

Leicestershire Infrastructure Review – Working Party 2006.

Model C proposal for the revision of voluntary sector Infrastructure support for Frontline voluntary and community organisations in Leicestershire – a single infrastructure body for the whole county. (developed from the previous Model One)

Summary

This model proposes the establishment of a single Infrastructure organisation to cover the whole county of Leicestershire. In doing so it replaces all of the existing infrastructure organizations such as district based CVS and volunteer centres, and the countywide RCC and other specialist infrastructure organisations. The rationale used for the model is the ChangeUp defined infrastructure functions, with an estimated staffing level based on assessment of workload, with comparison to the delivery of infrastructure functions in Leicester City. The model therefore is presented as an ideal position, and is also presented in a reduced level to fit with existing budgets.

The outcome is an organisation with staff members in **three** service teams covering the infrastructure support functions for frontline voluntary and community organizations as defined by ChangeUp. There is:

- A team delivering the locality based volunteer recruitment and brokerage, along with the support for small community and voluntary groups. The members of this team will be based in the communities they serve to ensure local responsiveness and access. This team will have an office presence in each District.
- A county-wide team focused on the development and sustainability of voluntary and community groups who are seeking to deliver effective public services. This team will be supporting groups in successfully bidding for, and delivering on, procurement tenders from local public agencies.
- A team will enable community and voluntary groups to influence and participate in the development of public policy and practice. This will primarily be via the Local Area Agreement and LSP structure across the county. This team will work closely with district level LSP's and district-based voluntary and community groups, as well as larger county-wide organisations.

The proposed organisation also includes a small central services team to manage the finances and governance. It is anticipated that the delivery of specialist infrastructure support (i.e. support for particular communities of interest

or place) is integrated within this model, though options for specialist infrastructure support as a single stand-alone agency, or as currently with a set of independent specialist infrastructure agencies, is explored at the end.

The predicted cost of this new organisation is **£2,603,317** per annum. This is higher than the current investment in infrastructure of approximately £1,248,189 per annum (excluding the City) but creates an infrastructure that is 'fit for purpose' for the County. Following a request at the Funders Meeting on 1st September 2006 an attempt has been made in each section of the proposal to look at a reduced cost delivery model to fit within the current budget – but points out the loss in service delivery as a result. The options and their costs are summarised in the table below:

| Option | No. staff | Annual cost (£) |
|---|------------------|------------------------|
| Single voluntary sector infrastructure body that integrates specialist infrastructure | 71.5 | 2,603,317 |
| <i>Reduced Cost above</i> | <i>43.5</i> | <i>1,600,730</i> |
| Single voluntary sector infrastructure body and a single specialist infrastructure body | 88.7 | 3,220,837 |
| <i>Reduced Cost above</i> | <i>54</i> | <i>1,948,697</i> |
| Single voluntary sector infrastructure body and current range of independent specialist infrastructure bodies | 89.7 | 3,253,788 |
| <i>Reduced Cost above</i> | <i>54.6</i> | <i>1,860,261</i> |

Infrastructure support Functions 1 - Support for volunteering and development of small groups.

These functions of the new organisation will need to be delivered on a locality basis in order to successfully reach potential volunteers, and to support small locally based community and voluntary groups. The changeup defined infrastructure functions to be delivered here are:

| ChangeUp Definition | Comments |
|---|--|
| Start up – how to start up an organisation, legal and regulatory requirements Business planning | Main source of start up information and advice for new community groups and support for existing small community groups including basic fundraising |
| Volunteers – recruitment, management and retention | Recruitment and placement of volunteers in local area, promotion of volunteering and development of local volunteering opportunities, training on volunteer involvement and management, promotion of volunteering, best practice policy work on volunteering |

As this is the locality based work a specific team is proposed to work on these functions. In order to anticipate the workload of this team the following elements have been considered:

- Benchmarking against the City provision (For volunteering 2.5 wte staff and for small group support 4.5 wte staff covering a population of 280,000)
- Rough assessment of staffing levels of current volunteer centres and CVS across the county – covering a population of 670,000.
- Consideration of the access issues in rural areas, and the current different approaches to volunteering.
- Commitment to have a physical office presence in each of the seven districts in Leicestershire.

