

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM

REPORT TO CABINET

14 DECEMBER 2017

REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Cabinet Member for Access, Communities and Community Safety – Councillor Steve Nelson

VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY UPDATE

Summary

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Volunteering Strategy Framework which was originally endorsed by Cabinet in September 2015.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Continue to support Catalyst in delivery of the Volunteering Strategy and support plans to include the Volunteers Market (as part of Volunteering Month) in the annual programme of events supported by the Council Events Framework.

Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To update Cabinet on the implementation of the Volunteering Strategy for the Borough which was endorsed by Cabinet on 10th September 2015. It follows a previous update in May 2016.

Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in paragraphs 9 and 11 of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of paragraphs 12 - 17 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in paragraph 16 of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, in accordance with paragraph 18 of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 17 of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in paragraph 17 of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in paragraph 18 of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (paragraph 19 of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in paragraph 18 of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in paragraph 20 of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) paragraph 21 of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (paragraph 22 of the code)

**AGENDA ITEM
REPORT TO CABINET
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REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

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VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY UPDATE

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the implementation of the Borough-wide Volunteering Strategy Framework “Better Together” which was originally endorsed by Cabinet in September 2015.

RECOMMENDATION:

Cabinet is recommended to:

- Continue to support Catalyst in delivery of the Volunteering Strategy and support plans to include the Volunteers Market (as part of Volunteering Month) in the annual programme of events supported by the Council Events Framework.

BACKGROUND

1. This report follows previous reports made to Cabinet describing the development of a Volunteering Strategy for the Borough (September 2015) and its initial implementation (May 2016).
2. The development of a Volunteering Strategy for the Borough is something Cabinet supported as part of its commitment to delivering the Key Objective in the Council Plan to:

“Support the continued development of a strong and vibrant voluntary, community and social enterprise Sector”

3. The development and delivery of the Volunteering Strategy, entitled “Better Together”, is being led by Catalyst Stockton in partnership with the Council and other key stakeholders in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE). A copy of the Strategy is attached at **Appendix 1**.

DETAIL

4. Following Cabinet endorsement of the Strategy in September 2015 a steering group was established by Catalyst to develop an action plan that has been used to organise and drive forward delivery of the strategy across all four of the areas identified in the original strategy:



Promotion, Communication, Branding and Awareness raising

5. The promotion, communication, branding and awareness raising of volunteering in the borough has been drawn together under the “Stockton on Tees Volunteers” brand:



6. The promotional work has been led by Catalyst and in particular Lesley Makin who has been appointed to lead on this work. A great deal of work has been done promote and develop the brand as the first port of call and co-ordination point for volunteering the borough. There are of course a number of national brands such as Do-it.org and the Royal Voluntary Service and other local organisations such as Volunteers which provide opportunities across the Tees Valley and of course many organisations who continue to promote their own volunteering opportunities directly. However we think there is also a place for a Stockton on Tees brand to provide a vehicle for co-ordination, encouragement of volunteering in the borough and support (especially to local and smaller organisations). The Stockton on Tees Volunteer brand is becoming well recognised and having a positive influence on volunteering in the borough:
7. Communication and promotion work has been carried out directly through the Volunteering Partnership (see below) through the many Catalyst VCSE sector communications channels such as Voice, the e-bulletin, annual conference and breakfast meetings. It has also been promoted through the Volunteers Market, through the media and through the Catalyst annual awards. Work continues on this through the 2017 Way Forward plan.

Pre-Volunteering support and advice

8. The Stockton Volunteers Steering group chaired by Catalyst provides volunteering support and advice to organisations through the Volunteering Partnership. This partnership was formed in December 2016 following a series of discussions between key VCSE stakeholder organisations, The first full Volunteering Partnership was launched on 6th December 2016 at Preston Hall. 58 people attended and gave strong feedback on the objectives and delivery of the Volunteering Strategy. The second partnership meeting was held on 23rd March 2017, with 35 organisations attending, this session delivered on some of the actions identified in the December meeting, namely information on DBS checks and a presentation on the value of volunteers under the age of 18.
9. The Partnership continues to thrive with meetings in July and November looking into the introduction of a quality standard for organisations that use volunteers (such as that introduced in County Durham) and an extended joint training and development programme. The Partnership has identified that one of the services needed by many looking for volunteering opportunities is support to help them build their confidence and skills in order to prepare them to then find volunteering opportunities. This has been a recurring theme and one that has not been resolved as many organisations are willing to train able volunteers but are not set-up to work in a “pre-volunteering” way to support those with confidence or mental health issues that preclude them from volunteering. The Partnership continues to work to find an approach to address this need.

Opportunity Take up

10. Driving increased take-up of volunteering opportunities in the borough is a key strand of the strategy and it is recognised that there are many aspects to this area of work:
 - Providing easily accessible information about all opportunities eg. through an on-line platform
 - Promoting the benefits of volunteering
 - Running targeted recruitment of volunteers to meet identified gaps (services/project related or sections of the community)
 - Increasing employer supported volunteering
 - Developing ‘pop-up’ volunteering opportunities for those who aren’t able to commit to regular and ongoing projects and services
 - Arranging annual showcase events to promote opportunities
11. The issue that has caused much discussion in this area of work has been around how an online brokerage for volunteer recruitment can best be managed. Various options for an online

approach have been discussed and investigated including national brokerage platforms, bespoke software developed for the VCSE and other local services developed by infrastructure organisations. It was agreed by VCSE and local authority members of the steering group that a platform for volunteering in Stockton would be established to gauge the appetite for developing it further and, crucially, investing more time and money into both the software and the staff time to manage the website.

12. A “basic” pilot site was developed by Catalyst and launched on 1st June 2016 under the Stockton Volunteers brand as www.stocktonvolunteers.org.uk. The site was improved and developed followed a review at the Volunteering Partnership in December 2016 and continues to be developed. The web stats for the last three months are shown below:



13. Sessions are down in the past three months, however this correlates with a same dip in visits that we saw last year – probably a result of everyone going back to school and the run up to the winter months. The site is averaging 100 visitors a week who go beyond the front page, which is nearly doubled from the average monthly visits for this time last year. Bounce rate – the measure of people who come to the first page and then leave - is artificially high as there is a project called Stockton Volunteering in Stockton, California. Bounce rate amongst UK visitors is much lower and hovers around 34%, which is well within industry averages, even bordering on good. It is considered that the site has developed positively over 2017 and a commitment to driving up usage (both in the 49 organisations currently posting opportunities and in people looking for opportunities should be undertaken for the next 6 months followed by a further review in 2018. Feedback from the sector has been welcoming of it in principle and in practice by those using it and the need to advertise it even more.

14. Continued work to drive take-up of volunteering opportunities continues with promotion to employers and the provision of pop-up opportunities. The Growing Up Stockton programme is providing opportunities for young people in Stockton to take part in volunteering opportunities at the Council (such as SIRF Correspondents) the programme is now registered with v-inspired so that the volunteering hours lead to a recognised volunteering award..
15. Further promotion of volunteering opportunities has taken at two annual showcase Volunteering Markets – held during June in 2016 and 2017 as part of volunteering month. The evaluation of the 2017 is attached at **Appendix 2**. The events have been extremely successful and provide a great basis for even further growth in 2018. In light of the positive feedback on the 2017 market it is proposed that the Market is added to the annual events programme to be supported by the SBC Event Framework.

Skills Development and Accreditation / Reward and Recognition

16. The Volunteering Partnership is currently exploring options for the development of an accreditation (kite mark) scheme for organisations who use volunteers. The partnership is also developing a package of training for organisations.
17. Both Catalyst and the Council continue to undertake activity to reward and recognise volunteers. The annual Catalyst Awards in July celebrated the contribution of volunteers in the Volunteer of the Year Award category:

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Awarded to an individual aged 25 years or older who has made a difference in Stockton through their volunteering.

Award Sponsored by **Bluefin**

Winner:
Luke John Frost

Winner:
Luke John Frost puts countless hours into making a difference to the people of Thornaby by setting up Thornaby Partnership four years ago. Luke works tirelessly to make sure his ideas have a positive impact on the local community.

The partnership has gone from strength to strength; they have recently opened the Community Hub, which is a meeting place for people of all ages and helps ease social isolation. Through the Adult Learning Zone they offer courses such as cooking on a budget and craft making. Luke also manages the Teesside Youth Zone project, giving the young people of Thornaby the opportunity to enjoy the facilities at the Tees Barrage. In addition, Luke also oversees Thornaby Community Kitchen and The Point Food Bank.

Luke is also a Community Health Ambassador on behalf of the Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees Clinical Commissioning Group, gathering opinions from local people to improve health and social care. He is a passionate and motivated person who aims to make a positive impact in his local community.

★ Finalists ★

Alice Dent
Nominated for her incredible work with multiple organisations. Alice has volunteered with the Cleveland Fire Safety Network for over eight years. She also volunteers with the Stroke Society supporting people to become mobile again. Aged 77, Alice shows no signs of slowing down.

Bernard Bousefield
Nominated for his hard work supporting the Sporting STEPS project. Bernard has a learning disability and has spent most of his life in day services. Since being referred to STEPS he has become an inspiration to others, going above and beyond to help anyone and everyone.

