

Wakefield Together Partnership

Third Sector Development Plan 2010 - 2013



FINAL (18.03.10)

THIRD SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2010 - 2013

INTRODUCTION

This development plan builds on the mapping undertaken through the Third Sector Review commissioned by the Wakefield Together Partnership in 2009 and draws out the recommendations from that review. It sets out in brief an overview of the third sector, its valuable and distinct role, and sets out a number of proposals based upon the refreshed National Compact for how the sector can be strengthened in the future.

One of the key drivers for this plan is to ensure that the Wakefield Together Partnership meets its commitment to National Indicator 7* – providing “an environment for a thriving third sector”. NI 7 will measure the contribution that local government and its partners make to an environment in which independent third sector organisations can operate successfully. A thriving third sector will also assist directly with delivery against the following national indicators (NIs):

- NI 1: % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area*
- NI 2: % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
- NI 3: Civic participation in the local area*
- NI 4: % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality*
- NI 5: Overall/general satisfaction with local area*
- NI 6: Participation in regular volunteering

(* National indicators agreed within the Local Area Agreement 2008-11).

Furthermore a strong third sector will contribute to the delivery of a far wider range of outcomes and targets across the Local Area Agreement and to delivering the sustainable Community Strategy.

Third sector organisations bring with them not only the ability to deliver services that address key priorities in a way that can be more flexible, but to reach into communities and innovate in ways that the statutory sector often can not. Additionally third sector organisations funded to deliver against particular priorities will often contribute to far wider objectives, for example by improving community cohesion (NIs 1 and 2).

The Partnership should also consider the strength that the third sector can offer to the new area and neighbourhood based arrangements in engaging with citizens and communities about local service provision and supporting communities to do things for themselves. The new working arrangements will also result in more joint commissioning of services at a local level and the skills, experience and reach into communities of third sector organisations would mean that they would be well placed to deliver these services locally.

The personalisation agenda will also replace much of the low level commissioning currently taking place. The overall aim of personalisation is for social care service users to have control over how money allocated to their care is spent. If personalisation is to achieve its core aims, it will be essential for those accessing individual budgets to be able to refer to sources of advice and support. It is likely that much of this support and brokerage could be provided by third sector organisations.

Unfortunately the number of third sector organisations capable of delivering statutory services in Wakefield is limited and the sector needs to be strengthened significantly to enable it to compete effectively when commissioning opportunities arise.

This Development Plan sets out how, as a Partnership this can be addressed to create a stronger and more vibrant sector to support the achievement of improved outcomes for all citizens across the district.

THE THIRD SECTOR

The purpose of this plan is to set out a shared vision for the Wakefield Together Partnership of the role of the third sector in the Wakefield District and how that vision is to be achieved.

The vision is for an independent, thriving and sustainable third sector which:

- reflects and meets the needs and aspirations of the diverse communities in the District
- has the capacity to contribute as an equal partner towards the social, economic and environmental well being of the District, sub-district and neighbourhoods
- recognises the sector's long reach into communities and its role in regeneration

In order to turn the vision into reality, it is necessary to ensure that the sector is supported by high quality and effective infrastructure in order to best utilise the funding and resources available to the third sector in the District.

The term third sector refers to organisations that do not fall within the private or public sector. There is no formal definition of the sector because of the shifting political and economic context but there is a consensus that it broadly comprises of community groups, voluntary organisations, charitable trusts, not for profit membership organisations and social enterprises.

The term "third sector organisation" becomes more ambiguous when considering organisations such as trade unions, independent schools and registered social landlords. They are sometimes included in the third sector

(and may be registered charities) but could also be defined as public or private sector organisations.

Social enterprises are businesses set up with a social purpose and their profits are reinvested in the business.

The independence of third sector organisations from the statutory sector is fundamental to their success and it is essential that this independence is maintained.

The purpose of this plan is to provide a framework for the development of a thriving third sector that can support delivery of NI's 1-7 and would be strong enough to deliver services across the other LAA targets. The primary focus of this Development Plan is on community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises.

THE COMPACT

One of the most common approaches nationally to developing an environment for a thriving third sector is to use the specific commitments in the Compact as a framework. This plan will embed the newly republished national Compact in future developments rather than sitting in isolation.

