

## Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board (AHWB)

### Partner Quarterly Update for the Voluntary Sector – Quarter 2: July to September 2015

<p>What's going on in our world</p>	<p>Local voluntary and community sector infrastructure body Case Kent has merged with EKVAS and formed Red Zebra Community Solutions. The new infrastructure body covers the whole of East Kent.</p> <p>Many charities are working through the tendering process for the community and mental health service delivery contracts next year. Currently, potential strategic partners are being selected. This has been an onerous process for small organisations despite support offered by the STAMP programme.</p>
<p>Success stories since last AHWB</p>	<p>There are over 350 voluntary and community organisations in Ashford so here are a couple of examples as a flavour of what's happening in the sector overall.</p> <p><b>Ashford Counselling Service</b> has been awarded £136, 650 over three years by the Big Lottery Fund to work with parents with postnatal depression. The service will be delivered in Ashford Children's Centres working closely with the Early Intervention team.</p> <p>An <b>Ashford Well Being Café</b> will be opening at the the "House" at the Stour Centre, Ashford and will offer. The provisional start date is proposed for 23<sup>rd</sup> October.</p> <p>The café will be open from 6 – 10pm Friday &amp; Saturday initially for a 6 month pilot period and will offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· An initial welcome and assessment by a mental health support worker –</li><li>· Opportunities for social and creative activities</li><li>· On site one to one support by a mental health support worker and/ or an onsite CPN</li></ul> <p>The purpose of the initiative will be to: provide out of hours support to people experiencing mental health problems which do not require hospital admission; Support a common approach for mental health providers and community safety teams; Identify and address the role mental health issues play in anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>This has been set up in line with the Kent &amp; Medway Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat and after successful pilots of similar Cafes in Swale and Medway, Mid Kent Mind along with other voluntary organisations offered our project proposal for a Wellbeing Café based within the Ashford CCG locality.</p>

What we are focusing on for the next quarter <u>specific to the key projects</u>	CASE Kent has produced a report examining the impact of the Voluntary Sector in East Kent. We will present this information at the October Board meeting. The report looks at how 'cost-effective' the sector is, funding issues for the sector, sustainability and engagement with statutory bodies (including health and local CCGs). We will be working with local organisations in the voluntary and statutory sectors to address the recommendations in the report.
Anything else relevant to AHWB priorities NOT mentioned above	
Strategic challenges & risks including horizon scanning?	It is coming to the time of year when grants are up for renewal and It is likely that Voluntary organisations will face cuts to their grants once more in the next financial year. Savings have been made by many organisations already operating very close to the bone and closure is a very real threat to some organisations. KCC's preference to put tenders out to larger consortium or lead partners does not sit well with smaller charitable organisations whom are extremely under resourced and in many cases dependent on volunteers alone. They provide vital services for local people and require comparatively low levels of funding to operate. A resilience fund for these smaller organisations is a possible solution, to enable them to concentrate on delivery of service.
Anything else the Board needs to know	
Signed & dated	Tracy Dighton, Michael James. 5 <sup>th</sup> October 2015.