Lesley Collinson
Nominated for her work with the food bank run from Thornaby Baptist Church. Lesley coordinates volunteers from local churches giving those in need access to nutritious food. She also has supported foodbank users to complete a cooking course to achieve employability skills.

13

Volunteering was further celebrated in the Mayor's Civic Awards with recognition for volunteers in both the group and individual award categories:



Bloodrun Emergency Voluntary Service

Service to Community Award – groups and organisations

Bloodrun Emergency Voluntary Service (EVS) ferries essential blood supplies by motorcycle between North East NHS hospitals and trusts, saving the NHS money and providing a free, professional and reliable service. The volunteers work out of hours, giving up their evenings and weekends, to help the lives of others. The team regularly covers 1,500 miles a week and responds to over 3,000 callouts per year.



Martin Dixon's family – daughter, Hannah, son, Martin and wife Tina

Service to Community – Individual Award

Martin Dixon was a volunteer for the Bloodrun EVS when he was involved in a road traffic accident in November 2016. Sadly Martin passed away - losing his own life whilst helping to save others. This award is in dedication to his memory.

The value of volunteering has been further recognised with the nomination of two Stockton on Tees VCSE organisations for the Queens' Voluntary Service awards in 2017.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report. Delivery of the strategy can be supported and delivered within existing budgets.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Delivery of the strategy is considered to be low risk.

COUNCIL PLAN THEMES

Delivery of the strategy supports the Council Plan theme to support strong and vibrant communities.

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT

N/A for this update report.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

The report provides an update on the strategy which has been consulted on widely across the VCSE sector.

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Volunteering Month 2017: Market Event Feedback Report





Volunteering Month 2017: Market Event Feedback Report

On 9th June 2017, Stockton Volunteers hosted an event on the High Street in Stockton Town Centre. It was the first event of this kind ever hosted by Stockton Volunteers. This event saw 55 organisations taking over the event marquee and holding stalls of food, information, products and fun. The event was well attended, and after it was finished, participating organisations were asked to take part in a survey to feed back their experiences and opinions; in the hopes that any further events would be able to make improvements.

Consider the type of music played, to ensure that future band bookings encourage both visitors and conversation

It will still be necessary for organisations to receive an Event Plan as it holds information on health and safety. However, future events will require a stronger message on the importance of reading the document, and ensuring that all those involved in the event are aware of its contents.

Earlier promotion of the market within local businesses and organisations is required

Provision of additional welcome notes which identify toilets, coffee shops, and other amenities for the stall holders. A Stall minder may be required to allow holders to access comfort breaks.

Additional types of stalls and activities, within health and safety limits, would be a welcome addition, to bring variety and interest to the event.

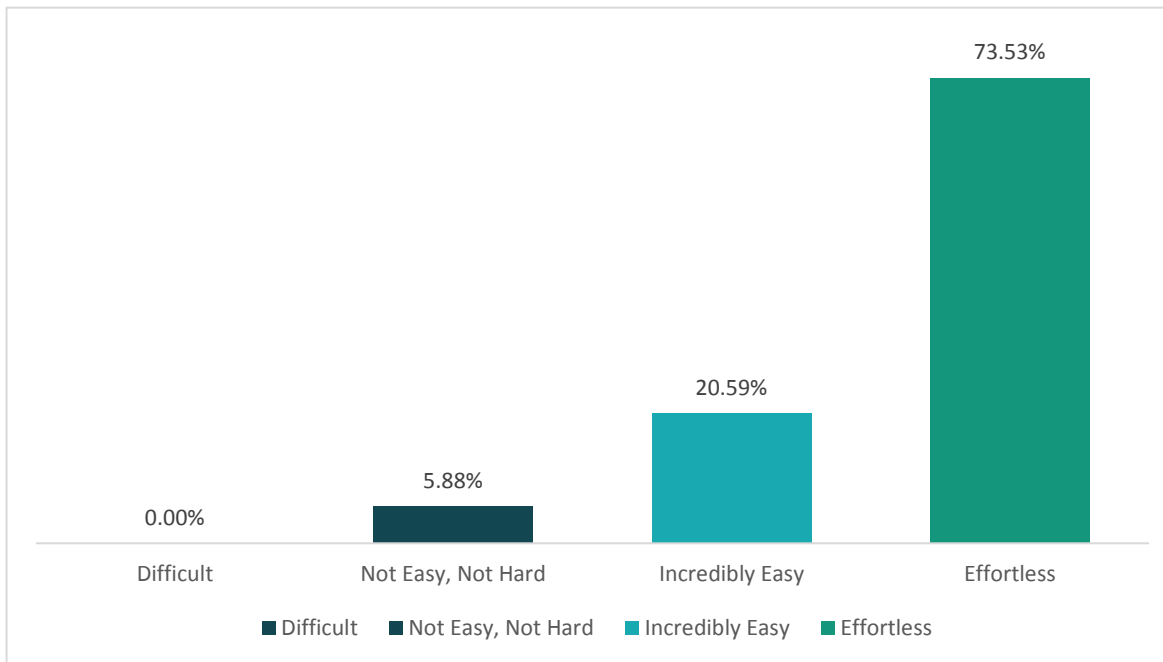
Much additional work is required in promotion of the event to the general public, and a comprehensive communications and marketing plan needs to be enacted and followed, at least two months prior to the next event.

Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 1

Did you find the booking process easy?

Additional Comments:



"brill idea but to long and the band brill idea but not next to the stands"
"No well organised."
"Real buzz about the place, well attended by the sector, Catalyst and the public :)"

Report:

A full booking, briefing and information pack was created to facilitate the process of organisations attending the event. The booking pack was intended to ease the burden on the organisations, to enable attendees from all manner and sizes of charities. We did not want to present a bureaucratic barrier to anyone who wanted a stall on the day.



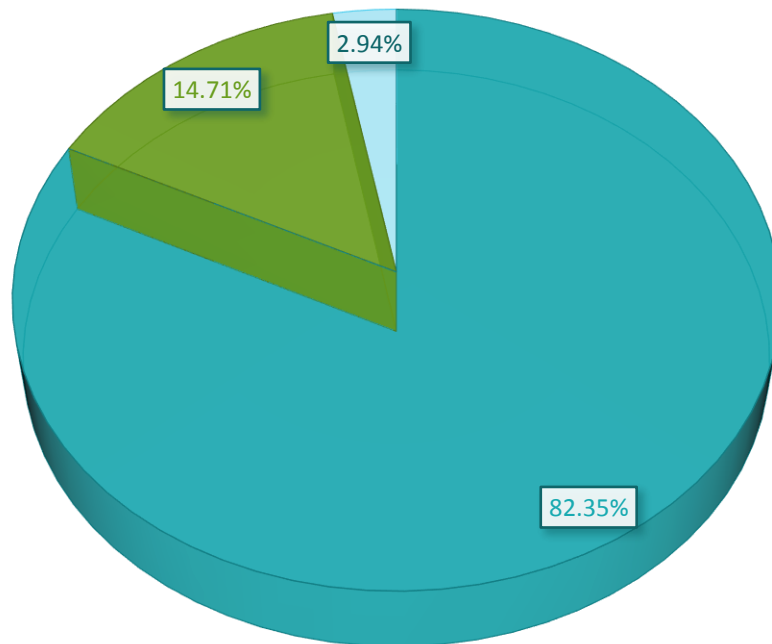
Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 2

Did we communicate the details of the event to you properly?

Additional Comments:

- Your communications were great! I knew everything that was going on and the day went smoothly.
- The day went well, but there were times when we didn't know what was happening.
- It was terrible, your communication needs serious improvement.



"Perhaps consult with stakeholders beforehand about length of time to be available. There were also some empty tables which was a shame - if notice was given could they be filled. If no notice was given, an absence fee should be levied next time."

Report:

This first event for Catalyst's Stockton Volunteers was 'piggy-backed' onto a Stockton Borough Council event scheduled for the following day. As such we followed SBC's Event Plan, which included a stipulation that groups remained until 4pm. However this was ignored by some organisations, or those who had not read the Event Plan, which was sent prior to the event, and tables became empty from around 1.30pm, which created a domino effect with other groups, leaving eventually large gaps. The organising team did request people stay, however most refused stating they had other commitments and needed to leave.



Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 3

Rate the ease of accessing the event site!

Additional Comments:



Incredibly Difficult

Not Bad

Incredibly Easy

Average rating, out of 20, was **13.47**, putting ease of
 access to the site at just over **NOT BAD**

"Parking situation all became a bit confusing, having to move my car several times, which was not very practical, and nowhere to park close by when the event had ended.

"Locals had said they were unaware of the event."

Report:

Catalyst has secured temporary parking to unload during the 2 hours setting up period, which was about 20 meters from the Marquee. Once unloaded organisations were asked to park somewhere else appropriate for the length of time of the event, car park map was included in the Event Plan.

