



Report for:	Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting:	13 June 2018
Part:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Update on Voluntary and Community Sector Contract Delivery
Contact:	Neil Harden, Portfolio Holder Community & Regulatory Services Author/Responsible Officer(s) Matt Rawdon (Group Manager – People and Performance) and Alex Care (Community Partnerships Team Leader)
Purpose of report:	1. Update Members on the performance of the Voluntary Sector Contracts.
Recommendations	1. Members note the performance of the contracts and the added value they provide 2. Members promote the contracts / services to their residents
Period for post policy/project review	Formal quarterly meetings are held for each contract.
Corporate objectives:	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity
Implications:	<u>Financial</u> This report has no financial implications for the Council
'Value for money' implications	<u>Value for money</u> This report shows the value for money that these contracts provide for both DBC and Dacorum residents.
Risk implications	N/A
Community Impact Assessment	A community Impact Assessment is reviewed annually

Health and safety Implications	None reported. Health and safety issues would be discussed as part of contract management
Consultees: (including feedback from Scrutiny where appropriate)	N/A
Background papers:	Attached are some example case studies Appendix 1 Living Stable Lives Case Studies Appendix 2 Reducing Social Isolation Case Studies Appendix 3 Promoting Healthy Relationships Case Studies
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	

Introduction:

Effective from April 2016 the Council implemented a new approach to working with the voluntary sector in response to changes in the market place and best practice.

After an extensive consultation and engagement process to inform the service specification of each contract, five contracts were tendered on the open market and awarded as follows; *Information, Advice and Advocacy* was awarded to Citizens Advice Dacorum; *Reducing Social Isolation for Older People* was awarded to Age UK Dacorum who work with Centre in the Park to deliver some of the outcomes; *Supporting the Voluntary Sector* was awarded to Community Action Dacorum who worked with the Volunteer Centre Dacorum to deliver certain outcomes; *Promoting Healthy Relationships* was awarded to a partnership between Relate London North West and Hertfordshire, and Mediation Herts; and *Living Stable Lives* was awarded to Westminster Drug Project .

Each contract has specific aims which they are trying to achieve, but the impact of the achievement of these aims has wider implications on the demands for statutory services; the preventative aspects of each of these contracts results in a reduction on demands for statutory services such as health, anti-social behaviour and homelessness.

The first year of each contract was used to gather baseline data against which performance indicators and targets could be set for the outcomes, where appropriate. As data started to be gathered the reporting framework needed to be adapted to ensure it was fit for purpose.

This report is intended to update Members of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the contracts' delivery and performance over the past full year of each contract. A summary and overview will be written about each contract, including performance data and targets, where relevant, concluding with comment on the impact of the contracts on Dacorum residents and the value for money the contracts deliver.

Contracts:

Information, Advice and Advocacy

Outcome	Management Information
Dacorum residents who access information, advice & advocacy are able to have their issues resolved satisfactorily and are able to resolve similar issues in the future.	As a result of the support from CAB, of those that responded to a client survey, 96% stated they had a better understanding of how things worked, enabling them to better support themselves in the future.
The information advice & advocacy offered has a positive impact on people's health and wellbeing.	Of those that responded to the survey, 96% reported an increase in their confidence and 87% reported an increase in their wellbeing.
The information, advice & advocacy offered improves people's financial circumstances	£2,659,197 of debt for Dacorum residents was written off and £633,251 of income was raised for Dacorum residents through support and advice regarding claiming relevant benefits.
Information advice & advocacy can be accessed by all local people	7472 clients have been helped over the last 12 months either over the phone or face to face.
People have access to further support that is relevant to resolving their issue	CAB are a signposting service as well as an advice service. They have good knowledge and connections of the local area. In addition, they also run a number of additional projects which provide added value to Dacorum residents. Over the last year they have run a crisis intervention project (supporting 313 residents), Public Health project (supporting 50 residents) and an Energy best deal project (supporting 68 residents).
People feel satisfied with the service they receive	87% stated improved wellbeing 96% stated improved confidence 96% stated improved understanding of how things worked.
Dacorum Tenants are supported to maintain their tenancy.	212 DBC tenants sought money advice which helped them to maintain their tenancy.

The contract started in July 2016. The first full year of the contract resolved over 15,300 separate issues for Dacorum residents and, as a result of utilising 40 volunteers, saved £78,500 worth of staff costs each quarter.

The most frequently identified issues have been debt, and benefit and tax credit support. Concerns around the roll out of Universal Credit have been discussed at contract monitoring meetings and in more depth at specific cross-organisation meetings set up to identify how different agencies can work together to minimise the impact. Additionally, teams from across DBC have also been meeting to discuss how we will work with residents and other agencies to minimise the impact.

