

Wellingborough and District Community Consortium Meeting Notes

**Wednesday 13th July 2011
Tithe Barn Wellingborough**

The meeting was opened by Rosemary Hadaway CEO of Nene Valley Community Action (NVCA).

Introductions around the room were held.

Rosemary Hadaway explained the idea behind the new Community Consortium meetings. NVCA were successful in obtaining the new Local Support and Development contract (LSD) from Northamptonshire County Council starting in May 2011 after previously holding the contract (then called Local Infrastructure Organisation) (LIO) for the areas of both Wellingborough and District and East Northants. A survey was sent to all groups on the NVCA database which resulted in the sector confirming that they would like a networking/ meet the public event in Wellingborough. RH advised that this is the first of these meetings and that the promotion of the event to the public has been done via the local press but NVCA are unsure as to how many public will attend. RH confirmed that it is expected that NVCA will hold 3 meetings per year. 2 of these meetings will be held in Wellingborough and 1 in either Earls Barton or Finedon.

Presentation from Cllr Paul Bell – Wellingborough Borough Council on Managing Change Together – see attached presentation.

Questions arising from the presentations:-

Question:	Who choose the groupings that WBC are using?
Answer:	WBC but they are general and all groups should bring their case forward
Question:	Will WBC be looking to co-operate with NCC or Health for combined decisions on this?
Answer:	These will really only be decisions for WBC
Question:	Is this process going to be grant or tender?
Answer:	Tender process is most likely
Observation	Can WBC think closely about Indemnity Insurance as currently NCC insist on cover for 2 million which far exceeds what most voluntary organisations are covered for
Observation	It should be pointed out that in brackets on the "Our Proposals" slide Victims of Interpersonal Violence – this is already committed to for 3 years across the County of Northamptonshire

We have now received the following statement from WBC regarding the above:-

The question I asked Andy Frost (Assistant Chief Constable (C&J) | Northamptonshire Police) was:

"I was at a community meeting this morning where a consultation upon our grants programme for 2012/13 was being launched. As part of this presentation we were explaining that our Interpersonal Violence funding was now being directed to a countywide project aimed at rationalising these services. This prompted a series of questions about the progress of this project and the impact upon agencies operating locally in the Wellingborough area. Is there any update you can give me that I can share back with representative from local agencies?"

The reply I have received is:

"The current services that are funded by Wellingborough are still being provided through MARAC, MAPPA and Sunflower. The only difference is they are being provided at less cost. Most of the cost taken out was admin and management. Where local groups may have noticed a difference is in the County Council specific grants, which I know have been cut. These grants were never part of our Interpersonal Violence budget.

We are now in the process of developing a design spec for a new commissioned Interpersonal Violence service. This spec will be out for consultation once drafted. I have a number of meetings next week to put timescales and resource to this work."

Question:	WBC should look at duplication of funding that is already funded by NCC and others especially with locality based working?
Answer:	WBC intend to discuss duplication with NCC
Observation	WBC has ring fenced the voluntary sector money and contracts will be for 3 years which will give the sector time to set up some good partnership working – there will not be single big grants anymore. There will be a new pot of money in 2012 which will result in joint commissioning under Health and Wellbeing with a possibility of more partnership working.
Question	The timelines are quite short on this and with other funding applications that are in the pipeline the impact on groups will mean that this is all happening at the same time – in most voluntary groups there is a single fundraiser who will now have to deal with a multiple of funding applications?
Answer	WBC have given as much time for applications as is possible but the deadline is slightly flexible
Question	Would groups benefit from some form of training for the tender process?
Answer	Most agreed that it would be good to come together for support
Question	Some organisations are very specific and may not lend to the services that WBC are looking for?
Answer	WBC are looking for outcomes and quality of what services they deliver (not particularly quality marks)
Question	Can WBC confirm how much the money is going to change and what will be available?

Answer	WBC are looking at a budget of around £200,000 which is down by 25%– WBC would like to hear the sectors voice on whether they would prefer cuts in one go or tapering – it may be that different organisations need different tapering
Question	Will organisations fall at the first hurdle if they have reserves?
Answer	WBC will need to clearly see that the reserves that groups have are ring fenced for a particular project and are not just free reserves
Question	Will the small grants pot disappear?
Answer	No this will continue
Observation	WBC may have a problem with the small grants as there will be no match funding from NCC
Observation	Groups should look at this as an exiting time with opportunities to have 4 – 5 agencies within one building which could combine resources
Observation	Partnership working does not mean that each group will loose their identity you can have 5 groups within a service agreement that can all be monitored separately
Observation	The sector get very nervous around the words “merger” and “partnership working” – there would always need to be a “Lead Organisation” who would be the accountable body but all partners would maintain their “identity”
Observation	Mergers/consortia will reduce back room costs and give groups the ability to focus more on their front line work
Observation	Any groups that are needing help and support in the process of mergers should use their Local Support and Development Organisation to guide them through this – this is what they are there for. In Wellingborough’s case this is Nene Valley Community Action.
Observation	It would be helpful if the consultation document could be sent out with a statement from WBC explaining the consultation process to the sector

Statement from WBC

Wellingborough Voluntary and Community Grants Consultation – July 2011 **(see attached consultation document)**

The Borough Council of Wellingborough is reviewing its annual grants programme to the voluntary and community sector and would now like to seek views from the sector on the draft proposals.