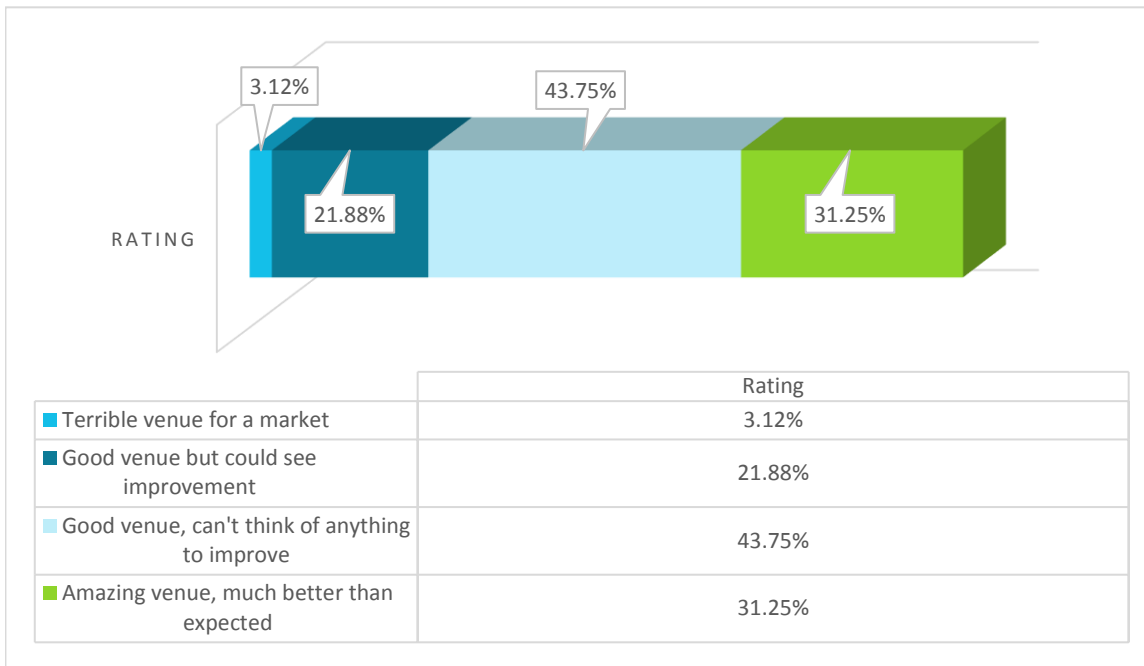
Stockton Borough Council did circulate the event via their Town Centre Business links, but perhaps this was later than practicable for business to react.

Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 4

What did you think of the marquee and the facilities available?

Report:



Music is great crowd gatherer, however, as we learnt the volume can over power the discussion with prospective clients, although this was only in respect of one particular band. The question about the facilities of the marquee, provided some ideas for the future. Within the Event Plan organisations were informed on the space allowance and what equipment was supplied, on arrival each organisation was welcomed and provided information on nearest toilets; coffee shop etc however many organisations had shift changes during the day and information potentially wasn't cascaded down. Offering to be stall minders is something to include in 2018.

Health & Safety always factors into any event and this was no exception presenting problems for cooking/preparation of refreshments. Whilst not insurmountable would present additional supervision and staff that currently aren't within Catalyst's capacity. Additional verbal comments during the course the Market include the desire for wider diversity of stall types, The decision was taken to celebrate the sector rather focus just on Volunteering, so organisations had freedom to decide what they want to deliver on the day, being more prescriptive may have excluded some organisations due to capacity; financial constraints etc.

Additional Comments for Question 4:

Music was too loud - where people were seeking information it was difficult to hold a conversation.

Could have done with some tea making facility in the marquee

Had to move tables as was located at the entrance of the marquee and contents of the stalls were blowing everywhere.

We were placed at the entrance, all our materials were blowing away, it was freezing cold and we were placed so our backs were towards the entrance. all other stalls around us were moved

Toilet facilities needed. For an organisation only able to allow/afford 1 attendee, maybe a stall minder would be useful to allow loo breaks...or a coffee run.

Perhaps a map or birds eye view of the marquee set up would have been useful when planning what to bring to fill the space/tables provided or in my case what not to bring. Next time I will book another table or two for more space.

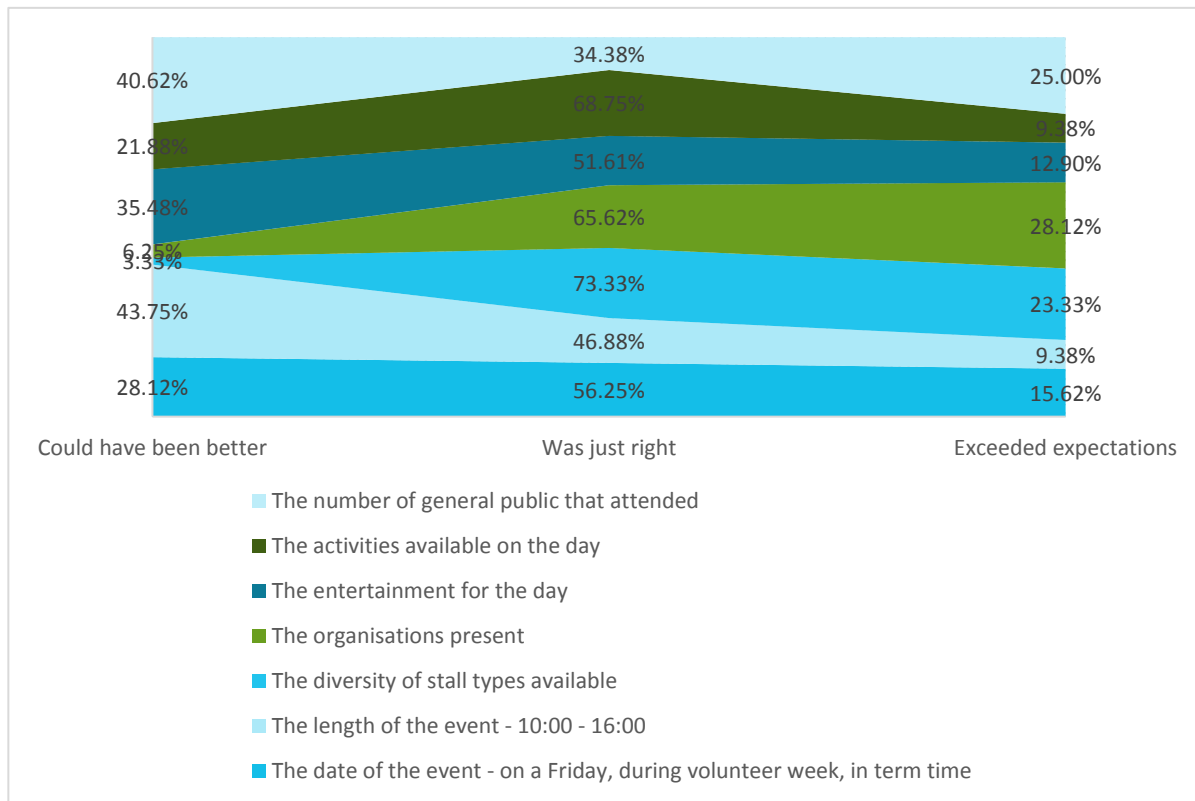


Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 5

What did you think of the marquee and the facilities available?

Report:



Day and times of the Market were commented upon, unfortunately the cost of hiring the Marquee independently is beyond the capacity of Catalyst, at this point, so we bound by the dates preceding existing events hosted by SBC.

Requests to 'group' like-minded organisations together was considered and delivered in terms of those organisations working with the environment were situated in one area, similarly organisations requesting to be side-by-side was also facilitated. Organisations needing electricity had to be situated in an area where cables could be secured safely i.e. not going across walk ways. Initially we had aspirations to theme the Marquee, but as organisations booked and made their various demands, including 'breaking-up' stalls that were selling items it was apparent with the exception of the environmental project this wouldn't be possible.

Additional Comments to Question 5:

<p><i>"The event was too long; 10 till 1 would have been reasonable enough. It would be a good idea to have services who do the same thing together, so have the marquee in sections that way the public could go to the part that interested them the most"</i></p>	<p><i>"Im sure people will have said this but the 1st band was too loud to be able to talk to people"</i></p>	<p><i>"The music would have been a welcome addition had it have not been so loud. Hard to chat with interested people above noise. Many people commented about this and I sincerely believe is why numbers dwindled as day went on and why some stalls chose to the pack up early...against request of others."</i></p>	<p><i>"Good entertainment just the volume level was excessive"</i></p>
<p><i>"The only thing I'd change would be holding the event during school holidays instead to capture a more diverse audience & shortening it slightly. Otherwise it was great!"</i></p>	<p><i>"All stallholders were told to trade until 4pm, but some left at 1pm, and many wanted to leave early, so we were then forced to leave at 3pm before schools had come out. Which May had increased the footfall."</i></p>	<p><i>"Think a Saturday would have been more appropriate to target young people"</i></p>	<p><i>"MUSIC WAS TO LOUD SOMETIMES, IT WAS HARD TO TALK TO PEOPLE"</i></p>
<p><i>"Entertainment was too noisy."</i></p>	<p><i>"Late finish for a Friday 2.30 would have been better. Also difficult to communicate when band was on."</i></p>	<p><i>"Maybe have the event 10-3pm in the future"</i></p>	<p><i>"The band music were very close to the stands - difficult to speak with people."</i></p>



Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 6

We promoted this event through Facebook, Twitter, and through posters in community centres, shops and supermarkets. What did you think of our publicity efforts, and how can we improve them in the future?