The new national Compact has three key areas. In Wakefield there are some additional commitments that reflect local needs. The priority areas identified by the national and local Compact are:

- ***Capacity Building***
- ***Communications***
- ***Advancing Equalities***
- ***Allocating Resources***
- ***Leadership***

Using these priorities gives us a number of areas for improvement that would improve the environment in which the third sector operates and will lead to partners reviewing their organisation policies and practices. However, just as the Compact applies to both the third sector and the statutory sector so the ownership and responsibility for delivering this plan falls on both sectors.

CAPACITY BUILDING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Capacity building is a critical element of developing a stronger third sector and falls into two areas:

- Development of the range and capacity of the third sector itself (i.e. the third sector organisations and partnerships)
- Development of the capacity of individuals and communities to enable them to set up third sector organisations (i.e. the people living in communities across Wakefield District).

Associated with this capacity building will be an increase in understanding of the third sector within the public and private sectors that will be delivered through other elements of the delivery plan.

Building the Capacity of the Third Sector

Third sector organisations vary significantly and the kind of support they need differs from organisation to organisation and may depend on factors such as their size, area of activity and the environment and markets they operate in. This will be reflected in the delivery of capacity building in the sector. It should also be remembered that many small groups only need basic support around governance, recruiting, supporting and keeping volunteers and managing their finances without wanting to develop their group or deliver services. Although they aren't directly involved in paid service delivery these groups will often be contributing to the development of community cohesion and need to be supported in the future.

Capacity building of third sector organisations is currently delivered by a range of third sector and statutory sector providers. Existing capacity building activities that need to continue include:

- Group development that provides support with organisational structures and governance
- Support for groups with their financial management, Human Resources and Information Communications Technology
- Training and information on funding and fundraising
- Effective brokering of volunteering opportunities with volunteers and support to organisations that manage volunteers

Other activities that require further development are:

- Development of an effective training programme and appropriate training opportunities for third sector organisations
- Development of infrastructure support that responds to needs and priorities
- Development of a funding advice service, including advice on how to reduce grant dependency
- Support around communicating with, marketing and publicity of VCS groups

- Opportunities to share good practice and learn from one another through the development of peer support through cross District networking
- Support to commissioning / bidding consortia

Long term funding of this capacity building work will need to be considered by the Partnership, particularly as much of the current support is grant funded. An analysis of the existing development support to groups and communities will be undertaken that includes the support provided by the statutory sector and clarifies the distinction between Community Development and Third Sector Development. This will then be developed into a contract specification for delivering all third sector capacity building support across Wakefield and should include funding from existing third sector providers (such as Voluntary Action Wakefield District and Young Lives) and from statutory sector providers (such as Wakefield District NHS). The development of this specification will include establishing a baseline and setting performance targets for capacity building support to the third sector.

Building the Capacity of Communities

Developing the capacity of communities will directly impact on the capacity of the third sector and vice versa. Improving the skills of third sector organisations will increase the skills of individuals within the communities and local projects will help to build a sense of community and to foster cohesion. Similarly empowerment work with community members will increase their skills and confidence and this may result in the establishment of third sector organisations by bringing people together who might be interested in setting up local groups and networks.

The development of area and priority neighbourhood arrangements will have a significant impact in responding to the needs of and developing the capacity of targeted communities. It is essential to ensure that support is provided to these communities so that they can develop third sector organisations to respond to need or develop existing local groups and organisations to deliver services locally. Local engagement and empowerment activities should be complementary to this support so that area and neighbourhood priorities can be used to shape organisational development. Linking third sector development, community engagement and empowerment to the neighbourhood and area based working arrangements in this way will facilitate the co-production and personalisation of local services.

Greater clarity is required to better understand how community development is targeted and co-ordinated strategically across the Wakefield District. There needs to be clear and closer linkages to building the capacity of the third sector.

ADVANCING EQUALITIES

The need to address inequalities is reinforced in both the new Single Equality Bill and the new national Compact and as such forms a key element of the Third Sector Development Plan for the Partnership.

A number of multi-agency groups in Wakefield are looking at ways to address inequalities in particular areas, however there appears to be limited overall strategic oversight of this work and no standardised approach across the Partnership but where possible the delivery of the third sector plan will link in to these developments.

