

Meeting of:	Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee
Date of Meeting:	Tuesday, 30 November 2021
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Glamorgan Voluntary Services (GVS) Annual Report 20/21
Purpose of Report:	To provide the Committee with information of the work of GVS throughout the year April 2020-March 2021
Report Owner:	Rachel Connor
Responsible Officer:	Rachel Connor
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	N/A
Policy Framework:	GVS represents the Third Sector on a range of VOGC Partnerships, Board and Joint Working Groups
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report summarises all areas of GVS activity during 2020/21.

Recommendation

That the Committee receive the report for information

Reason for Recommendation

As required by the terms of the VOGC/GVS Deed of Grant

1. Background

- 1.1** Glamorgan Voluntary Services is the County Voluntary Council (CVC) for the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 1.2** GVS is the umbrella body for the Vale of Glamorgan's third or voluntary sector and our role is to support, develop and represent third sector organisations and promote volunteering in the Vale of Glamorgan. We have a flourishing membership of some 750 community organisations active in the Vale of Glamorgan. We help to improve the quality of life of people and communities by supporting volunteers, volunteering opportunities and voluntary groups.
- 1.3** Thriving and cohesive communities require active engagement and involvement of local people. There is an increasing role for the third sector in the delivery of services and they have an invaluable role as partners and advocates for local communities. Our expert services help to provide a platform for a vibrant and robust voluntary sector.
- 1.4** Our Vision is of a valued and respected Voluntary Sector, in which GVS serves as a trusted leader, effective strategic partner and model of good practice for the Sector.
- 1.5** Our Mission is that GVS aspires to empower people, inspire excellence, and strengthen communities by stimulating and developing voluntary action.
- 1.6** Our values determine what we do and the way we do it. GVS is committed to:
 - Working collaboratively with others.
 - Being a learning and enabling organisation.
 - Conducting our business with integrity in an open, honest, transparent, and accountable way.
 - Recognising and valuing staff and volunteers as our greatest resource and investing in accordingly.
 - Voluntary and community action that is fundamental to the development of a democratic and socially inclusive society.
 - Diversity and equality of opportunity.

- The value and roles of volunteers and is committed to volunteering.
- Sustainable development.
- Valuing its independence and to working in mutually beneficial partnerships with others for the benefit of its citizens.
- The achievement of quality standards and services.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

RESPONSE TO COVID-19

2.1 GVS had and continues to have an important role in responding to Covid-19 GVS is a direct deliverer of support to individuals who need help but also a convener and fulcrum for other third sector organisations in the area. GVS helps to connect people to third sector organisations and third sector organisations to the wider public sector.

2.2 Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic GVS has:

- Provided direct support to individuals – GVS has supported people with access to food and medicine but have also supported and provided a range of activities that have supported people’s emotional wellbeing.
- Supported 882 individuals into volunteering – an increase of 1178% compared to 19/20.
- Provided support to the wider sector – GVS has continued to support the wider third sector with volunteers, information and guidance, direct funding and support to access wider pots of funding.
- Co-ordinated support – GVS has helped co-ordinate support to individuals, but has also worked with the Vale of Glamorgan Council ensuring a co-ordinated response across the Vale of Glamorgan including being part of key Local Authority meetings.
- Identified and contacted all Vale based Covid-19 support groups set up on social media in response to the coronavirus outbreak.
- Maintained contact with every community council to log available support measures in each area of the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Produced and updated a directory of Covid-19 support services available in the Vale.
- Provided support for individuals aged under 65 seeking information on services available in their area.
- Promoted third sector offers of help ensuring that statutory partners are aware of these offers.
- Managed seven grants schemes with funding from the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Welsh Government, Comic Relief, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board, Cardiff & Vale Health Charity and NHS Charities Together totalling £291,000. This enabled GVS to get funding quickly and efficiently to local grassroots organisations and groups that were providing vital

frontline services to individuals and communities in the Vale of Glamorgan.

