

The Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise Sector (VCSE) in Ashford

Ashford Health & Well Being Board - October 19th 2015

Introduction and Covering Report

We feel it is important to talk to the Board about the nature of the VCSE in Ashford and how these organisations support their beneficiaries, particularly where their objectives overlap with the priorities of the statutory sector represented by the Board.

We have chosen three organisations working specifically within the Board's priority areas:

- **Ashford Volunteer Centre - Care Navigator Service** (*Independent living, dementia, sustainable development for health and wellbeing*)
- **Caring Altogether on Romney Marsh (CARM)** – Befriending (*independent living, falls prevention*)
- **Crossroads Care – Carers Support Service** (*Dementia, independent living*)

We have also chosen the local Infrastructure organisation, Red Zebra Community Solutions; they provide invaluable support to the VCSE around governance, funding, training and representation and will provide an overall perspective on The State of the Sector.

With regard to the pressing need to make savings by the statutory sector in the immediate form and through early intervention programmes to prevent people's lives unravelling – with the associated moral and financial burdens, the above organisations have included specific impacts, with the potential for savings to be made by statutory sector agencies.

Much of the VCSE in Ashford deliver services on a very local level and for it to continue to effectively deliver these vital services we believe stable investment needs to be made in the form of longer term funding – this applies to those organisations in receipt of funding and those not currently funded by the statutory sector. It also needs healthy investment in the Infrastructure bodies that enable these organisations to function at their optimum.

There is huge potential for the VCSE to leverage in funds to provide services for beneficiaries to address the demand which statutory bodies are finding increasingly difficult to meet.

Presentation 1

Charlie Fox Chief Officer, Red Zebra Community Solutions
The State of the Sector

“Charities play a vital role in improving our society and make a huge contribution to the UK economy. They are the biggest builders of social capital, and provide crucial support to people and communities across the country, often those that are hardest to reach.”

(A Financial Sustainability Review; NCVO; July 2015)

There is a widespread recognition of the value of an effective and dynamic voluntary sector in supporting community action and in particular vulnerable individuals.

Preventative and early intervention services prevent or delay escalation to more costly health and care interventions and can:

- Improve wellbeing
- Reduce unnecessary health appointments
- Reduce reliance on medication

This presentation provide an overview of the VCSE sector and how Red Zebra Community Solution plays a vital role facilitating increased effectiveness of frontline VCSEs and improving their resilience.

Presentation 2

How the voluntary sector can support peoples' health and well-being.

Helen Mattock, manager CARM

CARM's key services befriending, enabling and reminiscence, can greatly improve the lives of their beneficiaries and demonstrates how the VCES can support the statutory sector in early intervention. Helen will explain how, via the co-ordination of their 120 volunteers the VCSE can help the statutory sector with provision of services including falls prevention and assistance with diagnosis (dementia). She will evidence how CARM delivers savings whilst ensuring a better quality of life for their beneficiaries

Presentation 3

Community Care Navigator & Trusted Assessor

Sue Sawyer, Manager Ashford Volunteer Centre

This will cover how the Care Navigator Service operates at the William Harvey Hospital and helps patients to get the right help to meet their needs. By linking them with community resources, beneficiaries have the choice and control over possible ways forward; they can be given this information by someone coming to their home to discuss options. Sue Sawyer will provide a detailed Case Study of a lady who with the input of a Care Navigator was able to be discharged from hospital without delay. She will also present a counter-factual scenario of what would happen if the lady in this Case Study had a bad fall and was rushed to hospital, this will factor in the associated cost to health services

Presentation 4 Social Return on Investment & Carers Breaks

Lorraine Williamson, Services Director Crossroads Care

This will highlight the needs of Carers which are addressed in Ashford by Crossroads Care and how the CCG can best support organisations like Crossroads Care to ensure that carers remain able to care for their loved ones and preventing them from having to access health services or falling into a cycle of poor mental health. This will also explore how one

of their network partners, Carers Trust has helped them to build an impact and outcomes measurement framework which will enable the Carers organisations to provide an accurate Social Return in Investment for their services. This framework was piloted in Greater Manchester in 2013 and this pilot identified that for every £1 invested in Carers Services the local health authority saved £3.90

Recommendations to the Board

- Explore ways to engage meaningfully, with the VCSE as an equal partner and to develop joint initiatives to leverage in additional, external funding not accessible to the statutory sector
- Recognise the social and economic value of community based services that address social isolation, improve independence and reduce costs to statutory services
- Create an a 'resilience' funding to support smaller organisations
- Change how VCSEs are funded; longer term funding that enables organisations to make strategic decisions and to respond to statutory sector objectives
- Develop a social prescribing scheme for Ashford
- Work with the VCSE to better understand economic savings to the system