

Adult outreach

Community Empowerment Committee

Rationale

There are many groups and organisations in the council area involved in supporting members of the community who are vulnerable or disadvantaged in some way. Often these groups seem to operate unknown to the council or other organisations; they tend to be known about on the “grapevine” but have no official recognition or acknowledgement of their existence and activities. This has resulted in overlap of facilities offered and an apparent lack of awareness within the community at large that these groups exist. As an example, it is not uncommon for specific medical issues to have self-help groups to support sufferers. I know of several organisations involved in supporting people with mental health and addiction issues. In many cases these groups are aiming, amongst other ambitions, to help people lead fulfilling lives as a part of society instead of, as can easily become the case, becoming isolated within society.

I have yet to see any register or list of all the various support groups that are around, and it seems to me that could be a useful starting point. Much of this will be on-line research and discussion with the various teams we find.

It is intended this document will be regarded as a starting point and will be reviewed within 6 months of acceptance or sooner if the need arises.

Explanation of terms:

Adults – persons above the age of 25

Sign-posting – putting people in contact with support organisations relevant to their needs.

Proposal 1

The AE (Adult Engagement) undertakes to develop a register of known organisations that support people that could be described as vulnerable or isolated or disadvantaged within society. The list will contain details of main contact point, phone number/email, purpose and target population, where this can be identified. The purpose of the list would be to identify the level of provision available which, in turn, would enable the Committee to begin to identify the unmet or under-served needs that this Council could usefully aim to address.

There are several distinct groups that meet with members of the general public that could come under the description of vulnerable, disadvantaged or isolated. Social Services, Salvation Army, some churches, registered charities, medical support groups, probation department and many others all meet with people for whom engagement with society in full may be problematic. Sometimes the group may provide a sign-posting service of pointing those in need towards possible sources of help. In other cases, they may be providing the help directly.

Proposal 2

Having compiled the list in Proposal 1, we circulate that list to the organisations that have direct contact with the public in the role of assessing and meeting their needs. It may be possible to achieve this on our existing website, but it must be a facility within the new

website. If it cannot be produced on the website then circulating in document form is possibly viable, depending how many sheets are needed.

Foreseeable issues:

- 1) We need agreement from the groups for their details and contact details to be circulated. That may have to be a signed document, though if they are providing some form of service to the public, I am not sure how much of an issue that is.
- 2) This will take time to get established and will be an on-going piece of work. There will always be a need for the list to be kept up-to-date.
- 3) Is this creating a rod for our own backs? This could develop into a huge piece of work.
- 4) We will need extra manpower to deliver this scheme.

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