- 2.3** Further detailed information regarding our response across service areas is contained within the Achievements and Performance section below.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

- 2.4** This review looks at what we have achieved and the outcomes of our work in the preceding twelve months. The review also helps us ensure our aims, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated objectives. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities thus ensuring that we continue our promotion of any charitable purpose for the benefit of the communities in the County Borough of the Vale of Glamorgan and the surrounding areas and in particular, the advancement of education, the furtherance of health, the relief of poverty, distress and sickness.

- 2.5** Achievements in year

- 2.6** GVS' main achievements during the year fall into the following areas:

- 2.7** IT

- 2.8** Website

The GVS website is a major asset to the organisation and the wider Third Sector here in the Vale of Glamorgan. The website contains a range of information including the services we offer, learning opportunities and news updates that impact on the voluntary and community centre. During 2021/22 a new, more dynamic website will be launched.

- 2.9** Social Media

GVS has made a commitment to ensure that Third Sector organisations operating in the Vale of Glamorgan can gain and build on their skills to make full use of 21st century communication mechanisms. A very comprehensive programme of training courses has been developed for groups and organisations operating in the Vale of Glamorgan. This, together with our own extensive use of social media provides an effective and useful tool to share news and information with our members and the wider sector.

- 2.10** Digital Platforms

During 2020/21 GVS, in partnership with County Voluntary Councils across Wales and Wales Council for Voluntary Action, continued to use a Wales Wide Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) and a Wales Wide Volunteer Management System.

- 2.11** Development and Advice Services
Our offices in Barry (Barry Community Enterprise Centre) and Llantwit Major (CF61) were closed to the public during 2020/21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, GVS quickly adjusted to providing services online. Our online provision was open to members and potential members for advice and development work. We offered information and guidance to assist organisations to operate legally and efficiently e.g. by providing information on registering as a charity, how to put together a governing document and how to develop policies and procedures.
- 2.12** GVS has provided Third Sector organisations with a range of support to develop ideas and projects. Support has been offered in a variety of ways including face to face meetings, e-mail, telephone consultations and briefing sessions. Our range of GVS branded Information Sheets have become popular and these have been invaluable in helping us deal with the more general day to day enquiries. We endeavour to make sure that all our information is available online via our website, enabling our members to access appropriate development information and advice more effectively and at a time that suits them.
- 2.13** Information Service
We act as an information agency for and about our members, maintaining a comprehensive database and ensuring the services of our members are publicised. We continue to produce information leaflets on our services in Welsh. Our information service was accessed 1500 times with members receiving additional information via e-bulletins on a weekly basis.
- 2.14** “Vista”, the GVS magazine, is published in house three times a year and is distributed to some 900 groups and individuals. “Vista” is supplemented by regular updates of newsletters on Health, Social Care and Well Being and Sustainable Funding News. Over the past year, eight updates were produced.
- 2.15** Our comprehensive range of information sheets are available in both English and Welsh for voluntary organisations to access either by hard copy, e-mail or through our website. This service is free to voluntary organisations and continues to be a resounding success.
- 2.16** Practical Services
These are a real benefit to many small voluntary organisations with little or no spare income. Low cost, reliable printing, help with desktop publishing, the loan of display equipment for exhibitions and presentations – these are some of the services that GVS offers its member groups.
- 2.17** Our reprographic services was put on hold because of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, towards the end of the reporting period, this service was used some 20 times.
- 2.18** Networks and Fora

Our Networks and Fora continue to be a popular way for voluntary and community organisations to access and share information. Networks and Fora supported by GVS were:

