

**Leicestershire Infrastructure Review – Working Party 2006.**

**Model A – Retain changed structures set up from April 2007**

This model proposes to allow time to test the significant structural and operational changes that have already be set in train in Leicestershire as a result of the ChangeUp process. These improvements to infrastructure support have emphasised the potential for local people to take part in the governance and management of the support to their local community. This fits with the recent White paper emphasis on working to neighbourhoods, and the new LCC commissioning agreement with infrastructure organisations. Since the start of Changeup in March 2003 there has been a dramatic change in Leicestershire’s infrastructure support landscape with most Districts to be served by a new combined local infrastructure organisation by April 2007.

**Fitness for Purpose**

The model for infrastructure support is fit for purpose for the following reasons:

- It is firmly based on a ‘bottom up’ approach utilising the skills and commitment of grassroots communities.
- There is a comprehensive spread of accessible infrastructure support services for Leicestershire groups.
- Recent mergers have significantly strengthened the local infrastructure organisations and will improve their ability to deliver excellent support to frontline groups
- County-wide support and collaboration/partnership working is providing for the more complex support needs of groups

**Structural Changes**

The structural changes to infrastructure support for frontline groups in Leicestershire have mainly focussed on the District based generic infrastructure support that in 2003 was delivered by eleven independent Volunteer Bureaux (VB), six independent Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS), and two Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO). It was recognised that this arrangement created confusion, inefficiency, and some duplication. In Oadby and Wigston a combined Volunteer Bureau and Council for Voluntary Service had already been created, and this model has been steadily adopted across the County Districts.

The structural changes are summarised in the table overleaf:

Types of Organisation	Before. Changeup April 2003		Situation from April 2007	Comment
Independent CVS	4	↓	0	
Independent VB/VC	9	↓	2	Lutterworth and Castle Donnington are the remaining independent VCs (though the latter sub-contracts its infrastructure functions to NWLCVS)
Merged Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)	4	↑	8	
County-wide organisations	3	↑	4	LEMP has been created
<b>Total Organisations</b>	<b>20</b>	↓	<b>14</b>	

Since the Start of Changeup in April 2003:

- **All** independent CVS have merged with another body (usually the local Volunteer Centre)
- **All but two** of independent VB/VC's have merged with the local CVS (though one of these subcontracts the volunteer brokerage function to the local LIO)
- The number of merged LDA's has **doubled**
- We have **one** additional county-wide organisation that is Leicestershire Ethnic Minority Partnership (LEMP) – although LEMP is only temporarily funded through Capacity Builders.

The position in each Leicestershire District is shown below:

Area served	Before start of Changeup April 2003		Situation from April 2007
<b>Blaby</b>	Blaby CVS		Voluntary Action Blaby District (VABD)
	Blaby South VC		
	Blaby North VC		
<b>Charnwood</b>	Charnwood CVS (inc Loughborough VB)		Voluntary Action Charnwood (VAC)
	Syston VB		
	Shepshed VB		

Area served	Before start of Changeup April 2003	Situation from April 2007
<b>Harborough</b>	South Leics CVS	Voluntary Action South Leicestershire (VASL)
	Market Harborough VB	
	Lutterworth and B.A. VB	Lutterworth One Stop Shop
<b>Hinckley and Bosworth</b>	Hinckley and Bosworth CVS	Voluntary Action Hinckley and Bosworth (VAHB)
	Hinckley VB	
<b>Melton</b>	Melton CVS	Voluntary Action Melton (VAM)
	Melton VB	
<b>North West Leicestershire</b>	North West Leics CVS	North West Leicestershire CVS
	Coalville and Ashby VB	
	Castle Donnington VB	
<b>Oadby and Wigston</b>	VAOW	VAOW
<b>Leicester City</b>	Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL)	Voluntary Action Leicester (VAL)
<b>County-wide</b>	Rural Community Council (Leicestershire and Rutland) (RCC)	
	CVS Community Partnerships	
	Leics Council for Voluntary Youth Services (LCVYS)	
		Leics Ethnic Minority Partnership (LEMP)

These structural changes will answer some of the criticism of the infrastructure support arrangements identified in the Sheffield Hallam Research Report (2005). In particular these mergers have increased the capacity at district level, and enabled organisations to strategically plan their resources to best effect. The mergers have responded to the finding that there was scope to rationalise "...this 'infrastructure of infrastructure'"

These new structures have also responded to the need for operational change to create a more rational infrastructure support service, and develop new areas of support for the frontline groups.

