

EXECUTIVE – 10th JULY 2013



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of

REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (COMMUNITY DIRECTION)

RE: PROGRESS REPORT RE ESTABLISHMENT OF A HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR HUB

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- To outline to members key progress in the establishing a Locality based Hinckley & Bosworth Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Hub, Forum and Commissioning Board

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- To note the VCS Hub progress report

3. **BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT**

- 3.1. A report was presented to Executive Committee on 30th January 2013, seeking members support for the establishment of a Hinckley & Bosworth VCS Hub from April 2013. Subsequently Executive members gave their support for the following:
- That HBBC support Next Generation Community Connects (NGCC) to lead and deliver the VCS infrastructure work within the locality, through the establishment of a VCS Hub operating from the existing Next Generation building. (VCS Infrastructure provision is aimed at supporting the establishment, development and sustainability of front line VCS service delivery organisations, and brokering effective joint working between the VCS and the public sector).
 - That HBBC continue to support Community Action Hinckley and Bosworth (CAHB) to lead and deliver the community development/cohesion work within the locality, (this was subject to a review of CAHB's financial standing and forecasts, to be obtained through a review of CAHB's 2011/12 accounts)
 - That HBBC support both organisations working in partnership through the VCS Hub to develop and delivery the VCS Forum (the Locality Forum for the VCS), and a VCS Commissioning Board
 - That Executive members support the proposal to allocate the annual HBBC VCS Grant funding of £27,670 to support the delivery of work streams to be commissioned via the VCS Hub
- 3.2. The VCS Hub report was considered in conjunction with a separate report seeking member's approval for growth funds, to support the ongoing delivery and development of neighbourhood management arrangements via our three community houses, to be funded via the HRA. It was subsequently agreed that 50% of the costs of each of the Community Houses, which equates to £72,500, be off set by income from the HRA, with £32,000 ring fenced for the delivery of services for Wykin Community House, via a SLA with CAHB. The subsequent savings arising from the General Fund, £40,500, to be ring fenced as a community development fund to be transferred to the new VCS Commissioning Board.

3.3. The following provides an overview of progress to date in relation to the above approved recommendations. Please note appendix 1 sets out the various funding streams referred to above, against each of the work streams.

3.4. Summary of progress:

- Establishment of a comprehensive VCS database, following an extensive mapping exercise identifying to date, 1,197 active VCS organisations within the Borough (see Appendix 2)
- A preliminary VCS representatives meeting on 12th March to share/test out initial thinking about the proposed VCS Forum and Commissioning Board model (see Appendix 3)
- VCS consultation workshop on 16th May to gain detailed feedback and views on the operation of the VCS Forum and Commissioning Board – (targeted invites to 50 VCS representatives), attended by 30 VCS representatives
- Development and circulation of a questionnaire to all 1,197 VCS organisations to inform the model
- Press release in Hinckley Times and Borough Bulletin May 2013, to promoting progress and next steps
- Establishment of an Executive Steering Group (including HBBC Lead Officer and Senior Finance Officer) to oversee development of the arrangements
- Comprehensive report developed capturing the outcomes arising from 16th May consultation workshop (appendix 4)
- Post consultation workshop meeting on 4th June 2013 to share feedback/analysis from both the workshop and questionnaire survey, with preliminary group representatives.
- Further Executive Steering Group meeting end of June 2013 to confirm proposed Commissioning Board
- Inaugural VCS Forum to take place early July 2013, to include a presentation on the proposed Commissioning Board model
- Commissioning Board to be operational from end of July 2013

3.5. The following provides a more detailed overview of developments to date: NGCC and CAHB are working in partnership to develop these new arrangements to secure the sustainability and development of the VCS organisations within the Borough. The first stage is the establishment of an overarching VCS Forum, and in working towards this a comprehensive mapping exercise has been undertaken resulting in the identification of, to date, 1,197 active VCS organisations within the Borough. This has resulted in a VCS database and Directory. Appendix 2 provides a breakdown of these VCS organisations by category, number and percentage.

3.6. The database provides the most comprehensive and up to date list of VCS organisations to be held for Hinckley and Bosworth, and is a fundamental piece of work, in ensuring an inclusive and representative VCS voice in the development of the VCS Forum and Commissioning Board.

3.7. Given the extensive number of VCS organisations who will be invited to engage through the VCS Hub and specifically the VCS Forum, it was decided to invite a number of VCS representatives to a preliminary meeting on 12th March, to share some initial thinking about the emerging proposed model for the Forum. (Appendix 3 details the draft model for the Forum and how it links to the Commissioning Board). The proposed model depicts sub groups around themes with a lead representative to be decided by the VCS. These themed clusters of VCS organisations could decide to put in place very local arrangements to facilitate linkage with the Forum, as well as highlight opportunities for collaborative working and new partnerships.