To cover the minimum of seven district locations with at least a reasonable presence each will require a minimum of **eight** staff members on volunteering and **eight** on groups support. In addition it is proposed to supplement these frontline with administrative support. This option will result in a significant reduction of locally based support for volunteering and small groups from the current dispersed model. The proposed staffing by locality is shown overleaf:

Northern Team

| District | Popn | Staffing for Group Support | Staffing for Volunteering | Admin | Comment |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Charnwood | 155400 | 2 | 2 | 1 | Office open 4 days |
| Melton | 48200 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | Office open mornings only |
| North West Leics | 87500 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | Office open mornings only |
| | | | | | |
| Total | 291100 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |

Southern Team

| District | Popn | Staffing for Group Support | Staffing for Volunteering | Admin | Comment |
|-------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|
| Blaby | 91500 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | Office open mornings only |
| Harborough | 79100 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | Office open mornings only |
| Hinckley | 101500 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | Office open mornings only |
| Oadby and Wigston | 56100 | 1 | 1 | 0.5 | Office open mornings only |
| | | | | | |
| Total | 328200 | 4 | 4 | 2 | |

The role of the locally based staff will be to:

- Provide the direct support in small groups support and start up,
- Provide access to volunteering for the local community
- Develop and maintain knowledge of the needs of people in their District,
- Ensure all communities in their district have access to the services,
- Engage with the local District Council and other agencies,
- Liaise with the central policy staff on local involvement and consultation on public policy.

A small, centrally based, management and administration team will support these local staff. The management of each local office will be delegated to the senior Group Support Officer.

Specialist Infrastructure Support

The ability to provide services to particular communities of interest or communities of place is integrated into this single infrastructure body model. It is proposed to have specialist posts within this team, one covering young people and the other BME communities. These posts are centrally based and will advise the frontline staff. In reality all staff will be expected to maintain awareness of key issues and ensure their services are accessible to all communities of interest and place.

If it is decided to have separate specialist infrastructure support then the two specialist posts within this team can be deleted.

Impact of reduced cost model

In order to reduce the costs of this proposal to within the current budget the staffing for this team has been reduced to **eight** locally based volunteering/group support officers for the whole area.

| Staff Role | Ideal proposal | Reduced Cost Proposal |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Management (and high level support) | 3 posts | 1 post |
| Volunteering Officers | 8 posts | 8 posts |
| Group Support Officers | 8 posts | |
| Specialist Groups Support officers | 2 posts | 2 posts |
| Administration | 8 posts (fte) | 5 posts (fte) |
| Total | 29 posts | 16 posts |

This means that each of the seven districts can only receive an office service for **2 days** in a working week.

Infrastructure Support Functions 2 - Development and sustainability of voluntary and community groups

The 'higher' level support and development of community and voluntary groups – in particular to equip them for successful winning and delivery of public service procurement contracts – is to be located in this team. The key functions are:

| ChangeUp Definition | Comments |
|--|--|
| Income generation – information on availability and advice on funding, finance, procurement and enterprise | Provision of fundraising advice from Trusts, Lottery and public funders, and provision of support and advice on tendering and procurement processes. As this is a critical area it is proposed to have three posts. |
| Personnel – how to recruit and manage staff and comply with legislation, including equal opportunities | Human Resources support, advice and training. It is proposed to have one post covering HR. |
| Organisational Development: performance improvement, governance, leadership, business planning, diversity, marketing, health and safety, management/ financial management, crisis support | Comprehensive organisation development support and advice for all groups. Provision of support and advice to local generic infrastructure. These posts will cover a wide range of expertise, and are essential to enable successful public service delivery – three posts |
| Technical support in specialist areas – for example meeting professional standards in child care provision | Where possible offer support but most likely a signposting role to national expertise. (Above posts to provide) |
| ICT – strategies for deploying ICT, access to low cost support/equipment and software | Provision of practical support, purchase advice (inc. group purchase) developmental consultancy and training for groups in the area. It is proposed to have one post covering ICT (or equivalent outsourced expertise). |
| Skills – developing the organisational and professional skills of the workforce whether paid or voluntary | Development and delivery of comprehensive workforce strategy for the voluntary sector in the area. Developing the staff required to improve the performance of voluntary and community groups – two posts allocated |

The team is divided into development and technical support. The aims are to prepare community and voluntary groups for delivering of public services by developing their governance, planning, financial management, marketing and management. In addition the technical team will provide groups with 'higher level' technical support not usually available in the voluntary sector – the key priority areas being Human Resources, Workforce Development, and ICT. The size of this team has been determined by the need to cover the required technical areas as well as an estimate of the workload to develop community and voluntary groups to a 'procurement ready' state:

- There are an estimated 3000 community and voluntary groups in Leicestershire - many are small and underdeveloped.
- In the City nearly 200 groups out of 1000 are delivering some form of public service. The same proportion in the County would mean 600 community and voluntary groups delivering public services.
- There are therefore suggested **six** posts in the development team.
- The technical support team staffing is primarily driven by the need to obtain the appropriate expertise, therefore posts are identified in HR, ICT, and workforce development

Specialist Infrastructure Support

The ability to provide services to particular communities of interest or communities of place is integrated into this single infrastructure body model. It is proposed not to have any specialist posts within this team as it is dealing with issues that are common to all groups. All staff will be expected to maintain awareness of key issues and ensure their services are accessible to all communities of interest and place.