- 2.19** Vale Housing and Homelessness Forum
This Forum is the longest established of all our Networks and Fora. It has been operating ever since GVS came into existence. Its works to terms of reference and is made up of agencies (Third Sector and statutory) that have an interest in housing, homelessness and related problems and issues. The Forum now meets jointly with the Vale Supported People Housing Group. During 2020/21, the Forum met 4 times online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.20** The Forum also links in with other strategic partnerships, networks, and fora, e.g. Safer Vale Partnership, Health Social Care and Well Being Network and the Domestic Abuse Forum.
- 2.21** Funding Service
GVS' funding and information service provided support to 145 groups throughout the year with a reported £556,000 of funding obtained as a direct result of the advice and information given by GVS.
- 2.22** Three editions of the Sustainable Funding Newsletter were produced containing information on a range of funders along with other useful articles to assist groups in their search for vital funds. Updates are posted two or three times a week on the funding section of the website and regular weekly e-bulletins are sent to over 700 groups.
- 2.23** Twelve Funding Events were held with representatives from two major funders giving valuable advice on a 1-2-1 basis with Third Sector organisations. Some 27 groups attended these sessions. Groups are finding this access to funders, ahead of applying, of great use resulting in a higher success rate.
- 2.24** Funding is still a major issue for many groups as the economic situation becomes harsher for those groups that receive most of their funding from statutory bodies e.g. local authorities. More groups are seeking funding from other sources, e.g. Trusts and Foundations and this is creating a more competitive environment.
- 2.25** Training Service
During the year, despite the pandemic, 14 group training events were delivered, all aimed at building the capacity of local organisations. Training opportunities offered included:
- How to run a virtual AGM
 - Reopening your Community Facility
 - How to run a Virtual Board Meeting
 - Being a Trustee
 - Recruitment, Selection and Management of Volunteers
 - Writing a Successful Funding Application

- Zoom Essentials
- 2.26** A total of 206 delegates attended the training courses with 100% rating the training as either good or excellent.
- 2.27** GVS provides IT and social media 1-2-1 training courses. GVS held three training sessions with all attendees rating the courses as good or excellent.
- 2.28** Partnership, Consultation and Joint Working
The Third Sector is seen as an important partner in supporting the work of statutory bodies in a wide range of areas, and GVS is committed to working in partnership to develop and improve local services.
- 2.29** GVS continues to facilitate Third Sector Representation in formal joint planning in accordance with the agreed Protocol between the Local Authority and the Third Sector, via the Health, Social Care and Well Being Network, or via the full GVS membership where appropriate.
- 2.30** GVS has continued to represent the sector on the Public Service Board, Regional Partnership Board, other strategic partnerships, and appropriate sub-groups, ensuring the voice of the sector and the wider community is heard at all levels. In addition, with the Reshaping of Services agenda, GVS has been heavily involved in consultations and discussions with service providers regarding the participation of the Third Sector in the shaping and delivery of future services. GVS and other Third Sector organisations have been working with the local authority to ensure that people and communities are engaged every step of the way.
- 2.31** Some of the key Strategic Partnerships on which GVS plays a key role include:
- Vale Public Service Board
 - Vale Business Intelligence Group
 - Cross Service Tackling Poverty Group
 - Vale Reshaping Services Board
 - Vale Reshaping Services Challenge Group
 - Children and Young People’s Partnership
 - Families First Strategic Executive Group
 - Flying Start Strategic Executive Group
 - Cardiff and Vale Integrated Health & Social Care Regional Programme Board
 - Cardiff and Vale Integrated Health & Social Care Strategic Leadership Group
 - Shaping Our Future Wellbeing Project Board
 - Creative Rural Communities Local Action Group
 - Safer Vale Partnership
 - Equalities Consultative Forum
 - Barry Regeneration Area Board

- Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committee
- Town & Community Councils Joint Liaison Committee
- Town & Community Council Project Team