### Operational Change

The development of new structures has been paralleled by a rethinking of the role of voluntary sector infrastructure driven by:

- Clarity of roles identified by ChangeUp
- Accreditation of Volunteer Centre roles by Volunteering England
- Accreditation of Local Infrastructure Organisation roles by the National Association of Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA)

- Accreditation of Rural Community Council roles by Action for Communities in Rural England (ACRE)
- Detailed work on the needs of frontline groups for the Leicestershire Infrastructure Investment Plan
- The creation of Capacity Builders to progress the ambitious plans laid out in ChangeUp

### Collaborative and Partnership working

This model is also developing **collaborative working** between LIOs. The seven LIOs in Leicestershire began a clustering project in Summer 2006 and identified 10 areas where they are explore working together on a day-to-day basis to save money and/or improve services. In some areas they are also involving VAL, RCC and LEMP. The 9 areas are:

- Strategic Finance and bookkeeping
- Strategic Role of Chief Officers
- Quality/Impact measurement.
- Capacity Building
- Trustees
- ICT
- Information Management
- Print and Design
- Policies

**Partnership working** has been developed particularly through the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement. Through the LIOs the Voluntary and Community Sector is leading on Stronger Communities and is also involved in all six other strands and cross-cutting themes such as Culture and Heritage.

As a result the future delivery of the various roles of infrastructure support to frontline groups in Leicestershire is planned as follows:

Support/ Assistance defined by Changeup	Delivery in Leicestershire
<b>Pre start-up</b> – community development, confidence building, idea development	The District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and promote the development of local communities</li> <li>• Promote the role of community action to solve community issues.</li> <li>• Contribute to their local LSP - feeding in community issues</li> </ul> <b>County-wide infrastructure</b> will contribute according to their particular interest (e.g. youth issues, rural issues, BME issues)
<b>Start-up</b> – how to start-up an organisation, legal and regulatory requirements Business planning	The District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> and the <b>County-wide RCC</b> are the source of start up information and advice in a locality.  <b>(Further improvement needed:</b> Advising frontline groups on more complex issues (e.g. Business planning))

<b>Support/ Assistance defined by Changeup</b>	<b>Delivery in Leicestershire</b>
Secure <b>access to facilities</b> – meeting rooms, offices, etc.	All the District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> have the ability to provide facilities in their localities for meetings and practical assistance, with some also offering start up office space.  <b>(Further improvement needed:</b> Some premises improvements would be desirable)
<b>Income generation</b> – information on availability and advice on funding, finance, procurement and enterprise	The District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> provide fundraising advice for start up and small projects from Trusts, Lottery and public funders. Additional fundraising support is provided by specialist infrastructure.  <b>(Further improvement needed:</b> Provision of more complex funding advice for larger and capital projects, provision of support and advice on tendering and procurement processes)
<b>Volunteers</b> – recruitment, management and retention	The District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> provide recruitment and placement of volunteers in local area, promotion of volunteering and development of local volunteering opportunities. A <b>collaborative forum</b> provides the coordination of training on volunteer involvement and management, sub regional promotion of volunteering, best practice policy work on volunteering.
<b>Personnel</b> – how to recruit and manage staff and comply with legislation, including equal opportunities	The District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> are able to provide basic HR information to varying degrees. From April 2007 there will be no funded specialist HR advice in the sub region.  <b>(Further improvement needed:</b> Human Resources support, advice and training for the sub-region)
<b>Organisational Development:</b> performance improvement, governance, leadership, business planning, diversity, marketing, health and safety, management/financial management, crisis support	The District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> provide organisational development support to groups and link to the National Hubs of expertise in governance and performance improvement.  <b>(Further improvement needed:</b> Complex organisation development support and advice for groups)

