be utilised.

VG3 CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU - EAST HERTFORDSHIRE

Laura Hyde gave a presentation on the development of the Citizens Advice Bureau – East Hertfordshire over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- Since the committee last met in 2016, the advice centre had now begun opening for a fourth day, ten new volunteer advisors had been recruited and twelve existing advisors had taken part in training and development activities. Skype had been piloted as a means of providing advice although this had not been particularly successful as of yet.
- The organisation wanted to continue to work on the recruitment and training of new volunteer advisors, and to develop existing advisors. It also planned to promote its advice channels, such as the use of email and potentially webchat, in order to improve access to advice.

VG4 ST CLARE'S HOSPICE

Cheryl Armitage gave a presentation on the development of St Clare's Hospice over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- Since the committee last met in 2016, St Clare's Hospice had reviewed and updated its day therapy service, introduced a child support and bereavement service, and introduced a new electronic patient records system.
- For the upcoming year, St Clare's Hospice's aims included promoting day therapy for more community groups, recruiting more volunteers for the child support and bereavement service, running sharing story workshops, and fully integrating the new electronic system into daily use.

VG5 HEARING HELP - ESSEX

Sophie Biebuyck gave a presentation on the development of Hearing Help Essex over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- Since the committee last met in 2016, Hearing Help Essex had trained three new volunteers, and had a 9% increase in users throughout the financial year so far. It had also found a volunteer willing to host a drop in equipment service for those wanting to trial assistive equipment, ensuring that people did not spend money on expensive equipment that did not work well for them.
- Hearing Help Essex was aiming to further increase the use of its service, to have the equipment drop-in service 'go live', and to further train the volunteers in the upcoming year.
- Councillor Rolfe suggested that volunteers from Hearing Help Essex could potentially utilise all of the day centres in the district, as a means of making the service more accessible to some of those who need it most.

VG6 ACTION FOR FAMILY CARERS

Ruth Morton and Julia Grey gave a presentation on the work of Action for Family Carers. Points included:

- Work was continuing on supporting the carers who were a part of the organisation. This included arranging meetings with all identified Young Adult Carers to develop personalised action plans, running a bereavement session with young carers, and engaging with schools in the area.
- Councillor Rolfe emphasised the importance of the service liaising with Uttlesford District Council.

VG7 UTTLESFORD COMMUNITY TRAVEL

Malcolm Barrell and Ian Shaw gave a presentation on the development of Uttlesford Community Travel over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- Staff training had taken place in order to meet demand, and three hospital car volunteers had been recruited. Uttlesford Community Travel was also now using portable devices to transmit instructions to drivers, and development and testing on the website to allow for online bookings had been completed.
- Over the next year, Uttlesford Community Travel would look to recruit more driver and office volunteers, rollout the portable device system fully by April, and work to adapt the organisation to comply with General Data Protection Regulations. It was also keen to explore the expansion of its services and it was suggested this could be progressed in conjunction with Parish Councils in the district.

VG8 UTTLESFORD CITIZEN ADVICE BUREAU

Kate Robson gave a presentation on the development of the Uttlesford Citizens Advice Bureau over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- Uttlesford Citizens Advice Bureau was working to become less reliant on Uttlesford District Council for funds. Staff and volunteers had taken training to help them to ask a set of routine questions, aiming to identify gender violence and abuse. The organisation had held a fundraising event and was applying for grants. It was also receiving funding from other organisations. It had dealt with a 9% increase in client numbers. It had taken on new volunteers, and now held appointments in Stansted. However the plan to promote services out of Station House in Takeley had been hindered due to the parish council considering moving to another building.
- The bureau was looking to continue delivering its core services and hopefully expand to provide more. It was keen to provide a power of attorney service and anticipated applying for a grant to convert its loft into office space. It would soon be trialling video-conferencing. The Uttlesford District Council Chief Executive and Communities Manager had been invited to attend a strategy meeting to discuss long term views on accessibility and advice delivery.

VG9 VOLUNTARY SECTOR TRAINING

Maddy Pitcher gave a presentation on the development of Voluntary Sector Training over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- The grant from Uttlesford District Council had helped to subsidise the cost of places on training courses. 15 different charities had sent people on a wide range of courses. Targets for the number of people to be trained had been exceeded, and feedback received about the courses. In addition, Voluntary Sector Training had recently merged with Community 360.
- Voluntary Sector Training was looking for other sources of funding. It would aim to continue to deliver a wide range of courses such as GDPR training, and to expand the number of registered charities it engaged with.
- Councillor Rolfe suggested that the Council could work with Voluntary Sector Training to investigate the possibility of running cooking classes.

VG10 **SUPPORT 4 SIGHT**

Gary Hyams and Paul Atkins gave a presentation on the development of Support 4 Sight over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- The grant provided by Uttlesford District Council had been used to make provision to man the Support 4 Sight centre. Results had been positive – those involved with the project reported improved health and emotional wellbeing. Many of those involved had been able to gain knowledge or advice about equipment. It had been working on a befriending scheme, and was so far on target to engage with the targeted number of people. Volunteers had received dementia training from Alzheimer’s UK.
- Support 4 Sight aimed to continue to train its volunteers on data protection and to engage more people in the befriending project. It would also be looking into other means of fundraising.

VG11 **HOME-START UTTLESFORD**

Debbie Flicos represented Home-Start at the meeting instead of Sophie Marriott. She gave a presentation on the development of Home-Start over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- Home-Start had been working on a school readiness project, as well as carrying out its work to support families to deal with situations in the home.
- The organisation would be looking to recruit more volunteers for its school readiness project. It would also interact with Home-Start in other areas to share knowledge and experience.

VG12 **VOLUNTEER UTTLESFORD**

Robin Lee and Lizzie Petrie gave a presentation on the development of Volunteer Uttlesford over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- Volunteer Uttlesford had promoted volunteering as a means of improving health and wellbeing, worked to improve its relationships with schools, and had increased its support for youth volunteering. It had set up a UDC Employee Volunteering Scheme, and was working alongside organisations such as Carver Barracks and Great Chesterford Research Park to develop employer-supported volunteering. It had also extended its opening hours to five days per week
- In the future, Volunteer Uttlesford would like to work to create a higher profile for volunteering, such as further developing the culture of volunteering in primary schools, and opening up opportunities to take a course to be a Volunteer Mentor.
- Councillor Rolfe suggested that Volunteer Uttlesford should take part in Volunteering Week, which was to take place in the third week of June. The Council would be driving this in local media.
- Volunteer Uttlesford confirmed it was working with the Council for Voluntary Services Uttlesford to set up a gardening team and create a post for a Gardening Coordinator, who would organise volunteers to do work in gardens owned by those who were not able to maintain them.

VG13 COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICES UTTLESFORD

Clive Emmitt gave a presentation on the development of the Council for Voluntary Services Uttlesford over the previous year and its goals for the upcoming year. Points included:

- The Council for Voluntary Services had raised funds to create a Development Officer post, recruited a member of staff to support social media, launched the Uttlesford Business Exchange Forum with Volunteer Uttlesford, and fundraised to run a team of gardening volunteers.
- Over the next year, the Council for Voluntary Service Uttlesford aimed to implement a Community Builder project, further develop the business exchange forum with Volunteer Uttlesford, work with organisations such as MIND to run courses to increase skills for volunteers, develop and recruit for a co-ordinator role on the Green Matters project, run health checks with organisations to help them become more established and collaborate in a number of projects such as the Community Action Zone, the mental health forum and the Community Safety Partnership.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.