The work of communities of interest, for example, BME engagement, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered groups, older peoples' issues, disability, hate crime and tension monitoring, needs to be embedded within the Shared Future Cohesion Framework, the Positively Ageing Strategy and the new area and neighbourhood arrangements. These groups may also identify areas that the third sector needs to develop further to address inequalities, such as workforce development training programmes to raise awareness about specific issues affecting different communities of interest.

The proposals put forward to deliver each part of the Development Plan will be assessed to ensure that they are fully accessible to groups with different equalities needs. It may also be appropriate for a small advisory group to be set up made up of third sector organisations from each equalities strand. This group would provide expert advice but would not be a representative or political structure, which would fall within the remit of the engagement review.

Equalities Impact Assessment tools will be developed for the third sector so that third sector organisations can assess the work that they do and ensure that their delivery is fully accessible.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication is a cross cutting priority for the Partnership, underpinning all work undertaken. This needs to extend also to developing the knowledge and understanding between the statutory sector, private and the third sector. Doing so will help to build trust and mutual respect alongside an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each sector. In addition communication within the third sector needs to be improved so that there is a greater awareness of what statutory objectives are, where advice and support is available and how the third sector can engage with development activities.

Consideration will be given to ways of improving communication, consultation with and representation of the third sector and how third sector organisations are engaged. Engagement of communities and the members / service users of third sector organisations fall within the remit of the Duty to Involve group and it is suggested that there should be a greater link between these pieces of work to ensure that duplication is minimised and an integrated approach is developed.

A communications plan will be developed building on the communication and engagement mechanisms and processes already in place and will cover the development of:

- open and transparent communications channels within both the statutory and Third sector supported by information and data sharing protocols
- representation and engagement of Third Sector organisations on a collective basis
- the purpose, structure, format and role of a third sector assembly
- ways to improve communication about capacity building and support services available to the third sector (for example through partner agencies and community development staff)
- ways to improve direct communication between the third sector and the statutory sector (for example by further developing www.wakefieldvcs.org)

There has been significant mapping of the third sector which has provided valuable data. However mapping often only provides a snapshot of the sector. Effective communication of the support available (including neighbourhood based outreach) would build on mapping work and would enable the third sector to access support without being surveyed.

Communication between the third sector and the statutory sector should also be strengthened. The establishment of a third sector delivery group (see below) would provide a valuable mechanism for this, accountable directly to the Wakefield Together Partnership and to the third sector.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

There is a perception across the third sector that it is inadequately resourced, but this is not always the case. The review highlighted that a lack of co-ordination of the available external funding is causing the District to miss out on significant opportunities. In order to ensure that there is a mixed economy of grants and contracts available, more effective use needs to be made of existing funding opportunities. Where appropriate third sector organisations will also be supported to reduce their dependency on grant funding for example by developing their capacity to deliver services locally.

Funding opportunities also need to be more accessible and more easily identified. In addition other 'in kind support' would benefit many of the smaller third sector organisations that can otherwise find it difficult to operate, for example by providing venues for activities or meetings at discounted rates.

Third Sector Resource Plan

Given that some smaller third sector organisations are under resourced and unable to access additional opportunities, it is proposed that:

- A review be undertaken of existing small grants with a view to exploring the creation of a single pot / grant applications process that is Compact compliant
- A community buildings / asset transfer strategy is developed
- Policies are developed on gift in kind provision / discount rates for third sector organisations using public resources such as meeting rooms

Partnership Strategic Commissioning Framework

Although a Partnership Strategic Commissioning Framework would be broader than the third sector it would have a significant impact on the environment in which medium - large third sector organisations operate. Preliminary work has been undertaken and a draft developed with key commissioners from across the statutory sector and third sector representatives. It is critical that this work is completed to ensure that the partnership makes better use of resources available and delivers more jointly commissioned contracts, particularly in light of the ongoing development of the Total Place Initiative.