<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good, Photographs could now be used to inform people about the event.</i>	<i>Did not see any publicity except on Catalyst. Perhaps event should have been on a Saturday, or during a school holiday.</i>	<i>Members of the general public seemed to be unaware that the event was on.</i>	<i>good</i>	<i>More awareness raising in advance with local groups and organisations - and some more focus on those stall holders to also push to their service users more</i>	<i>Excellent. Do the same again.</i>
<i>We saw and engaged plenty via social media. OB via local radio or similar may help.</i>	<i>Well promoted</i>	<i>They were good and our marketing assistant really appreciated the pre written scripts to put on social media - thank you</i>	<i>Excellent effort</i>	<i>ok</i>	<i>Great</i>	<i>Publicity was good - we also publicised</i>
<i>I think it was advertised well</i>	WAS GOOD	<i>We felt this was publicised sufficiently.</i>	<i>all good</i>	<i>I think the publicity was fine</i>	<i>Definitely well publicised on social media.</i>	<i>Very good</i>

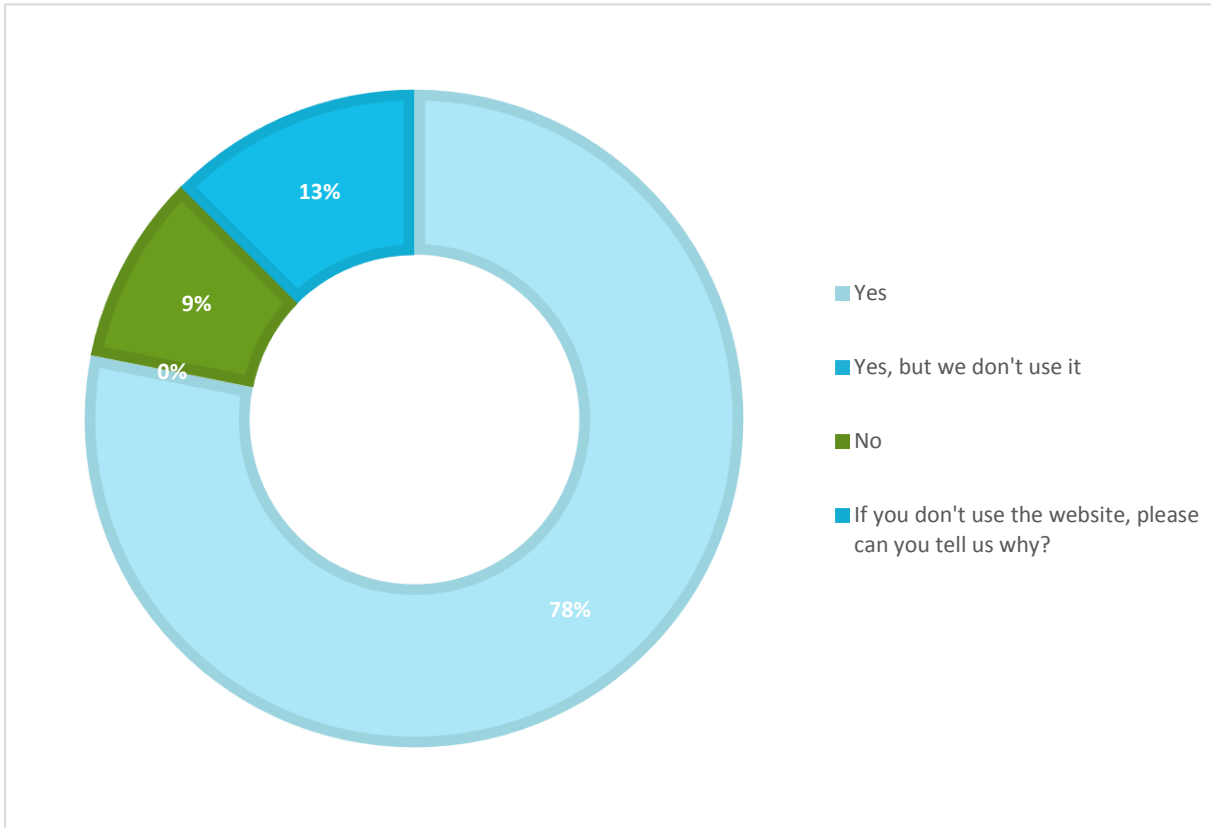


Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 7

Are you aware that you can list your volunteering opportunities through www.stocktonvolunteers.co.uk

Additional Comments:



need to get logged on and register etc.

Wer don't currently have volunteering opportunities.

Haven't got around to adding our information.

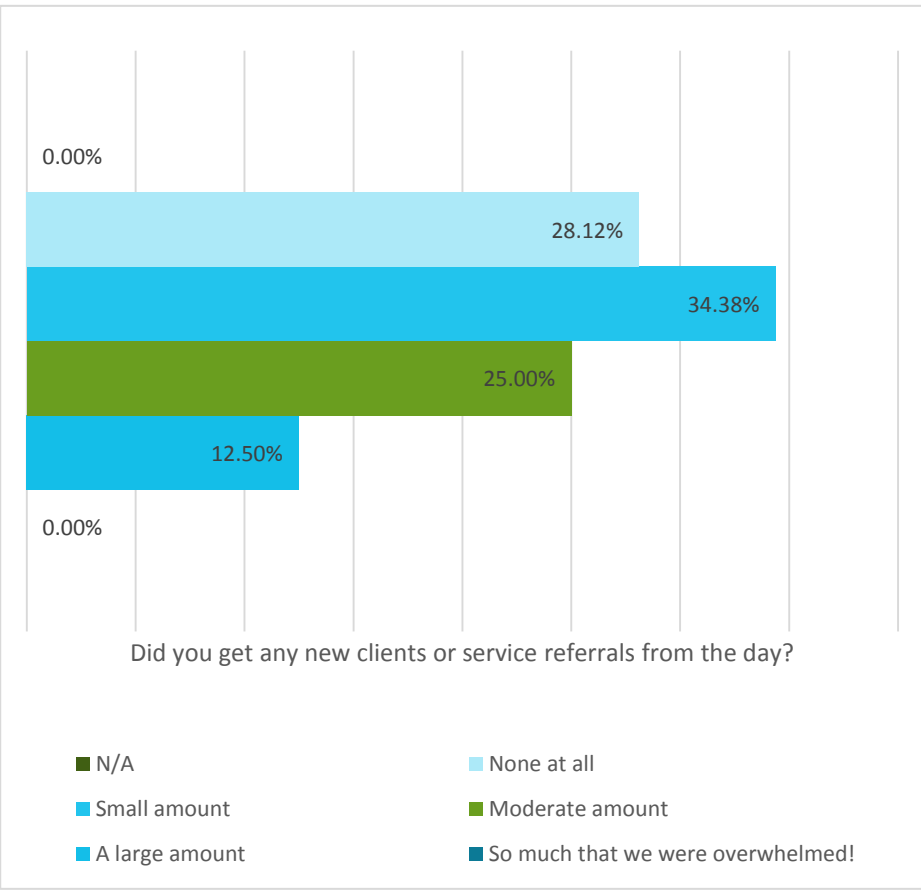
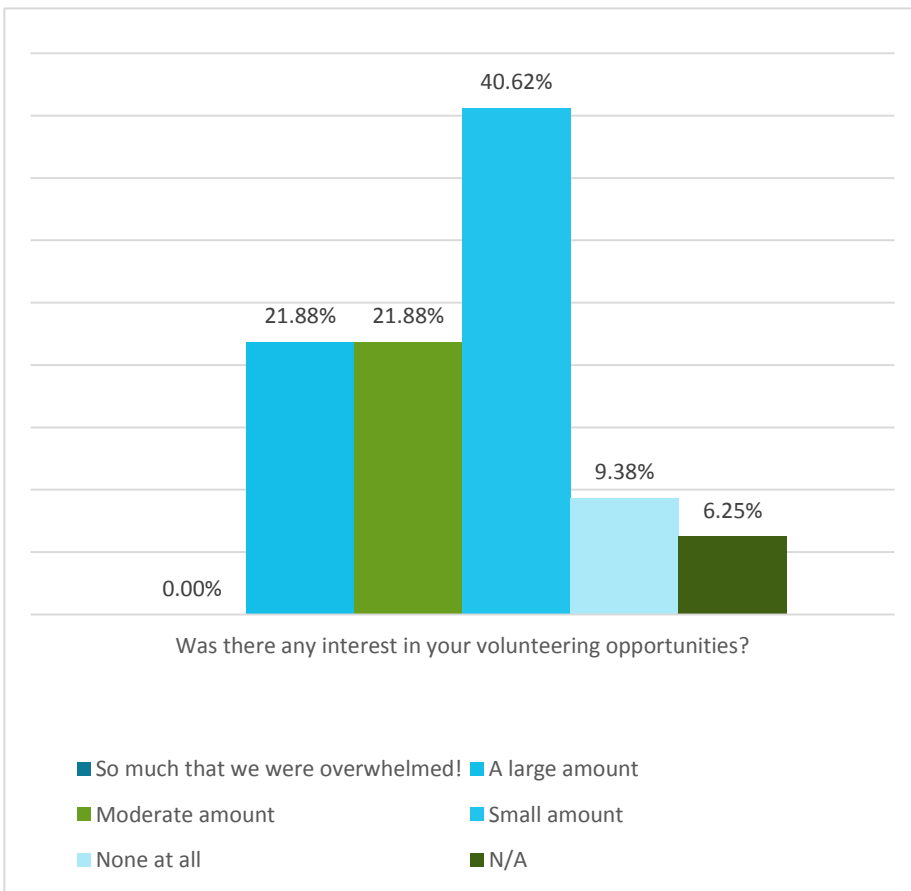
I am new to role and prioritising. I intend to use it once our needs are established