<b>Support/ Assistance defined by Changeup</b>	<b>Delivery in Leicestershire</b>
<b>Technical support in specialist areas</b> – for example meeting professional standards in child care provision	The District based <b>Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIO)</b> provide a signposting role to national expertise
<b>Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</b> – strategies for deploying ICT, access to low cost support/equipment and software	As part of the ChangeUp plans VAL have set up a <b>social enterprise</b> to provide practical support, purchase advice (inc. group purchase) developmental consultancy and training for groups in the sub region.  <b>(Further improvement needed:</b> Social Enterprise needs ‘buy in’ from groups and local funders to ensure sustainability)
<b>Skills</b> – developing the organisational and professional skills of the workforce whether paid or voluntary	There are <b>two short term funded projects</b> dealing in a limited way with this issue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOCOLLS – an ESF project providing training opportunities managed by CVS Community partnerships</li> <li>• A project run by VAL supporting the workforce development of groups working with children's and young people's services</li> </ul> <b>(Further improvement needed:</b> Development and delivery of comprehensive workforce strategy for the voluntary sector in the sub region)
<b>Partnership building/brokerage</b> – bringing together frontline organisations and other public and private sector organisations for joint/co-operative policy making, planning and service delivery	The <b>local LIO's</b> provide partnership working on a local level with local public sector bodies and the local community and voluntary sector (e.g. with District LSP's), and in collaboration contribute to county-wide partnership (e.g. County LSP and Stronger Communities agenda)  Further support is provided by <b>County-wide agencies</b> , especially in Health and Social Care (CCP), rural issues (RCC), youth issues (LCVYS) and BME issues (LEMP)
<b>Advocacy/representation</b> – providing a representative and accountable voice for frontline organisations to policy makers, service planners and funders	<b>(Further improvement needed:</b> More proactive links to be made to identify the potential for voluntary groups to deliver public services)
<b>Policy and research</b> – collecting and providing evidence in order to influence policy,	Local research into local community need is carried out in a limited way by the <b>local LIO's</b> . Sub-regional research is similarly limited and occasionally carried out by <b>County-wide agencies</b>

planning and delivery	
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The areas requiring further action or development as shown above are:

- Provision of advice and support to frontline groups on more complex issues (e.g. Business Planning)
- Some further premises improvements would be desirable
- Provision of more complex funding advice for larger and capital projects, provision of support and advice on tendering and procurement processes.
- Human Resources support, advice and training for the sub-region as the funding for the current project runs out in March 2007.
- Complex organisation development support and advice for groups
- The ICT social enterprise providing support to groups needs 'buy in' from groups and local funders to ensure sustainability
- Development and delivery of comprehensive workforce strategy for the voluntary sector in the sub region
- More proactive links to be made to identify the potential for voluntary groups to deliver public services
- More balanced funding across the sector to achieve greater uniformity of core staffing across infrastructure organisations.

### Financial investment in Infrastructure Support

Over the page is a summary table of the financial investment in infrastructure support for frontline voluntary groups in Leicestershire. Estimates from research by Capacity Builders (Nigel Siederer 2006) indicate there will be **three** community and voluntary groups per 1000 population in an area. On this estimate Leicestershire will have **1858 community and voluntary groups** and the current annual investment in infrastructure support therefore equates to only **£705 per group** per year.

The table overleaf hides some historic discrepancies in funding between districts with an county average of infrastructure investment of £2.09 per head of population, the best resourced district getting £2.63 per head, and the worst resourced getting £1.08 per head.

As yet there are no clear figures for what is a required level of funding for infrastructure support for frontline groups, and such a figure would depend on the level of ambition the local area had for the growth and development of its community and voluntary groups. Further work is required on this issue and could be a focus for the revised Leicestershire Infrastructure Investment Plan due in 2007.

To deliver the above range of services the investment from local public sector funders in Leicestershire is as follows:

## Summary of financial investment from statutory organisations in infrastructure support for frontline voluntary groups in Leicestershire

<b>2006-07 Figures (combined)</b>	<b>Leicestershire County Council</b>	<b>District Council</b>	<b>Leicestershire PCT</b>	<b>Connexions</b>	<b>Total</b>
Voluntary Action Blaby District	74,113	25,686	4,723		<b>104,522</b>
Voluntary Action Charnwood	207,915	20,000	7,165		<b>235,080</b>
Voluntary Action Hinckley & Bosworth	113,310	25,500	5,617		<b>144,427</b>
Voluntary Action Melton	55,830	35,000	3,428		<b>94,258</b>
North West Leicestershire CVS	207,000	37,670	11,316		<b>229,750</b>
Voluntary Action Oadby & Wigston	57,939	2,500	0		<b>60,439</b>
Voluntary Action South Leicestershire	57,515	28,736	10,377		<b>96,628</b>
Lutterworth VC	12,945		10,739		<b>23,684</b>
Rural Community Council (Leics and Rutland)	42,000	28,821			<b>70,821</b>
CVS Community Partnerships			210,000		<b>210,000</b>
Leics Council for vol youth services	26,266			20,000	<b>46,266</b>
<b>Total 2006/7</b>	<b>854,833</b>	<b>203,913</b>	<b>263,365</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>1,342,111</b>

The above organisations also attract other sources of finance, at times this is to supplement their infrastructure role, but also at times to deliver direct services.