- 3.8. Notable issues arising from the preliminary meeting include the following: a view that the VCS needs to work more collaboratively, the new Forum should not be a 'talking shop', encouraging groups to work under themed areas/clusters (reporting into the Forum representatives) was viewed as an effective initial approach enabling inclusivity given the large number of organisations who may wish to be involved.
- 3.9. Please note the draft model at Appendix 3 makes reference to a VCS Executive Group, including the Lead HBBC Officer and a senior finance officer, to inform the development of these arrangements, as well as having an ongoing overview role.
- 3.9. Following on from the initial engagement meeting on 12th March, broader VCS views have been sought, firstly via the circulation of a questionnaire to each of the groups on the newly established database, to get as much feedback and opinion about the proposed arrangements and how they could work.
- 3.10. Secondly, a VCS consultation workshop took place on 16th May 2013, at the Concordia Theatre in Hinckley, attended by 30 representatives from the voluntary and community sector, drawing on their experience and expertise, to help inform the new VCS Forum and supporting arrangements, as well as the VCS Commissioning Board.
- 3.11. A comprehensive report summarising the outcomes arising from the consultation workshop, and taking into account feedback from the returned questionnaires, has been developed (appendix 4). There is considerable consensus in views, and in particular the importance of the Forum in supporting VCS learning and development, collaboration, communication, and a key mechanism for listening to and capturing the voice of the local people of the Borough.
- 3.12. It is important to stress that considerable time has been taken in the development process to date, to ensure that the VCS have had every opportunity to be engaged and to inform the arrangements - in practice this has resulted in a core of approximately 30 VCS organisations being engaged throughout. It has been extremely important to the key partners to ensure that the VCS feel that they are owning and shaping these arrangements, not being done to.
- 3.13. At a time when funding for charities and community groups has become even more difficult to obtain, the aim of the Commissioning Board is to provide a fair and accessible way of commissioning services, informed by a sound and representative evidence base via the Forum. The ambition overtime will be to secure funding/commissioning arrangements via all key statutory agencies, with a clear demonstration of impact and value for money, aligned to Borough wide priorities. Representation to key delivery partnerships within the Borough to influence funding allocation, to help shape service design and delivery options, should be a key role for the Forum.
- 3.14. The concept of the VCS Commissioning Board is new to both the VCS and the Borough. The proposed model to date suggests a core Board membership to include representatives from the key statutory agencies, including two HBBC representatives, and appropriate representation from the VCS. In addition it is proposed that the Board will include 'expert' representatives appropriate to the area of work being commissioned.
- 3.12. In addition to the above NGCC has continued to undertake activities, in the development of the NGCC building becoming operational as a VCS Hub and a town centre location to complement the new Hinckley statutory agency Hub, e.g. a town centre access point established for the Clockwise Credit Union provision has been operational from 1st April 2013. The promotion of this town centre facility and it's role

in signposting people to appropriate support, will become increasingly important in facilitating a link with the new Hinckley Hub.

- 3.13. It should be noted that CAHB have submitted all necessary financial information, providing HBBC with the necessary assurances of CAHB's financial position moving forward for the year 2013/14.

4.0. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (KB)

HBBC currently allocate £27,670 of funding on an annual basis to support VCS arrangements, for 2013/14 this fund will be allocated to the Next Generation Community Connect VCS Hub. This budget for 2013/2014 was approved as part of the budget setting process.

The total budgets for the Barwell and Earl Shilton Community Houses for 2013/2014 are £32,190 and £81,640 respectively. These are financed from the base budget and were approved as part of the 2013/2014 budget setting process.

The allocation of funding for the Wykin Community House via CAHB has been considered reasonable following a review of the body's financial standing and forecasts. On this basis a £32,000 expenditure budget will be included for 2013/2014. No supplementary budget is required for this amount as £33,010 budget was included in the base budget for the previous year.

In order to fund the expenditure budget and the additional contribution to the VCS Hub, the following supplementary budget requests will be made from Executive:

- £40,500 HRA expenditure budget to fund Community Houses within the General Fund.
- Corresponding income budgets of £40,500 within the General Fund to reflect the receipt of income from the HRA and payment to the Barwell and Earl Shilton Community Houses (£20,250 each)
- £40,500 VCS General Fund expenditure budget.

Funding for the Community Houses from the HRA is permitted under the HRA ring fence, on the basis that the property is within the HRA and the provision serves Council tenants. Any additional allocation of funding which is not provided solely for this purpose should be reviewed further to ensure compliance with the ring-fence.

5.0. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (LH)

- 5.1. None arising directly from this report.

6.0. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

The contents of the report relate to and support the following strategic aims:

- Cleaner and Greener Neighbourhoods
- Thriving Economy
- Safer and Healthier Borough
- Strong and distinctive communities

7.0. CONSULTATION

This report has taken account of the ongoing consultation undertaken by NGCC and CAHB in establishing a comprehensive VCS database and Directory, to inform the development of the VCS Forum and Commissioning Board.

10. RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is the Council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Lack of sustainability of key VCS organisations within Hinckley and Bosworth, resulting in no VCS infrastructure arrangements within the locality	Establishment of the H&B VCS Partnership and supporting work streams	Edwina Grant

11. **KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

The utilisation of up to date evidence sources and data, informed via the key VCS organisations within the locality, has helped to inform the need to consider alternative approaches to the sustainability of the VCS within Hinckley and Bosworth, to focus resources on priority needs across all areas of the Borough, including rural Hinckley and Bosworth.

12. **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

- Community Safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset Management implications
- Human Resources implications
- Planning Implications
- Voluntary Sector

Background papers: None

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