

Bolsover District Council

Executive

4th March 2019

Voluntary Community Sector Support

Report of the Portfolio Holder - Partnerships and Transformation

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To provide an update of the current position in respect of the support for the voluntary and community sector (VCS) in Bolsover district following the closure of Community Voluntary Partners (CVP) in January 2018
- To seek approval from Executive to allocate funding from the Grants to Voluntary Organisations budget in line with the outcome of the feasibility study and provide a more stable future for the VCS.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 In January 2018, Bolsover Partnership and the Council were notified that the trustees of CVP had taken the decision to close the organisation. This left a huge gap in infrastructure support for the sector as well as the loss of a key strategic partner.
- 1.2 A number of actions were quickly taken to mitigate the effects of this development, including the re-contracting of two projects that CVP were delivering on behalf of the Partnership. Bolsover Partnership facilitated meetings with members of the Bolsover VCS community and discussed how the void could be best filled for the sector. Two areas of activity were identified; the first was to plug the short term gaps, and the second was to plan a future model that would provide a new support service, focused on the sector's needs.
- 1.3 A report was taken to Executive on [date] and agreement given to utilise the £23,000 normally ring-fenced for CVP from the Council's Grants to Voluntary Organisations budget in 2018/19. Tenders were sought to deliver short term support and long term plan but no tenders were received. This resulted in the work being split and two contracts awarded.
- 1.4 Bassetlaw CVS are currently providing temporary support to fill the short term gaps under a contract which currently runs to 31 March 2019 and includes:
 - Advice service: Funding/Governance
 - Signposting to other available support sources
 - Volunteer development support

- Communication channels between members (e.g. ebulletins) and with strategic partners
 - CVS representation on local authority boards/panels e.g. Place Alliance
- 1.5 In addition to the above, a procurement process was carried out which resulted in a charitable organisation called Locality being appointed to undertake a research and development project that includes:
- Identification of capabilities/capacity already available within the district
 - Consultation to establish members' needs
 - Identification of good practice in other regions
 - Development of possible models for future delivery
 - An options analysis and development of next steps, with a view to launching a new service in the 2019/20 financial year.
- 1.4 Two reports have been received from Locality and considered by the VCS steering group. The first provided feedback from the research into the needs and wants of the VCS. More recently, an options analysis that proposed and evaluated four possible models. These are discussed in more detail in Section 4 but in summary, they are:
- 1 Create a new single provider
 - 2 Partner with an existing infrastructure organisation to deliver a future service
 - 3 Design a contract specification and put it out to competitive tender
 - 4 Design and commission a local partnership/consortium to deliver the service
- 1.6 The steering group's recommendation which was supported by the wider VCS network on the 13th February 2019, was to commission an existing organisation to manage overall delivery and to utilise existing local organisations to deliver other elements of the service, effectively an amalgam of options 2 and 4 above.
- 1.7 The next steps now involve securing a budget so that the proposed service can be commissioned. A report will be taken to Bolsover Partnership Executive Board in March 2019, seeking approval to allocate a budget of £25,000 per annum for a period of up to three years from Partnership reserves. This report is also seeking approval from Executive to utilise the £23,000 ring-fenced within the Grants to voluntary organisations budget (previously to CVP) and allocate it to this area of work.
- 1.8 Subject to both the Council and Bolsover Partnership agreeing to the above, this provides a base budget of £48,000. The Partnership team will then work with the steering group to develop a specification for the proposed service contract, incorporating input from the work carried out so far. The procurement timescales would probably lead for a start date for the new service of 1st July 2019. The existing contract for support from Bassetlaw CVS will be extended to end June 2019, and the existing budget will cover this.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The ceasing of CVP's operations in 2018 left a huge gap in infrastructure support for the CVS in Bolsover. This has been mitigated by short term delivery by Bassetlaw VCS in the interim period whilst a research project is undertaken by Locality to establish a model for the longer term.
- 2.2 The proposed model is to partner with an existing infrastructure organisation through a competitive tender process to deliver the required elements of a new support service, using direct delivery and sub-contracting arrangements where appropriate. The required elements of a new support service are as follows:
- Voice and strategic development of the sector
 - 1:1 support and advice for new and existing groups (including governance, volunteer management, community engagement, business planning, funding, policies, marketing, financial management, trading)
 - Training
 - Volunteer brokerage and support
 - Networking
 - Information distribution
- 2.3 Securing a base budget from the Council and Bolsover Partnership will help to lever in additional resources from other avenues. Discussions are already taking place with the BIG Lottery, Lloyds TSB Foundation, Derbyshire County Council, and Hardwick Clinical Commissioning Group.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 Consultation has been undertaken with VCS groups and strategic partners as part of the research and development element of the work undertaken by Locality. Over 50 organisations contributed to the consultation process and a particular emphasis was placed on engaging with grass roots community groups to establish their needs for a future service.
- 3.2 Over the past 12 months there have been regular meetings, chaired by a nominated representative from the VCS, attended by a wide range of organisations from both the VCS and public sector and supported by the Partnership Team administratively.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 New single provider – a new core funded single provider organisation most likely in the form of a new local CVS. Rejected due to there being little appetite from the sector and strategic partners to create a new organisation for a number of reasons including high level of overheads and long lead in time before delivery.
- 4.2 Partnership with an existing CVS infrastructure organisation – an extended CVS with governance and membership that can be extended to Bolsover. This model has its strengths but rejected on the basis that there is also a desire to utilise skills and strengths within the District.

- 4.3 Co-design a contract specification and put it out to competitive tender – to any able and willing provider including private sector organisations. Whilst this model might achieve good value for money because of its competitive nature, it was rejected as there is no guarantee that it will be a local organisation/partnership, and potentially a private sector organisation wins so local resources translate into private profit.
- 4.4 Co-design and commission a local partnership with various sub-options available, for example, an 'alliance contract' or creating a new incorporated consortium. This option offers local accountability and a catalyst for partnership working but rejected due to lack of consortium track record, potential for complexity and disagreement and long lead in times.
- 4.5 Full details of the options analysis is available upon request from the Partnership Team.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

- 5.1.1 The recommendation of the report is for Bolsover District Council to allocate £23,000 from its Grants to Voluntary Organisations budget for the proposed service. This money is already included within the Council's budget so there are not any additional financial implications.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

- 5.2.1 The service will be procured via a competitive tender process, overseen by the Partnership Team and in consultation with the Procurement Team.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

- 5.3.1 There are no HR implications to the Council.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive note the contents of the report
- 6.2 Agree to allocate £23,000 from the Grants to Voluntary organisations budget to contribute towards the cost of the proposed service delivery to be procured via a competitive tender process.

7 Decision Information

<p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: <i>BDC: Revenue - £75,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £150,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>NEDDC: Revenue - £100,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Capital - £250,000</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p>	No
<p>Has the relevant Portfolio Holder been informed</p>	Yes
<p>District Wards Affected</p>	All
<p>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</p>	Supporting our Communities to be Healthier, Safer, Cleaner and Greener

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
<p>Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)</p>	
<p>Bolsover Infrastructure Options Analysis Report</p>	
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