The final Framework will be developed through the Commissioning Improvement Project funded through the National Commissioning Improvement Project and will consider:

- An agreement about what best practice commissioning models to adopt
- Statutory obligations that must be adhered to in the commissioning process

- The commitments made in the national Compact around commissioning (e.g. 3 year funding agreements and clear performance targets)
- An agreement about how tender specifications should be designed (e.g. how long to consult providers and when it is/isn't appropriate to speak to service providers including commissioning consortia). This will also include consultation with partner agencies who may be commissioning/have commissioned similar work to minimise duplication
- A commitment to equalities impact assessment of tender opportunities and assessing how well bidding organisations address inequalities
- A strategy for providing grant funding to voluntary and community organisations
- Development of local markets for service delivery (e.g. through developing local consortia, community anchors or social enterprises)
- Incorporating social clauses and / or community benefits into tender specifications

The framework could result in standardisation of Pre Qualification Questionnaires (PQQ's), tender documents and a list of approved / desirable quality standards that might benefit organisations applying for contract opportunities (but it is recognised that this may not be possible).

Direction will be provided by statutory partners to support to develop commissioning consortia in Wakefield District. These consortia enable third sector organisations to compete more effectively for contract opportunities and develop third sector marketplaces for commissioning. The Third Sector Delivery Group will lead on work with commissioners to explore the development of these consortia. There is at present no clear strategic oversight of their development or the support provided to them. Needs will be taken into consideration and appropriate models for the development and management of consortia will be explored. The Third Sector Delivery Group will then allocate resources to supporting capacity building for consortia.

LEADERSHIP

A major issue which is a barrier to effective communication between the third and statutory sectors is that the third sector, owing to its diversity, has no single voice that is mandated by the sector to speak on its behalf. There need to be mechanisms in place which take account of this diversity which allow the different voices to be heard.

A key challenge for developing the third sector is to develop its voices and to provide an opportunity for the statutory and third sectors to interface directly. Consideration needs to be given that many third sector organisations are unable to release staff for meetings as this can have a detrimental effect on their core business. However, this situation will not mean that organisations are excluded from any discussions that take place. Appropriate methods will be explored to be more inclusive of third sector organisations in terms of communications.

The Partnership will consider the identification of clear third sector champions from within its wider public and private sector organisations, who can support and drive delivery of this Development Plan and ensure that Third Sector issues are not purely considered and owned by third sector organisations.

A strategic Third Sector Delivery Group will be established, supporting and working to the Wakefield Together Partnership, to increase the voice of the sector in all aspects of the Partnerships work, as well as taking responsibility to managing delivery of this Plan. .

DELIVERING THE THIRD SECTOR DELIVERY PLAN

Third Sector Delivery Group

A Third Sector Delivery Group will be established, under the Wakefield Together Partnership. This group will be responsible for the implementation of the Third Sector Development Plan and ensuring that the principles and commitments that have been signed up to in the Compact are embedded in new frameworks, plans and strategies. The group will be responsible for securing funding to deliver elements of the plan (for example by preparing bids to the RIEP for the funding and resource plan) and for allocating resources. It will also act as a representative body for the Third Sector that could disseminate information to and collate information from key networks and could provide expert advice on the sector.

The Third Sector Delivery Group will also take forward a full review of all existing partnership arrangements in place around the Third Sector, to ensure that they are fit for purpose to meet current and future challenges, allowing an opportunity to rationalise and better align with the Wakefield Together Partnership.

The Delivery Group membership will consist of champions from the statutory sector who are at a level where they can make/directly influence decisions, third sector networks and consortia (such as Young Lives, Voluntary Integrated Services for Older People and the Wakefield Infrastructure Partnership), the VCS representative on the Wakefield Together Executive and representatives from each of the Wakefield Together thematic working groups. Initially the Wakefield Together Executive should nominate a lead for this group but in the future the chair will be appointed by the group itself.

In addition to the actions in the development plan the group will also need to identify where there are gaps in the representation of third sector organisations and either identify suitable representatives or support the development of representative networks. An early priority will be to identify a representative for social enterprises in Wakefield District to ensure that they are included in the delivery of all aspects of the third sector development plan.

Although the initial function of this group is to deliver the third sector development plan it will develop into a body that can provide expert advice on the third sector as well as nominating representatives for the Wakefield Together Partnership, Wakefield Together Executive and the two delivery groups. The initial membership of the group will be nominated but by 2011 the group will consist of representatives elected by the representative third sector networks from across the Wakefield District. Obviously other avenues of communication for the sector will continue to exist for organisations and networks that do not want to be part of this delivery group.