Impact of reduced cost model

In order to reduce the costs of this proposal to within the current budget the staffing for this team has been reduced as follows:

| Staff Role | Ideal proposal | Reduced Cost Proposal |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Management (and high level support) | 3 posts | 1 post |
| Income generation | 3 posts | 2 posts |
| Group development | 3 posts | 2 posts |
| Workforce development | 2 posts | 1 post |
| HR support | 1 post | 1 post |
| ICT Support | 1 post | 0 posts |
| Administration | 2 posts | 1 post |
| Total | 15 posts | 8 posts |

These reductions in staffing mean that some of the key technical issues will not be well covered, and the development of procurement ready community and voluntary groups in Leicestershire will be significantly slower.

Infrastructure Support Functions 3 - Influencing and participating in the development of public policy and practice

These functions are related to the development and application of the Local Area Agreements (LAA), Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP), and the modernisation of public services. The team suggested here will have three key roles in support of community and voluntary groups:

- To enable their participation of in local strategic partnerships (including District LSP's),
- To support their influencing of the development of public policy, primarily through the LAA.
- To undertake research to evaluate the potential future role of community and voluntary sector groups in the delivery of public services in Leicestershire

The ChangeUp voluntary sector infrastructure functions to be covered by this team are:

| ChangeUp Definition | Comments |
|--|--|
| Pre start-up – community development, confidence building, idea development | Support and promote the development of local communities and the role of community action to solve community issues |
| Partnership building/ brokerage – bringing together frontline organisations and other public and private sector organisations for joint/co-operative policy making, planning and service delivery | Partnership working with public sector bodies and the community and voluntary sector offering a strategic lead on voluntary and community sector involvement |
| Policy and research – collecting and providing evidence in order to influence policy, planning and service delivery | Research to lead on strategic policy for involvement of the community and voluntary sector |
| Advocacy/ representation – providing a representative and accountable voice for frontline organisations to policy makers, service planners and funders | Representation of the views of the community and voluntary sector public agencies and partnerships |

In order to determine the staff required to fulfil these functions for Leicestershire I have considered that the Leicestershire LAA has seven identified policy themes, and therefore propose to have a policy lead for each of these themes and a cross-cutting policy lead (**eight** staff). In addition there are seven District LSP's and one county-wide LSP in Leicestershire. Therefore it is proposed to employ **four** LSP officers to work as the conduit between these LSP's and the communities they serve. Finally it is proposed to employ **two** dedicated research

officers to provide the background analysis and evaluation of practice – working for continuous improvement.

Specialist Infrastructure Support

The ability to provide services to particular communities of interest or communities of place is integrated into this single infrastructure body model. It is proposed not to have any specialist posts within this team as it is dealing with issues that are common to all groups. It is intended to ensure the staff groups reflect the communities they serve. All staff will be expected to maintain awareness of key issues and ensure their services are accessible to all communities of interest and place.

Impact of reduced cost model

In order to reduce the costs of this proposal to within the current budget the staffing for this team has been reduced combining the policy and LSP roles and deleting the research posts.

| Staff Role | Ideal proposal | Reduced Cost Proposal |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| Management (and high level support) | 3 posts | 1 post |
| LAA Policy Officers | 8 posts | 7 posts |
| LSP Support Officers | 4 posts | |
| Research Officers | 2 posts | 0 posts |
| Administration | 4 posts | 1 post |
| Total | 21 posts | 9 posts |

This means that some of the key policy areas will not be well covered, and the involvement of community and voluntary groups in Leicestershire LSP's will be significantly reduced.

Conclusion

This model provides a significantly reduced presence at a District Level and would require hosting arrangements in each district. It proposes a lower level of resource for volunteer recruitment and brokerage, forcing a more 'hands off' approach to this service. The model does seek to create competitive advantage for local community and voluntary groups by investing in 'higher-level' support than is currently easily available to county groups. The size of this second team is arguably to be determined by the ambition of Funders to invest in the local community and voluntary sector for public service delivery.

The Policy role is also expanded from that which is currently available and is linked to the need for commissioners to be better informed about the potential of local community and voluntary groups, as well as the need for effective preparation and involvement of local groups. This model prioritises the benefits of centralised working with the ability to build expertise against the loss of local presence and ground level understanding.

Appendices:

Structure Chart for Model C and Model C Budget

Reduced Service Structure Chart Model C and Reduced Model C Budget

Table of ChangeUp Infrastructure Roles