2.32 Joint Working Groups:

- Covid-19 Vaccine Stakeholder Group
- Cardiff and Vale Ageing Well Group
- Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (UHB) Stakeholder Reference Group
- Cardiff and Vale Safeguarding Board
- Cardiff University School of Social Sciences Ethics Committee
- Cardiff & Vale Action for Mental Health Mental Health Forum
- Cardiff and Vale Carers Workstream
- Cardiff and Vale Carer Friendly Accreditation Panel
- Cardiff and Vale Carers Gateway steering group
- Cardiff and Vale Carers Support and Information Network Group (CSING) facilitated by GVS
- Change Plan – Change Co-ordination Group
- Greenlinks Steering Group
- Domestic Abuse Forum
- Health, Social Care and Well Being Business Planning Group
- Regional Work Programme (RWP) Business Group and Operational Group
- RWP Carers Training and Development subgroup (chaired by GVS)
- Sport Lot Community Chest
- Shaping Our Future Wellbeing (SOFW) Wellbeing Hub in Penarth group
- SOFW Wellbeing Centre in Barry Hospital group
- Food Vale
- Integrated Health & Social Care Social Value Forum
- Cardiff and Vale Learning Disability Planning Group
- UHB's Children and Women's Clinical Board Charity and Voluntary Reference Group
- Disability Futures (attendance led by C3SC)
- Cardiff and Vale Advocacy Network (facilitated by GVS)
- UHB Corporate Induction days each month (for new staff)

2.33 National networks

- Third Sector Support Wales
- Wales Association of County Voluntary Councils
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action Assembly Liaison Group
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action Equality and Human Rights Coalition
- Wales Council for Voluntary Action Health and Social Care network
- Wales Funders Forum

2.34 Health, Social Care and Well Being

- 2.35** The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Network
This network provides an opportunity to bring together all voluntary organisations operating in the Vale of Glamorgan who have an interest in health and social care. It facilitates a strong, collective voice, supports the involvement of voluntary organisations in planning, development and delivery of health and social care services, influences health and social care policy to bring about change and improve services and facilitates communication between the voluntary and statutory and other sectors. The Network has increased in numbers over the year and currently has over 400 members.
- 2.36** The Network provided an effective mechanism for reaching out to the third sector during Covid-19. GVS was able to find out from Network members about changes in service delivery and utilised this information to produce third sector service directories for the use of the general public and health and social care staff. This helped people get the help they needed during the pandemic. The Network also held one virtual meeting focussed on older people's services.
- 2.37** The Network e-bulletins, due to popular demand, are now sent weekly rather than monthly. The e-bulletins include updates on health and social care services in the Vale of Glamorgan, updates from Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, the Vale of Glamorgan Council, Public Health Wales, from Third Sector organisations and general wellbeing information. The e-bulletin also provided a useful way of disseminating Covid-19 guidance and information on the vaccine roll out.
- 2.38** The Cardiff and Vale University Health Board worked closely with GVS in 20/21. This was not just in relation to Covid-19, but in also sharing information about their services and developments, eg CAV 24/7 and Shaping our Future Clinical Services. GVS supported the third sector to provide feedback and also provided feedback on behalf of the sector. During 20/21 GVS supported the key strategic principles of the Health Board.
- 2.39** GVS Health and Social Care Facilitators worked with the Cardiff and Vale Public Health Team to ensure that third sector priority frontline staff and volunteers were able to access the Covid-19 vaccine at the same time as priority health and social care staff. The scoping of third sector roles successfully included a wide range of third sector organisations, all of which were pleased to be acknowledged as priority frontline.
- 2.40** Funding schemes administered by GVS focussing on Health and Well Being:
- Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) – Supporting Older People in the Vale
 - Cardiff and Vale University Health Charity
 - ICF Third Sector Capital Investment Fund
- 2.41** Volunteering
GVS' volunteering service offers a one-stop resource for information, advice and guidance on all aspects of volunteering for both volunteers and recruiting

organisations. We aim to link the skills, experiences, time, and enthusiasm of local people looking to volunteer with organisations seeking to develop their services. This service is delivered through several venues across the Vale, as well as at our main office in Barry, to ensure that we can reach those across the county. Our centre in Llantwit Major, CF61, has also provided GVS with opportunities to further develop our volunteering outreach work.