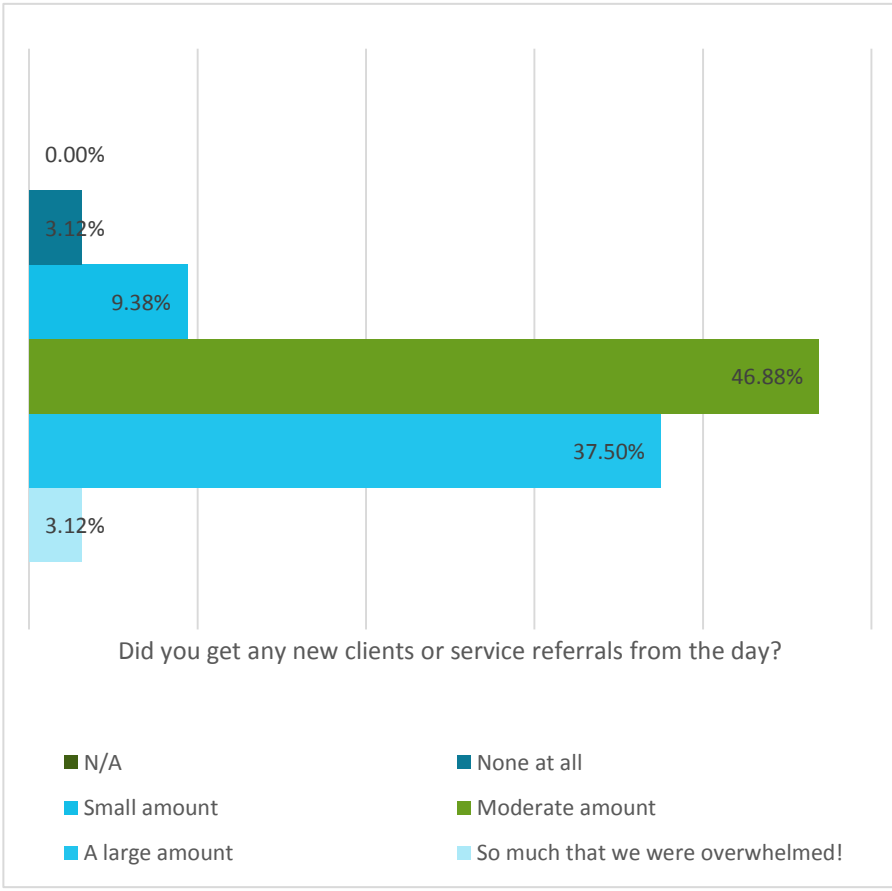
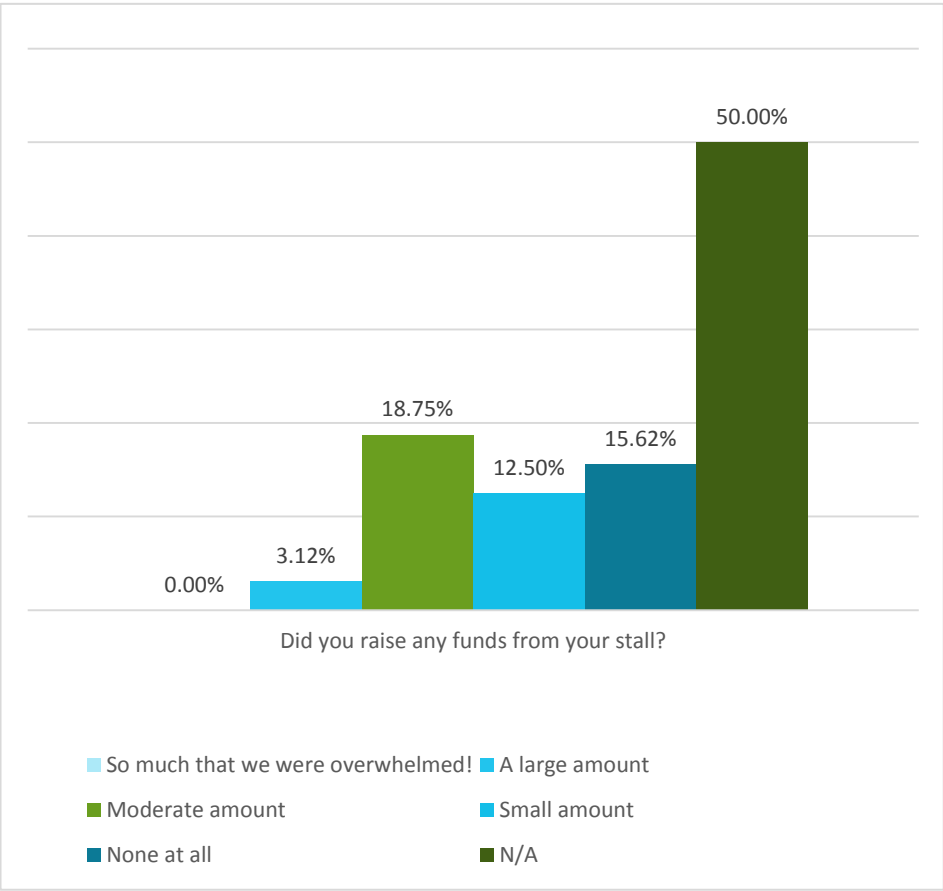
Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 8

How did the day go for you? Part 1



How did the day go for you? Part 2

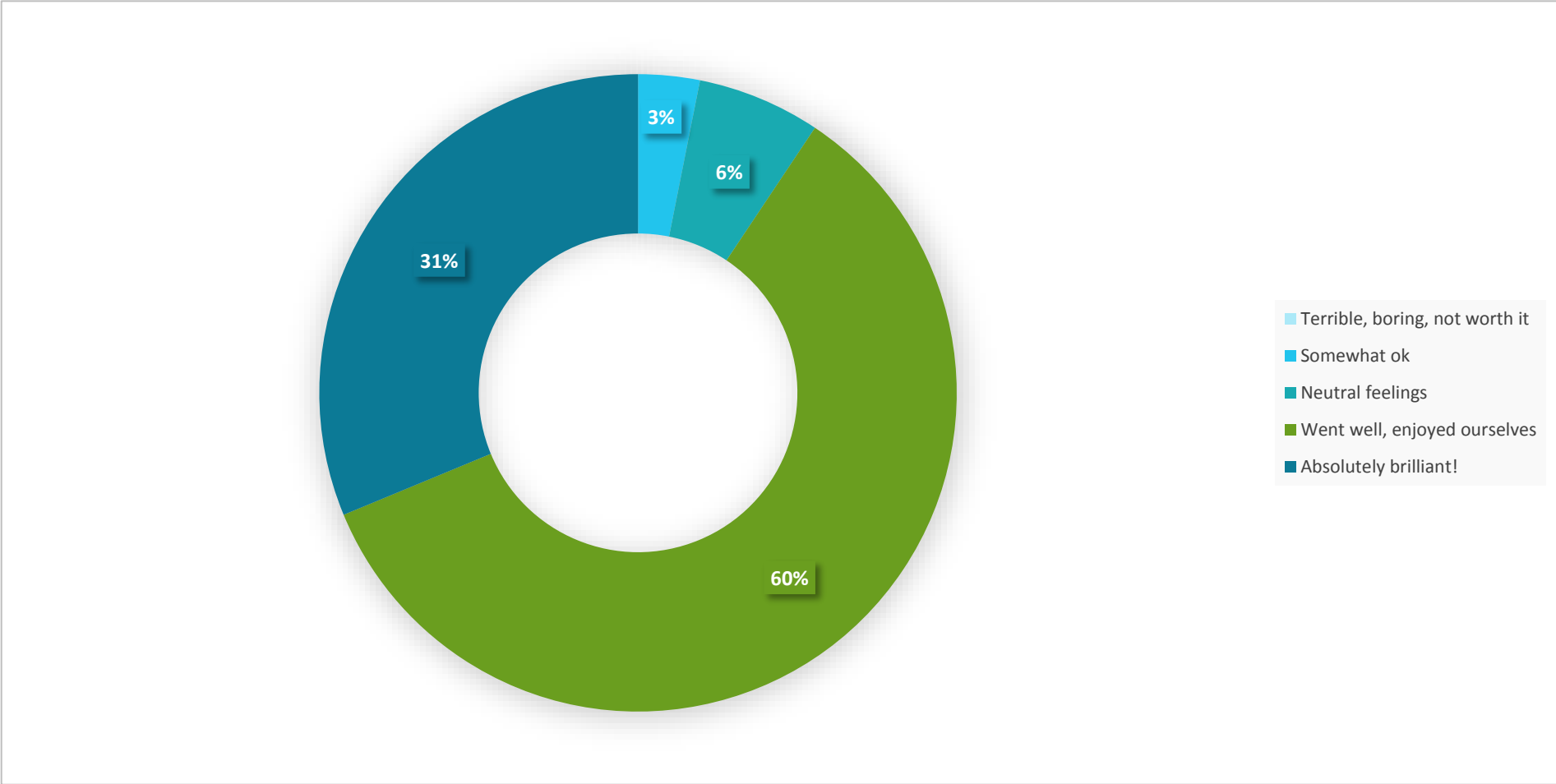




Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 9

Did you enjoy the day?