The Council is asking colleagues to review the proposed service descriptions and criteria and give comments upon:

- Do our proposals make sense?
- Do the proposals address areas of need?
- Can the sector meet these needs?

Please forward your comments by email to
gchapman@wellingborough.gov.uk or post to:
Mrs Gill Chapman
Principal Community Support Manager
Borough Council of Wellingborough
Tithe Barn Road Offices
Wellingborough
NN8 1BN

By 12 August 2011

Rosemary Hadaway thanked Cllr's Bell and Graves for their presentation and confirmed that all documentation would be sent out to all attendees with the meeting notes.

.....

NVCA asked that attendees complete the Training Needs Survey on their tables to enable NVCA to gauge what groups need training wise to move forward.

Rosemary Hadaway then introduced Lynne Jones and Tony Meadows of Northamptonshire County Council who are presenting the Northamptonshire County Council Prevention Strategy which is now out for consultation – see attached consultation document.

Lynne Jones started the presentation by confirming that this consultation was launched on 7th July at Kettering to around 800 organisations. The Consultation will run till 30th September and the proposal paper will go to Northamptonshire County Council cabinet in November. NCC have asked the Local Support and Development Organisations (LSD's) to facilitate a Consultation Event in each of the 7 areas, there will be a NCC Officer and a person from Northamptonshire LINK attending each of these and a toolkit to use to aid the consultation.

Question	Can NCC confirm that if an organisation has a 3 year contract with NCC that is only in its first year and is within the 440 contracts being looked at within this Prevention strategy – will these contracts already awarded be safe or will they be re-looked at?
Answer	All contracts will be looked at under the Prevention strategy – this includes the 250 contracts from the Supporting People programme along with the rest of the contracts which make up the 440 contracts in the Prevention strategy
Question	With regard to the specifications on the contracts – can NCC confirm that they will be able to achieve these timescales?
Answer	NCC will adopt a phased approach and there may be a longer transition for some contracts
Question	Does this mean that there will not be total change from April

	2012?
Answer	Within the process NCC are aiming for April but this is subject to a Cabinet decision
Observation and request	If an existing organisation such as a Children's Centre could have a worker that could listen to all problems but then signpost onto the relevant organisations via a locality hub then this could be useful. It would be most helpful if NCC could provide a comprehensive list of the NCC funded organisations providing a service in Wellingborough under the Prevention Strategy before the Consultation Event in their area in order that this can be discussed to avoid duplication etc.
Answer	NCC can provide a comprehensive list of the NCC funded organisations providing a service in Wellingborough and will forward this to NVCA who will facilitate the Consultation Event NCC would like the following to be discussed:- "What are the needs of Wellingborough?" "Are they being addressed and are there gaps?" Organisations should be asking themselves " what does Wellingborough need and how can my services fit into this?"
Question	Who will define "needs" and who will make the decision on "needs"?
Answer	The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) can be viewed on the Northamptonshire Observatory http://www.northamptonshireobservatory.org.uk this will be used by NCC to make the decisions on need but will ultimately be the decision of NCC Cabinet which includes Wellingborough County Council members.

Rosemary Hadaway thanked NCC for their presentation and full discussion on this matter. She advised that the Wellingborough Consultation Event would be held on Wednesday 10th August from 5 pm to 7.30 pm at Swanspool Pavillion, Wellingborough but that groups could attend an alternative Consultation Event if they are unable to make this date. A list of the 7 Consultation Dates will be sent out as soon as they are all confirmed. Reminder information on the Wellingborough Consultation Event will be sent out by NVCA's weekly ebulletin.

A short overview of NVCA's services were given to the meeting from Debbie Moore their Development Officer.

Debbie reminded groups that NVCA supply a weekly ebulletin for the sector which is sent out on a Friday. This information provides a wealth of things from funding available, to events and training that is being put on for the sector. Groups can also put information onto this to inform the sector.

NVCA's website is still under construction and there were apologies for the length of time this is taking.

Debbie is now available at the Wellingborough Tithe Barn Council Offices reception every Monday now and groups can pop along to see Debbie about support, information and volunteering from 10 am to 4 pm.

Volunteering has taken an increase and NVCA are always looking for interesting, eye catching and innovative ways of volunteering if any groups would like to discuss their volunteering opportunities further then Debbie would be pleased to help.

Volunteering appointments are now being held from Nene Valley Citizens Advice Bureau on a Tuesday afternoon and a Friday morning but NVCA can arrange to see someone in Wellingborough at an alternative time if needed.

NVCA have an IT suite available in Rushden that could be made available if a group would like to have an online look at the Prevention Strategy consultation.

Rosemary Hadaway confirmed to the meeting that the selection process for the Countywide Forum has now been completed and the Steering Group members are now in place:-

Wellingborough Members are:- Anne Toms (All Hallows Church Restoration Trust)
Sandra McDermott – Family Support Link

Both members introduced themselves to the meeting and confirmed that they are looking forward to representing the views of the sector. More details of how to contact them will come out in the NVCA weekly bulletin. The first meeting is due to take place in August and it is anticipated that the members will feed back to the sector via various methods including the Community Consortium events and NVCA's weekly bulletin. It is hoped that a full mechanism for a 2 way conversation will be effective after the 1st meeting of the Group.

Rosemary Hadaway thanked all for attending and advised that all will receive a copy of the meeting notes along with supporting documentation and presentations by email.