- 2.42** Volunteering offers valuable experience which could aid study, help someone decide if they are thinking about a change in career or simply give them the opportunity to put something back into their community. The highlights of our Volunteering Development work in 2020/21 were greatly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns.
- i. Enquiries regarding volunteering in the Vale of Glamorgan during March to June 2020 showed an increase in enquiries of 1067% - from 84 in the same period 2019 to 981 in 2020.
 - ii. The number of people who GVS then found an opportunity to volunteer in the community showed an increase in placements of 1178% - from 69 in the same period 2019 to 882 in 2020.
 - iii. For Volunteers Week 2020 all activities were delivered on line due to the Covid lockdown. Through Social Media and other online resources GVS reached 14,222 people across the Vale, and engaged with 4172.
- 2.43** Our Youth Led Grant helped local organisations provide more youth volunteering opportunities in the Vale of Glamorgan. We were pleased to present grants to three successful youth projects with a total of £2,549 distributed.
- 2.44** Our ReBuild project, funded by the Big Lottery Fund to support people into volunteering to achieve wellbeing came to an end in March 2021. We have however been successful in securing a further 12 months for the FoodShare initiative created by the ReBuild project. ReBuild delivered a mental health volunteering project across the western part of the Vale of Glamorgan. With a focus on peer support and meaningful interaction the project introduced people into volunteering and provided them with the support needed to succeed and improve their physical and mental health.
- 2.45** Our Track 2000 Community Fund complemented the ReBuild project with a part time Volunteer Co-ordinator developing links with volunteering organisations. This project ended in March 2021.
- 2.46** The Connected Carers project, funded by the Big Lottery Fund and led by GVS, delivered in partnership with Touch Trust and Cardiff & Vale Parents Federation. Connected Carers support family carers of people with a life-long and / or life limiting condition. This project ended in March 2021. Due to lockdown restrictions, Cardiff & Vale Parents Federation arranged online social gatherings discussing issues carers faced.

GVS's volunteering service offers a huge array of volunteering roles depending on the volunteers' interests and skills. Volunteers provide invaluable help in the work of Third Sector organisations and beyond, which often enhance the range of services offered by paid staff.

2.47 GVS' Environmental Impact

2.48 GVS is committed to the welfare of the environment and endeavours to have a positive environmental impact. GVS recycles its printer cartridges, paper, tins, bottles, cardboard, plastics, and most office equipment. GVS strives to send more and more information by e-mail and sends its membership approval packs by e-mail and using electronic questionnaires and evaluation forms instead of hard copies. We are also moving more of our service delivery on line (e.g. virtual meetings) as a direct result of Covid-19.

2.49 Efficiency Savings

GVS is committed and determined to make the best use of funders' money so has made efficiency savings in several areas. GVS constantly aims to become more efficient in every area of its work. Some of the saving initiatives include: encouraging all contacts to receive GVS' Vista magazine and supplements by e-mail; introducing an e-bulletin service; restricting telephone calls made to mobile phones; turning off electrical items when not in use; using a smaller GVS room for our training courses rather than paying for room hire and encouraging our staff to only print if required. This, together with constant vigilance and hard negotiation, continues to ensure that GVS is getting the best possible deals on contracts and services.

2.50 Projects

2.51 1.14.1 ReBuild and Track 2000 (See report in Volunteering above)

2.52 Connected Carers

The Connected Carers project, funded by the Big Lottery Fund, is led by GVS, and delivered in partnership with Touch Trust and Cardiff & Vale Parents Federation. Connected Carers support family carers of people with a life-long and / or life limiting condition.

2.53 Cardiff & Vale Parents Federation arrange social gatherings in venues across Cardiff and the Vale at a range of times which best suit the carers to juggle a meeting with their difficult and demanding caring role. They can discuss their problems with like-minded people, many of whom have experienced similar problems / issues, who completely understand that problem and can offer support and solutions. Touch Trust organise Time For Me days which give carers the opportunity to relax and unwind with a head, body, or foot massage or to take part in a creative workshop.