Additional Comments to Question 9:

Thank you for a well organised and informative event!

We made £108.50 for the RNLI Hartlepool, and the remainder of our leftover goods went to the British Red Cross shop.

We at Happy Talk had a lovely day both in monetary terms, prospective stroke members and at least one future volunteer. Thank you to all.

Too early to measure impact. Great opportunity to network and understand how well the voluntary sector provides much needed support in the community

Real feel good factor throughout the day - a great sense of what the sector delivers, contributes

Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 10

How about a quote about the day for our reports and next year's advertising?

A lot of people knew more about a stroke than before the event.

An enjoyable community event that informed and entertained the team from Shelter!

Engaged with more potential volunteers than expected, especially under 21s

Lots of great opportunities in one place - good for networking and promoting.

Great way to engage the public

Only thing I would add - perhaps drinks and food stall

*Fantastic event for getting to know what support is available to Stockton residents.
Thanks*

A real celebration of those groups, individuals and organisations who want to make a change, improve and make things better in our communities!

If you want to promote your service to the general public you need to be at this event! Excellent networking opportunity.

Good way of promoting your organisation and attracting potential volunteers.

Catalyst true to its name engaging the voluntary sector and community together

Buzzing atmosphere, lots of interesting information and opportunities.

This event was about raising our profile and some much needed funds. We met over 110 people and achieved both objectives.

COULD NOT BELIEVE HOW MUCH GREAT WORK IS CARRIED OUT IN STOCKTON BY CHARITIES THAT HELP PEOPLE

It was great to get together with other voluntary sector organisations, share partnership ideas and provide information to the public

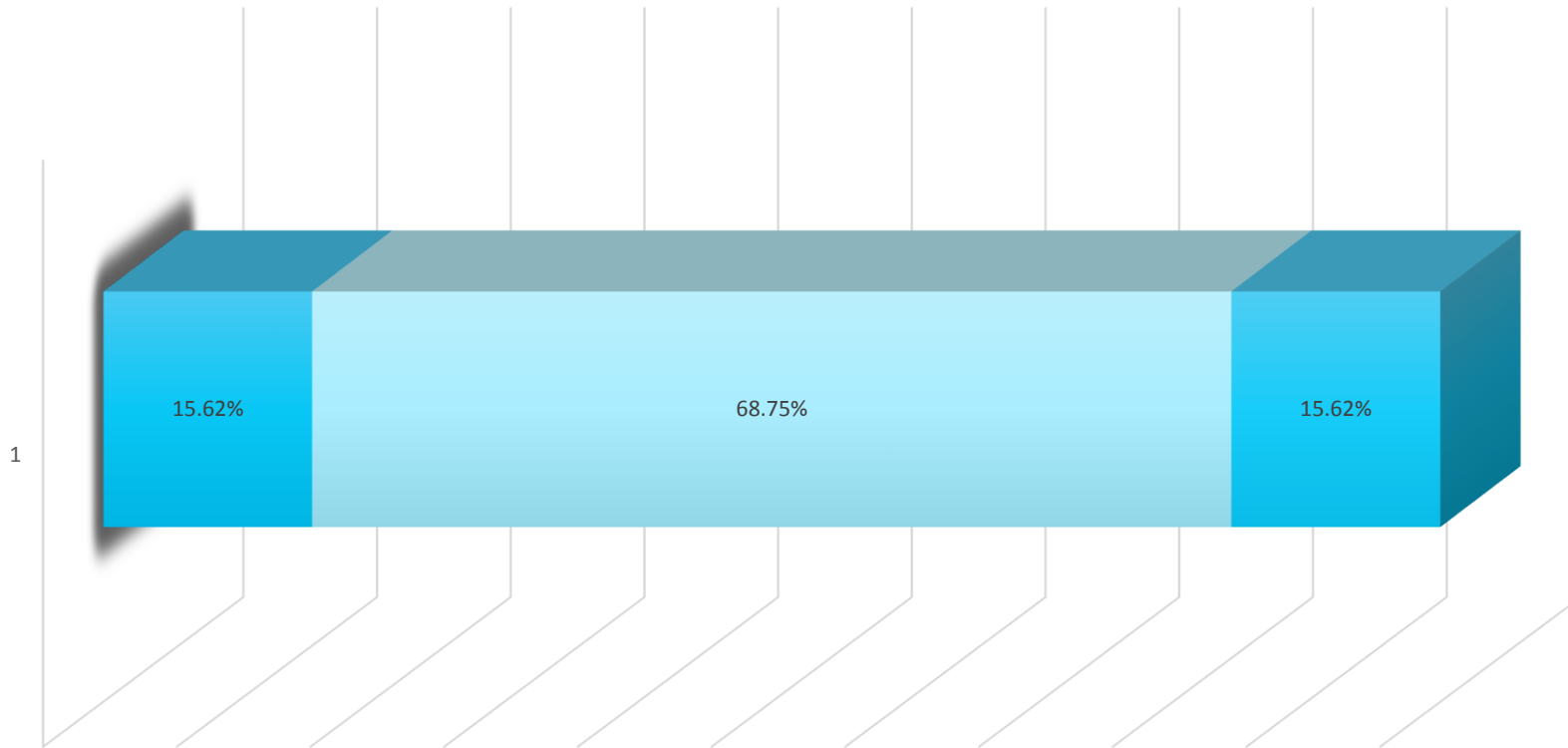
Come along and sample just what volunteering means to Stockton.



Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 11

Do you have any ideas on what we could do for next year's celebration event?



	1
■ Same thing again!	15.62%
■ Same thing, with something new added in!	68.75%
■ Try something new!	15.62%



Do you have an idea of anything new that we could do next year?

Potentially something more for the celebration of the volunteers themselves. or a culture festival. i.e. hennas, different foods, entertainments and stalls, inflatables etc.

More entertainment perhaps as we were at one end and couldn't see much that was going on

I think alot of people walk past a stall and i never feel the amount of people you speak to justifies you standing there, especially when it is a long walk way through as it can be intimidating for the public and they hurry through trying to avoid eye contact but trying to look at the information. I worked in Volunteer Centre for 5 years and tried to think of different ways of doing it. I think manless stalls where people can stop and look/read information without feeling like they will be pounced on, then the organisations doing something different away from the stalls ie, we could show a video of a family talking about being affected by imprisonment and how our volunteers helped them, then on a microphone we could say if you are interested in Nepacs go to our stall or speak to me for more info. And just keep rotating the speakers. Just an idea. Ive always thought Volunteer centres could be the ones at the event all day with manless stalls and then if anyone was interested they could take a leaflet and contact us afterwards.

As mentioned in previous question. Cafe with refreshments to buy might be good. Especially in the great weather

I think the formula for this event was just right and worth replicating. Follows the principle of if 'it isn't broke, don't fix it'.

Perhaps a coffee area
A great event and well organised - Well done



Catalyst Volunteering Month 2017 - Feedback Report

Question 12

We promoted this event through Facebook, Twitter, and through posters in community centres, shops and supermarkets. What did you think of our publicity efforts, and how can we improve them in the future?

<p><i>Have more home made or home grown products/ produce. Flowers/ vegetables etc.</i></p>	<p><i>people to direct the public and encourage participation e.g one to one support points</i></p>	<p><i>Perhaps some stalls with things like crafts for sale just so there was some variation of stalls for visitors</i></p>	<p><i>I WOULD TRY TO ADD SOME CASE HISTORY STORYS PLAYING ON A SCREEN FOR PEOPLE TO WATCH. EVERYBODY LOVES A SUCCESS STORY</i></p>	<p><i>As previous Drinks Food stall, Maybe take a leaf out of Stockton Council book and have publicity gimmic - Storm troopers etc</i></p>	<p><i>offer it for the full week of national volunteering week? or have the same setup in different locations each day during the week?</i></p>	<p><i>Fill the empty tables and turn the music down!</i></p>
<p><i>Interactive sessions whether this is making things, cooking, taster sessions etc. Maybe more stalls that sell goods/hand made products. And a quieter band ??</i></p> <p><i>Reduce timing - 10-3pm</i></p> <p><i>Have more items being sold on the day with charity shops</i></p> <p><i>Maybe have a programme with plays/ entertainment/demonstrations???</i></p>						
<p><i>as per 1st info band not next to the stalls great idea but at the end of the tent</i></p>	<p><i>Not so many fund raising stalls</i></p>	<p><i>Tea making facilities, more stalls with just not leaflets and ensure everyone stayed till the arranged finish time.</i></p>	<p><i>Just the day. A Saturday would be busier.</i></p>	<p><i>Possibly have more local produce stalls to advertise just what is available from the oldest market in the North of England.</i></p>	<p><i>More food stalls for people to try or purchase on the day.</i></p>	<p><i>It is keeping it fresh so not sure</i></p>



Better together

Stockton-on-Tees Volunteering Strategy

2015 - 2018



Stockton-on-Tees
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Executive Summary of Stockton-on-Tees Volunteering Strategy

Welcome to the first Volunteering Strategy for the borough of Stockton-on-Tees which has been developed through a partnership comprising Catalyst Stockton, Tees Valley Community Foundation and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

'What is volunteering'?