The move to the Forum for CAB has been successful overall, with a much more visible presence for them and a more favourable working environment; feedback has been positive from both staff and volunteers.

The impact of supporting residents with financial worries or concerns cannot be underestimated. There is a clear link between stress regarding finances and debt, and mental health and wellbeing. As can be seen in the figures above, the improvement in residents' wellbeing having had financial issues resolved is critical. By supporting residents with the issues that they present, CAB is not only able to help resolve those issues, but are able to support residents to help themselves to avoid similar situations in the future. This results in less contact for DBC and other statutory services.

Living Stable Lives

This contract began in December 2016 and is targeted solely at private rented tenants and landlords in Dacorum. The overall aim of the contract is to keep tenants in their homes to prevent them from becoming homeless and then requiring statutory support from DBC. The nature of the contract means that the clients supported tend to be some of the most vulnerable.

The contract was awarded to an organisation outside of Dacorum, but one that was already working in Dacorum through a contract with Hertfordshire County Council. Unlike the other contracts, this contract needed to spend some time raising its profile, building relationships with organisations and clients, and making it clear who the service was aimed at and its desired outcomes.

This contract provides statistical information in order that it can be monitored to review and analyse its reach. However, due to the nature of the contract the outcomes are better evidenced in case studies and by using 'outcome stars'. These can be seen in appendix 1.

The contract has supported 88 clients to date, provides breakdown of resident using services from equalities perspec

Qualitative evidence and analysis can be challenging when dealing with vulnerable clients. The 'outcome star' is a way to identify, at a moment in time, how an individual is feeling about certain areas of their life at that moment. While they are a recognised evaluation method, it is worth noting that when completing the outcome star at the beginning of an intervention, the client may not be aware of how low their confidence or knowledge of a certain aspect of their life might really be; you don't know what you don't know.

As with the other contracts, the benefits of successful support can be experienced by others; neighbours, family and friends and a reduced demand on statutory services.

Reducing Social Isolation

Outcome	Management / Outcome Information
Older People and their carers have increased contact with others and feel less isolated. Older people and their carers will feel more integrated with the community.	This outcome is delivered through their Centre in the Park, and Tea and chat clubs. In total there have been 7208 annual users of the Centre in the Park service and 1175 users of their Tea and Chat Clubs.
Older people and their carers use technology to help with daily tasks.	Age UK Dacorum were running separate clubs for technology support. However, this did not prove to be a good use of resources associated with the contract and so these sessions were incorporated into their Tea and chat clubs which are better attended. This has resulted in more older people bringing along their devices and asking for specific help as and when they need it. Age UK Dacorum is working with other organisations to bid for additional funding to support partnership working in digital support for older people.
Older people and their carers are independent and maintain their dignity	This outcome is delivered through their Living Well Service which is evaluated through individual case studies of the residents the service supports. Example case studies have been attached to this report. Please see appendix 2
Older people and their carers have an improvement in their overall quality of life	This outcome is delivered through their Living Well Service which is evaluated through individual case studies of the residents the service supports. Example case studies have been attached to this report. Please see appendix 2
Older people and their carers live in warm, weather tight, safe and secure Council owned properties	This outcome is delivered through their Handyman service. Over the last year 526 jobs have been completed at 214 properties. Security and general repairs are the most common request for the handyman service.

The contract started in October 2016. This contract's aim is to support older people to feel less isolated which in turn will have an impact on demand for other services.

Although Management information can be provided for this contract to monitor delivery against the outcomes, this contract is a good example of where the impacts

of the contract can be more readily seen through the use of case studies (please see attached).

Some comments which have been received from service users include:

Mrs C said she was pleased to have made new local friends as her neighbours were out at work all day and she had been feeling lonely since moving but now can look forward to having company on a regular basis (relating to the Tea and Chat club)

"It's marvelous what you have done for me. All the piles of paperwork were getting on top of me and I just couldn't seem to make a start on sorting it by myself". (quote from a carer)

"I didn't realise how much I had let myself go. I didn't know where to turn. Until AUKD helped me I had no one to ask for help"

Again, the impact of this contract on the lives of Older People in Dacorum cannot be underestimated. The improvements to their mental and physical health and wellbeing as well as the practical support this contract provides, means that the demand on other services is reduced. Unnecessary health and other appointments are reduced, resulting in decreased costs and the freeing up of time for more vulnerable residents.