- 2.54** Third Sector Locality Officer
The project (funded by Cardiff & Vale University Health Board) supported and promoted the development of a dynamic network focussing on the Western Vale of Glamorgan which recognised, linked up and expanded the assets in our communities to support the population’s health and wellbeing and helped foster individual and community resilience.
- 2.55** The project provided a mechanism in the Western Vale of Glamorgan area whereby key individuals and local wellbeing activities and assets could be identified, supported, developed, and promoted. Asset and activity gaps were identified, and communities supported to develop opportunities that meet their need.
- 2.56** Dewis
Funded by the Vale of Glamorgan Council, this project aims to encourage Vale based Third Sector organisations to enter their details about their services onto the DEWIS portal – www.dewis.wales
- 2.57** The project focussed on:
- i. Scoping Vale based organisations already on DEWIS and identify target organisations to encourage to enter data and/or update existing entry.
 - ii. Providing 1-2-1 and group support to identified organisations regarding data entry, updating information.
 - iii. Arranging for marketing of DEWIS through GVS and other appropriate websites, social media networks and e-bulletins.
 - iv. Attending appropriate Third Sector meetings and events to promote DEWIS
 - v. Acting as editor; receive e-mail updates when entries are going out of date (at 6 months), work with organisations which have not updated, approve updated entries and check accuracy of information.
 - vi. Attending the editorial group.
- 2.58** CF61
- 2.59** GVS has purchased a 99-year lease on the former Llantwit Major Youth Centre, Station Road, Llantwit Major, CF61 1ST. It has been refurbished as a community resource and the venue, now called “CF61”, aims to serve the local community. CF61 is a community space that is available to rent for a multitude of activities at an affordable rate. The building is fully accessible and welcoming. As a venue it is ideal for children’s parties and activities; meetings and conferences; fitness and wellbeing classes as well as many other community activities and functions. The building contains a main hall and two smaller rooms. GVS has organised two successful community fayres.
- 2.60** CF61 has quickly embedded itself in the community with regular sessions including: Wellbeing sessions; Wellbeing Café and FareShare; Volunteering Advice; Boxercise; Music and dance classes; fitness; Tai Chi; youth and children’s

activity sessions. All proceeds are re-invested into the Centre to continually improve the facility for the local community.

2.61 Achievements:

- 33 private bookings from organisations and businesses, including 14 delivering regular weekly sessions
- 10 Training sessions

2.62 Future Plans

2.63 Glamorgan Voluntary Services is well placed to serve and support the third sector and the communities of the Vale of Glamorgan and surrounding area. The sector is operating within a constrained economic environment and GVS is no different especially in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. As funders and partners are hit by austerity and the impact of Covid-19 the knock on effect to GVS is very likely to be a reduction in core funding which we have already experienced in real terms. There will also be greater competition for the funding that is available.

2.64 It will be important that GVS continues to make efficiency savings in the successful manner of the past year, but having implemented these progressively over a sustained period of time, the opportunity to make such savings continues to reduce year on year.

2.65 Different ways of working and delivering services to our membership are constantly being explored with focus on moving more services into digital delivery in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. It will be imperative that additional sources of funding continue to be secured in the way that we have managed throughout this past year. Above all opportunities to develop unrestricted income streams need to be pursued, whether through donations or standalone income generation as has been achieved in this past year.

2.66 We have recently obtained another building on a long lease via Community Asset Transfer (CAT) from the Local Authority. Our research has shown that the building, to be known as Illtud House, with appropriate development and management, would provide the sort of additional income that would greatly assist GVS' financial wellbeing. The building is ideally situated in Llantwit Major on the same site as CF61. GVS aims to relocate from our current premises in Barry to Illtud House, Llantwit Major.

2.67 GVS is also in the process of negotiating a long lease for another building in Penarth.

2.68 Whilst GVS is dedicated to ensuring that all these plans are successful, the Board of Trustees is mindful that its plans must be financially robust and subject to due diligence whilst remaining flexible to meet the ever-changing external environment.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** GVS aligns its work to the objectives of the Vale of Glamorgan Council

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** GVS receives core funding from VOGC .

Employment

- 4.2** GVS employs 14 people as of April 2021.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.3** Whilst there are no direct legal implications arising from this report, maintaining good relations with GVS will benefit the community in terms of improvement to human rights. The Council's position on equality of opportunity is put into daily practice through the funding of GVS's work with the voluntary and community groups operating in the Vale of Glamorgan

5. Background Papers

None