Volunteering is described as an unpaid activity where someone gives their time to help a not-for-profit organisation or an individual who they are not related to.

One of the better-known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Unpaid volunteers are often the glue that holds a community together. Volunteering allows people to connect to their community and make it a better place. However, volunteering is a two-way street, and it can benefit the volunteer as much as the organisation they choose to help. Volunteering can help people to make new friends, expand their network, boost confidence and develop new skills.

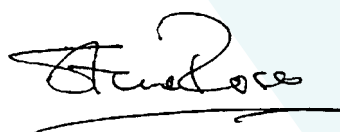
Volunteering is thriving in our borough with lots of people giving their time to help others. Sometimes this is on a regular basis, sometimes infrequently and sometimes as a one-off activity. There are many organisations in all sectors that use volunteers to help deliver their services in a wide variety of ways. The contribution made by volunteers is often essential in ensuring that projects and services are embedded in the community and reaching the people they need to.

'Why do we need a volunteering strategy for the borough'?

At both national and local levels, volunteering is regarded as a key mechanism by which communities can be strengthened and civil society built. With the rising demand on services and economic pressures there is an enhanced need to look to local communities to provide some of the support they need themselves rather than depending on the state.

This strategy describes research undertaken to establish the range of volunteering in the borough and the gaps that need to be filled. It is intended to be a framework from which a more cohesive approach is taken to support everybody who wants to volunteer as well as organisations in all sectors that are involved with volunteering.

The key areas of action are described in the strategy as well as those accountable for taking it forward. Most importantly, the strategy describes how volunteers will be acknowledged, and rewarded for the work they undertake for the benefit of people and communities in the borough.



Steve Rose

Chief Executive – Catalyst



Cllr Steve Nelson

Access, Communities and
Community Safety

Lead Cabinet Member, SBC



Hugh McGouran

Chief Executive, Tees Valley
Community Foundation

A volunteering strategy for the borough of Stockton-on-Tees

This volunteering strategy has been developed through a partnership comprising Catalyst, Tees Valley Community Foundation and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council who commissioned some research to help inform and shape it. The research was comprehensive and sought the views and contributions of a wide range of people and organisations with an interest in, or experience of volunteering.

It also sought out examples of practice elsewhere as well as presenting the landscape of volunteering across the borough at the time of the commission and exploring motivations for volunteering. A summary of the research findings is presented in the section 'Why do we need a volunteering strategy for the borough'?

What do we mean by volunteering?

The UK does not have a common single or legal definition of volunteering. Volunteer England describes it in general terms as:

"An unpaid activity where someone gives their time to an organisation or an individual who they are not related to." Other definitions include "carrying out unpaid activity for the benefit of a close relative and also where it is to benefit the environment."

Defining volunteering is further complicated by the introduction of terms such as 'informal volunteering' (where an individual gives unpaid help to somebody who is not a relative) and 'formal volunteering' where unpaid help is given as part of groups, clubs or organisations to the benefit of others or the environment. (Source: Home Office Citizenship Survey).

With this as a basis there is no pressure involved in giving the unpaid time, nor is the volunteering a mandatory requirement as part of any occupational or professional training. Using this definition the strategy will not be focussing on the following activities:

- Community sentences as part of the criminal justice system
- Work placements
- Internships



For the purposes of this strategy volunteering is taken to mean:

Unpaid activity voluntarily undertaken for the direct benefit of individuals (other than, or in addition to, close relatives), the community or organisations and to the volunteers themselves.

Why people volunteer

People are motivated to volunteer for a whole range of different reasons including:

- Because it's a good thing to do to 'give something back' to society
- To share a skill
- To get to know a community
- To help a friend or a relative
- They have spare time and see volunteering as doing something positive whilst at the same time getting to meet new people/make new friends
- As a means of gaining experience to support routes to employment
- To improve their own skills or confidence by doing things they might not otherwise get the chance to
- To improve their own health and well being
- Because they have an affinity with the cause or the group, sometimes as a result of their own experience
- For religious reasons
- To retain a skill and have an active role in the local community
- For fun

Why do we need a volunteering strategy?

At both national and local levels, volunteering is regarded as a key mechanism by which communities can be strengthened and civil society built. With the rising demand on services and economic pressures there is an enhanced need to look to local communities to provide some of the support they need themselves rather than depending on the state. Clearly, this isn't appropriate in all cases but there are numerous examples of success. Implementation of a volunteering strategy can also help build social capital through meeting the motivations and shared values of those who volunteer - generating a greater sense of community spirit and cohesion.

We recently undertook some work to better understand the picture of volunteering across the borough of Stockton-on-Tees both from the perspective of volunteers and organisations that use them.

The work reinforced some things we already knew but also highlighted a number of areas for us to consider and think about. A summary of that is presented below.

Volunteers are thriving in our borough with lots of people giving their time to help others. Sometimes this is on a regular basis, sometimes infrequently and sometimes as a one-off activity. We also have lots of organisations both in the public sector and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (VCSE) that use volunteers to help deliver their services.

This work ranges from small neighbourhood based organisations with no paid staff through to large voluntary organisations and social enterprises delivering public sector contracts of significant scale and size. This activity covers all geographical areas of the borough as well as communities of interest and need. The common factor in many instances is the contribution made by volunteers who often serve as the social capital necessary to ensure the projects and services are embedded in the community and reaching the people they need to.



From what we know the current routes into volunteering are generally via:

- Direct contact with individual VCSE organisations and/or public sector organisations, including schools
- Employer supported volunteering schemes
- Through faith-based organisations
- Viva Volunteer online portal
- Word of mouth
- Job Centre Plus
- 'Do it' national web portal

The benefits and positive impact of volunteering for individuals, communities and organisations are well documented nationally and locally the value of volunteers is routinely recognised and acknowledged through activity such as the Catalyst annual awards, Stockton Borough Council Civic Awards and similar community champion and sports volunteer awards through the local media.

However...

- Currently there isn't a single route or co-ordinated approach in relation to the opportunities available for anybody who wants to start volunteering. An internet search using 'volunteering in Stockton-on-Tees' returns over 70,000 results and no obvious pathway through them all. The first non-sponsored result directs people to the Stockton Borough Council website which only provides details of how to find out about volunteering opportunities in the Council.
- It's not always clear who is offering volunteering opportunities or who to approach
- It's not easy to identify whether the opportunities on offer are suitable for the individual wanting to volunteer.
- Organisations who are approached by willing volunteers who don't currently have any opportunities are often turning people away without being able to identify and signpost them to other services or organisations.
- Whilst most organisations have things in place to continue to support and develop volunteers this is varied. Some have a great deal of skill and expertise in volunteer recruitment, management, development and support and others don't have the resources to do it on a large scale.

- There isn't an obvious place for people to contact if they are simply thinking about volunteering and wondering if it is right for them and what sort of volunteer opportunity would they be best suited to.
- We also know that volunteering adds an immense amount of social value to our area and we believe it has a huge impact on both those who volunteer and those who they volunteer for but we haven't got any comprehensive or systematic way of capturing that and promoting it.

In 2009 Viva Volunteers was established by Tees Valley Community Foundation (TVCF) through a grant from the Central Area Partnership of the Local Strategic Partnership. It was set up in response to an identified need as a point of facilitated access and advice for individuals wishing to volunteer and looking for the right opportunity and also for organisations looking to recruit suitable volunteers. It built on the successful Professional Services Group (PSG) model within TVCF where organisations as part of their corporate social responsibility volunteered the time of professionals to support voluntary organisations. TVCF sustained Viva Volunteers beyond the life of the original grant through to December 2014 when, as part of their business remodelling, they changed the facilitated access and advice to an online portal linking to the national Do-it.org website.



Our vision for volunteering

The vision for volunteering in Stockton Borough is:

Volunteering is a positive experience for everyone involved and Stockton-on-Tees is a place where volunteering is part of the fabric of our communities.



Our plan for change

Whilst the commissioned research identified models of practice elsewhere, many included resource intensive traditional models of face-to-face brokerage services which are sustainable without a clear long term funding strategy or business development model in place.

This strategy is therefore based on an initial delivery plan formulated around a more sustainable framework model (see figure 1). The framework picks up all of the elements identified in the research with actions culminating in a month long programme of activity during June each year, as a local extension of the national Volunteers Week (first week in June). The aims of the strategy and resulting impact of the framework are based on the 5 strands suggested by Renaissance:

- Volunteering Diversity (range of opportunities, who is accessing them and who are the beneficiaries)
- Volunteering Quality (against the Volunteering England standards)
- Volunteering Value (social and financial return)
- Volunteering Voice (setting new policy agendas and developing best practice)
- Volunteer Dividend (rewards for volunteering including qualifications etc.).