Supporting the Voluntary Sector

Outcome	
There is a raised awareness of the voluntary and community sector within Dacorum	260 different groups have signed up to receive monthly newsletters. 110 new groups joined the Support4Dacorum (S4D) service in 2017/18. Over the past year, S4D has registered a total of 18150 visits to their website and social media.
The voluntary and community sector have improved access for local people	There have been 13 separate events held at the Roundhouse in the centre of town, and since opening on a Saturday, as part of the contract, they have had a total of 712 visits to the Roundhouse. 1078 VCS groups have registered on their community database and they have 468 members of their new Community News Facebook group.
The voluntary and community sector use digital technology to deliver services	In addition to the figures above, 23 groups have joined the Digital online forum set up by S4D.
The Voluntary and community sector create strong partnerships and networks	S4D has made a number of business contacts (358) throughout the year and has started relationships with 83 VCOs.
The voluntary and community sector access a variety of funding opportunities	There are 62 members of their online fundraising forum and 19 groups engaged with S4Ds check and advice service regarding funding applications. 60 groups have reported that they have had success when using online funding platforms promoted by S4D, and 44

	organisations have contact S4D for information about local funding opportunities.
The voluntary and community sector can fill and sustain volunteering vacancies	Over the last year there have been 94 new volunteering opportunities, 463 registered as being interested in volunteering, and 380 individual volunteering advice sessions delivered. S4D has made 614 referrals to organisations and a total of 252 volunteering vacancies have been filled. The new volunteering system and training sessions have been accessed by 105 different organisations.
Volunteer brokerage increases and improves the quantity, quality and diversity of volunteering locally	The role the Volunteer Centre / Roundhouse opening on a Saturday has been pivotal in registering 71 young people interested in volunteering and 13 individuals accessing the service on a Saturday morning, specifically for volunteering opportunities.

This contract started in December 2016. Originally awarded to Community Action Dacorum (CAD) who sub-contracted to the Volunteer Centre Dacorum for the volunteering specific outcomes, the contract is now wholly delivered by CAD who have taken on the responsibilities of the Volunteer Centre. The contract aims to support the voluntary and community sector in Dacorum to be robust and sustainable. This in turn ensures that much needed services remain available to Dacorum residents and prevents unnecessary strain on statutory services.

Opening on a Saturday has had a positive impact, encouraging those who would not usually seek opportunities, to seek them. For instance, verbal feedback from one resident stated that had they not been open on a Saturday he would not have volunteered, although he had been looking to volunteer for a while, He works during the week and so was unable to come to the centre during the week. Despite the demand and financial benefits from increasing online enquiries and traffic, the services sector still demands face to face interaction, and opening on a Saturday opens up volunteering to audiences that may not otherwise have volunteered.

Further anecdotal feedback from community groups has found the Saturday morning sessions offered to them to promote themselves at the Roundhouse to be a great way to raise their profile.

Giving the ever changing and ongoing austerity that particularly the public and voluntary sectors are facing, volunteering continues to play such a critical role in delivering services to vulnerable residents.

Promoting Healthy relationships

Outcome	
Dacorum residents are able to better manage issues affecting their relationships with others	An annual average of 97% of those seen by Mediation Herts feel more able to deal with difficulties affecting their relationship.

Dacorum residents feel better able to cope with future issues that affect their relationship with others	An annual average of 97% of those seen by Mediation Herts feel better able to cope with future issues.
Dacorum Borough Council tenants can better maintain and manage relationships with others	83 clients that Mediation Herts saw over the last year were DBC tenants. Of those, 95% stated that they feel they can better maintain and manage their relationships.

This contract began in December 2016 and is aimed at ensuring Dacorum residents have good relationships across all aspects of their lives. Although there is management information to evidence the success of the delivery of this contract, impacts seen through case studies can show that the affects on the individuals are far wider and deeper than statistics can indicate. Please see appendix 3.

The two organisations have come together to work in partnership to ensure that each of the outcomes in the contract can be delivered. The two services offer slightly different forms of support, and as such support different needs of Dacorum residents. Mediation Herts focuses on dispute resolution between two or more parties (and have seen the majority of their cases relating to family issues or issues within the community), whereas Relate London North West and Herts focuses on relationship counselling.

The benefit of this joint service to Dacorum residents isn't solely in the resolution of the issue presented. The impact of the skills learnt and developed through these sessions equip individuals to deal with issues better in the future.

Where neighbourly disputes (the most common community issue) have escalated to such an extent that they impact negatively on the immediate community, the support given to the individuals is also of great benefit to them. There can be a reduction in anti-social behaviour, improving the quality of life for all involved and reducing the demand on relevant statutory services.

Conclusions:

The move to a contractual style relationship with the Voluntary and Community Sector in Dacorum has overall been successful. The services that are now being delivered through the contracts have been specifically designed to respond to our residents needs and tackling community issues. The Council can be assured that our money is making a real difference to our residents and that the contracts are playing a key role in the preventative agenda

Also by having contractual relationships with the voluntary sector, it enables the Council to have a more robust way of ensuring outcomes are being achieved.