

## **Carmarthenshire application for WG Coronavirus Recovery Grant for Volunteering 2020/21**

### **Background**

In late November 2020 Welsh Government invited bids for a Coronavirus Recovery Grant for Volunteering from partnerships made up from public bodies and third sector organisations. This funding is to support public bodies and third sector organisations to transition effectively from the current levels of volunteering and community action to a sustainable long-term footing, improving or introducing new systems, support arrangements and complementing existing infrastructure to ensure more sustainable models of volunteering.

In Carmarthenshire, the aim is to sustain volunteering and community action witnessed throughout the pandemic and to ensure more sustainable models of volunteering moving forward by developing an integrated strategy involving the local CVC, Local Authority, Hywel Dda and other Public Service Board (PSB) partners, this will be underpinned by some structures already in place and others that have been identified. This funding has provided the opportunity to apply for fund to take forward proposals already identified by the Strong Connections Delivery Group.

A bid of £152,991.45 was submitted for three main elements of work – Carmarthenshire Volunteering Strategy, an online portal for volunteers/volunteering and digitising training.

### **The Bid**

Building on existing PSB activity, we propose to implement the following key interventions:

- 1 Develop an integrated Volunteering Strategy and supplementary standards across the whole continuum of active citizenship, including:
  - Mapping existing volunteering provision across PSB partners
  - Develop a crisis response plan and investigate ways in which volunteers can be shared across PSB partners and third sector groups, to ensure we have volunteer capacity with appropriate skills in the right place at the right time.
  - Explore opportunities to establish shared processes such as recruiting and training volunteers.
  - Establish a framework for local Volunteering Teams which will underpin a place-based approach. Working alongside Town and Community Councils, local support groups and current initiatives such as Ten Towns and Local Action Hubs. Volunteering Teams will form a network to mobilise spontaneous local support.
- 2 Develop online training based on CAVS existing courses for organisations, volunteers and individuals who need support to become volunteer ready. This will be hosted on a new purpose-built website which will be developed as part of the project.
- 3 Working in partnership with the Mentrau Iaith we will develop a plan to support the third sector to meet Welsh Language requirements in service delivery, encouraging cultural

changes to attract and retain bilingual volunteers. This will include mapping the level of Welsh language volunteers engaged in the delivery of commissioned services.

### **Intended Outcomes and Impacts**

- Co-produced sustainable Carmarthenshire Volunteering Strategy
- Strengthened partnership working with PSB members, town and community councils and third sector groups
- On-line digital resource including e-learning portal
- Framework for local volunteering networks
- A better understanding of Welsh language requirements in relation to volunteering
- Improved community cohesion, connectivity and resilience

The project will improve the social, environmental, cultural and economic wellbeing of individual volunteers, beneficiaries and communities, as well as enhancing the work of volunteer involving organisations and agencies.

### **Approval**

We have now received confirmation that the bid has been successful and are currently seeking consultants/contractors to undertake the three main elements of the work – the volunteering strategy, online portal and the digital learning.

### **Timescales**

Timescales for the bid have been very tight from start to finish with a week to submit the original expression of interest and a further two weeks for the full application. Likewise, the spend timescale is tight with the work to be completed by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

### **PSB Support**

The partnership would like to request the support of PSB partners for this project which will provide a much needed framework for the future of volunteering in Carmarthenshire.