Should the need for face-to-face brokerage continue an element of the delivery plan for the Steering Group could include the development and delivery of a funding strategy or a separate VCSE enterprise backed by a sustainable business model.

Framework for Volunteering across Stockton Borough - Figure 1



Awareness raising

Raising awareness of what volunteering is in all its various forms, what being a volunteer means in practice, different types of volunteering, myth busting, where to look for volunteering opportunities. All of these are an important part of making sure that people who have an interest already, or an interest sparked in volunteering, are clear about what they may be thinking about getting involved in. This is so that their potential journey into a volunteering experience is a positive one and based on a shared understanding of what it means.

Pre-Volunteering Advice and Support

Once people are aware of what it means to be a volunteer and have some ideas about the various types of volunteering many will be able to navigate their way to becoming an active volunteer themselves. Others may well benefit from some support and advice to make sure that they are volunteering for the right thing, in the right place. This would be beneficial both for them and the host organisation. Support and advice, for example in relation to understanding what their motivation is for volunteering; what skills or qualities do they have to offer or are they wanting to develop; how might volunteering impact on any benefits they are receiving; explaining and managing expectations in relation to self-presentation, communication and reliability. Signposting to other support to enhance or develop their skills prior to volunteering may be appropriate in some instances.

Opportunity Take-up

Bringing volunteer involving organisations together collectively on an annual or bi-annual basis (depending on need) to showcase opportunities and speak directly to potential volunteers (including those who have been through the pre-volunteering support) could help to ensure that people actively interested in pursuing volunteering are appropriately matched with an organisation with available opportunities. It would also provide an opportunity for potential volunteers to explore a wider range of opportunities than they otherwise might through web searches and direct approaches to organisations they are aware of. Available opportunities outside these events would still be promoted through existing channels and linked to the portal proposed as part of the promotion and communications strand of the framework.

'Pop-up' Volunteering

Not all volunteers will want to, or be able to, make the necessary commitment to volunteer on an ongoing or regular basis. This could be as a result of caring responsibilities, studies, work patterns or numerous other reasons. It may also be a way for people new to volunteering who aren't sure about volunteering on a regular basis to 'dip their toe in the water' or it may appeal to particular groups of potential volunteers. Many of these people have a lot to offer in terms of skills, qualities, enthusiasm and motivation to make a positive difference. Establishing one-off 'pop-up' volunteering opportunities are more likely to appeal to this group of volunteers and be of genuine value to a wide range of communities and organisations.

Volunteering Support

The initial and ongoing support needed by volunteers varies by individual volunteer and also on the size and capacity of the host organisation to provide it. In addition, some of the smaller organisations who rely on volunteers to deliver the services and activities they offer need help to support their volunteers. Through establishing a Volunteer Support Network these needs can be met. Such a network could include a virtual option for those who are confident and comfortable engaging and communicating in that way. It could also include a means of bringing those who prefer to meet face-to-face, or don't have the skills or confidence to operate in virtual environment, together 2 or 3 times a year through the 'Big Conversation' arrangements within the Voice arrangements within Catalyst. It could also include a 'network' of volunteer involving organisations (VIO).

Through these networks 'buddying' arrangements could be put in place, both for volunteers and between larger and smaller VIOs. They could become a route for sharing good practice, training and development opportunities, model documents etc).

Skills Development and Accreditation

Part of the principle of valuing volunteering is to ensure that volunteers are supported to develop their skills where they are needed or where the volunteer is keen to continue to learn and develop further. Organisations such as Stockton Borough Council Learning and Skills, Skillshare and Tees Valley Community Foundation are able to access funding and provide or signpost to appropriate courses and support. Local colleges and universities may also have a role to play on this element of the framework. There are clear links between this element of the framework and 'volunteering support' and 'pre-volunteering advice and support'. Delivery of this element could be embedded within the VCSE 'Centre of Excellence' arrangements within Catalyst.

Reward and Recognition

Volunteering is widely acknowledged nationally and locally as being valuable in terms of social capital, community and individual well-being and service delivery amongst other things. Many volunteers don't actively seek or want recognition or reward, although the commissioned research found that awards such as the Catalyst Annual Achievement Awards are viewed very positively and, particularly for the smaller community-based organisations, improving recognition for volunteers should be a clear part of the strategy.

It is proposed that this element of the framework is delivered by linking in the various opportunities for recognising and rewarding volunteers through identifying the month of June as Volunteering Month for the borough. The Catalyst Awards and the Mayor's Civic Awards both take place during the month of June and the Queen's Award for Volunteering is also announced during Volunteers week in June. The Steering Group overseeing the implementation of the framework will take responsibility for actively promoting and encouraging submissions to the local awards and making appropriate submissions to the Queens Award for Volunteering. The Steering Group will also seek to liaise with the private sector and public sector providers to secure some form of reward with the aim of introducing a volunteer of the month scheme. This would, however, need to be carefully considered in terms of the administration, criteria and eligibility for such a scheme. Alternatively it could be a monthly random prize draw.

A feature could be developed on a regular basis based on an individual volunteer. The Steering Group could also develop a communications campaign with the primary aim of raising awareness and recognising the contribution of volunteers across the borough and engage the local media in its implementation. One of the local universities could be approached to undertake a piece of research on the value of volunteering in the borough.

Promotion, Communications and Branding

The final element in the framework is perhaps the most pivotal one relating to promotion and communication. This needs to work on a number of levels. At its simplest level it needs to pick up one of the key issues identified within the research about making information about how to volunteer in our Borough easier to access, alongside the various support elements of the emerging framework. In the current climate the proposed solution is that a simple Volunteer Stockton (or agreed branding) web portal is created and hosted on the Catalyst Website. Appropriate links can be made from key stakeholder websites and vice-versa. It should also include links to the national 'Do-It' website. It could also be used as a place/forum for promoting the activity being delivered within the framework, a space for Volunteer News and possibly a forum for volunteers to share practice etc.





Oversight of delivery of the plan will be led by a Volunteering Steering Group managed by Catalyst as the VCSE infrastructure organisation for the borough. The Steering Group will be supported by a wider group of stakeholders and contributors operating as 'task and finish' groups as needed around the elements of the framework. (see figure 2).

Volunteer Strategy Steering Group - Figure 2

Volunteer Strategy Steering Group

(Membership: Catalyst, Tees Valley Rural Community Council, Stockton Residents and Community Groups Association, Stockton Borough Council, Teesside University)



The elements below give an indication of the type of activity the Steering Group will have oversight of and each 'task and finish' group will take responsibility for delivering.

Leadership and accountability

Responsibility for leading on the implementation of the strategy, coordination of the steering group and monitoring of action plans from the 'task and finish' groups will be led by Catalyst. Key accountability will include:

- Drawing up terms of reference for the volunteering Steering Group
- Lead on identifying and securing resources and funding to deliver the action plan, and/or development of a new VCSE sustainable delivery vehicle or partnership.
- Monitoring impact and reviewing the strategy over time including;
 - Develop a means of collecting and sharing relevant data on volunteering
 - Develop and implement a framework for monitoring and evaluating the impact of volunteering. Renaissance suggest it is around 5 strands:
 - Volunteering Diversity (range of opportunities, who is accessing them and who are the beneficiaries)
 - Volunteering Quality (against the Volunteering England standards)
 - Volunteering Value (social and financial return)
 - Volunteering Voice (setting new policy agendas and developing best practice)
 - Volunteer Dividend (rewards for volunteering including qualifications, awards, celebrations etc.)

Promotion, Communication, Branding and Awareness raising

- Establishing a brand and identity that raises the profile of volunteering in the borough
- Developing and implementing a marketing and communications strategy across a range of channels
- Seek to engage wider stakeholders including local universities and other educational establishments, Police and Crime Commissioner, health agencies, fire service
- Develop a programme of activity linked to key dates such as National Volunteering Week (June), International Volunteers day (Dec 5) and possibly a Stockton Make a difference day.

Pre-volunteering support and advice and volunteering support

- Co-ordination
- Develop arrangements for effective signposting/referrals between agencies
- Establish Volunteer learning network
- Develop pre-volunteering advice and support
- Provide guidance to smaller organisations particularly around policy, safeguarding and recruitment
- Develop core volunteer standards

Opportunity take-up/ Pop-up volunteering

- Run targeted recruitment of volunteers to meet identified gaps (services/project related or sections of the community)
- Develop an approach to increasing employer supported volunteering
- Develop an approach to 'pop-up' volunteering opportunities for those who aren't able to commit to regular and ongoing projects and services
- Arrange annual showcase event

Skills Development and Accreditation/ Reward and Recognition

- Develop an approach to skills analysis and support
- Continue to raise the profile and impact of volunteering through existing local channels such as Catalyst annual awards, SBC Civic Awards, local media awards.
- Proactively seek out and support opportunities for national recognition such as Points of Light, Queens' Award for VCS etc.



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