Task and Finish Groups may need to be created / tasked to deliver each element of the plan, reporting to the third sector delivery group:

THIRD SECTOR DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Section	Action	Lead	Timescale	Resources
Capacity Building (Building the Capacity of the third sector)	Continuation of existing funding for support to the third sector. Where essential grant funded support is coming to an end continuation funding should be considered until March 2011.	Wakefield Together Executive	2010-2011	Funding to be determined
	Audit of existing third sector capacity building support including resource requirements and current resourcing, gaps in provision and risks/vulnerabilities to establish a baseline for provision	Wakefield Infrastructure Partnership	Q2 2010	Wakefield Infrastructure Partnership staff time, already resourced through Capacity Builders.
	Development of tender specification for support to the third sector, including performance targets related to the established baseline.	Wakefield Together	Q3 2010	Commissioning staff time (to be committed)
	Award 3 year contracts for support to the third sector.	Wakefield Together	Q4 2010	Commissioning staff time (contract management role – redeployed from existing contract management)
Capacity Building (Building the Capacity of Communities)	Establish linkages between third sector development and community development activities	Wakefield Infrastructure Partnership	Q1 2010	Wakefield Infrastructure Partnership staff time,

Section	Action	Lead	Timescale	Resources
				already resourced through Capacity Builders.
Communications	Agree structure and role of third sector assembly.	To be agreed	Q1 2010	Time on agenda of existing meeting
	Methods for more effectively promoting capacity building support mapped.	To be agreed	Q3 2010	Staff time
	Communications plan developed.	To be agreed	To be agreed	Staff time or consultancy costs
Advancing Equalities	Establish links between the Third Sector Delivery group and other groups working on equalities issues	To be agreed	Q1 2010	Third sector staff time, already resourced
	Assess other delivery plans for their impact on addressing equalities needs and to ensure that they are fully accessible	To be agreed	To be agreed	Staff time
	Develop equalities impact assessment tools for third sector organisations to assess their services	To be agreed	Q2 2010	Staff time or consultancy costs (already resourced through Migrant Impact Fund)
Funding and Resources (Third Sector Resource Plan)	Feasibility of the collation of small grants into a single fund assessed.	Wakefield Community Foundation	Q4 2010	Staff time
	Creation of a single grant applications process for small local grants.	Wakefield Community	To be agreed	Staff time

Section	Action	Lead	Timescale	Resources
		Foundation		
	Development of a community buildings / asset transfer strategy.	VAWD	To be agreed	Staff time (already resourced) Advancing Assets through Communities programme
	Development of policies on gift in kind provision / discount rates for third sector organisations using public resources.	To be agreed	To be agreed	Staff time or consultancy costs (to be resourced – explore options through the RIEP)
Funding and Resources (Partnership Commissioning Framework)	Commissioners group established with representation from the third sector delivery group.	Wakefield Together	Q1 2010	Commissioning staff time through IDeA / IVAR project
	Review and finalising of commissioning framework.	To be agreed	Q3 2010	Staff time or consultancy costs through IDeA / IVAR project or RIEP
	Review of models for commissioning consortia and agreement on approaches for Wakefield District.	Third Sector Delivery Group	Q2 2010	Third Sector and commissioning staff time (to be allocated)
Leadership (Third	Nominate lead for delivery group	Wakefield Together	Q1 2010	Staff time

Section	Action	Lead	Timescale	Resources
Sector Delivery Group)		Executive		
	Establish interim membership including representatives from Young Lives, Voluntary Integrated Services for Older People and the Wakefield Infrastructure Partnership.	Nominated lead	Q1 2010	Staff time
	Identify statutory champions to sit on the delivery group.	Nominated lead	Q1 2010	Staff time
	Establish membership criteria to make the group representative of the sector.	Third Sector Delivery Group	Q3 2010	Delivery group staff time
	Review existing third sector partnerships and networks and ensure that they are fit for purpose.	Third Sector Delivery Group	To be agreed	Delivery group staff time
	Identify gaps in third sector representation and support development of representative networks.	Third Sector Delivery Group	To be agreed	Delivery group staff time
	Representative membership established and delivery group lead appointed.	Third Sector Delivery Group	Q1 2011	Delivery group staff time
	Undertake the third sector confidence survey in Wakefield	Third Sector Delivery Group	To be agreed	Delivery group staff time