

Commissioning and Procurement Sub-Committee 10.11.20

Voluntary Sector Update – Nottingham CVS

Support to Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) during COVID-19:

Group Development: NCVS has been working remotely since March 2020 but have been delivering group support sessions via video link, phone or email. During the pandemic, requests for support we have received, have in the main been for help to find funding opportunities and support with funding applications. But we have also had an increase in requests for support to register a Charity or Community Interest Companies.

At the beginning of lockdown, there was a steep rise in the number of people who wanted to help those most affected by the effects of COVID-19. NCVS has worked to link these volunteers to those groups and organisations who needed additional capacity in order to respond to the needs of those most vulnerable citizens.

Training Programme: NCVS have redesigned its training programme to be accessible and user friendly in a virtual world. Our training since March 2020 has included COVID-19 specific issues such as COVID-19 Fundraising Tips.

There has been a huge demand for VCSE Safeguarding training due to the increase in volunteers – accessible Safeguarding training is a big gap in the city. NCVS has managed to run a programme during lockdown in order to train a long waiting list, but more training will be required as we hopefully come out of lockdown and move into a recovery phase. With the welcome news of Government funding for Holiday Activities and Food Programmes, we anticipate that this demand will continue to grow.

VCSE Corona virus specific support: The new NCVS website now has a page dedicated to COVID-19 emergency resources (including funding streams). It provides links to reliable sources of Government resources or VCSE sector specific resources. NCVS gathers information on where support is most needed and those community groups who can support others during this emergency situation. We have also been sharing best practice guidance on how local people can volunteer in Nottingham.

During the first lockdown, NCVS supported with the Golden Hub by diverting all enquiries about volunteering and all VCSE appeals to our website so we could deal with them direct or signpost them onto organisations or agencies in the city needing help and support.

Networks and voice: NCVS have hosted all of our 5 network meetings online during the pandemic, continuing to provide a forum for local organisations to connect, have their voices heard and collaborate. NCVS has participated in the following strategic meetings in order to disseminate information to Nottingham's VCSE:

- LRF Support Hub Cell meetings
- LRF health and resilience of VCS work streams
- Nottingham Together and BAME subgroup
- ICS & ICP Partnership meetings
- 1 Nottingham System Change meetings
- Local Liaison Leads
- Core cities CVSs
- Social Prescribing Link Worker delivery groups
- Mental Health Social Prescribing
- CCG engagement

- NET meetings

Through our regular e-bulletin and social media channels, we share information with the sector about campaigns, surveys, the latest jobs etc. The NCVS website emergency pages includes urgent appeals for donations, changes to service delivery, emergency grants and other support which we've been made aware of locally.

VCSE Support to Nottingham during COVID-19:

During the pandemic, Nottingham's (VCSE) sector had to adapt to new ways of working in order to continue to support the city's most vulnerable. The sector has pulled together in these unprecedented and difficult times.

Groups and organisations have had to adapt to new ways of working in order to continue to support the cities most vulnerable. These changes have included:

- Changing food based activities to food bank and delivery services
- Shopping and prescription delivery and pick up services
- Dog walking
- Befriending
- Providing vital donations of toiletries, baby items and clothing.
- Online referral systems
- Carrying out telephone assessments.
- Setting up signposting and helpline services
- Providing COVID-19 specific financial and legal advice
- Running activities on digital platforms
- Support to find employment
- Providing ideas and resources to stay active during lockdown
- Free Mental Health support and counselling sessions
- Online support meetings and activities
- Issuing food bank vouchers

Funding Updates:

- Voluntary Sector Support Grants:
NCVS is still concerned about the number of groups and organisations in the city who 'fall through the gaps' of local support and funding, resulting in some groups/organisations in Nottingham not being able to access the support they require. We are keen for further discussion with NCC on a more efficient voluntary sector support delivery model.
- Community Asset Assessment:
NCVS has been commissioned by the Violence Reduction Unit to carry out an engagement programme in order to identify where and what community assets exist to reduce or prevent serious crime (weapon enabled crime, domestic abuse and serious cases of ABH and GBH). There will be a series of events rolled out across certain areas of the city and county between January and March 2021. Community leaders and champions will be asked about what makes their community feel safe and where the gaps are.

- Holiday Hunger Funding.
NCVS has been part of the previous 2 consortium bids for Holiday Activity Funding pilots. With the recent news that this funding will be extended across the country in 2021, we shall remain active to ensure that those voluntary organisations delivering activity are supported to thrive and can access all the necessary training in order to deliver safe activities.
- D2N2 LEP:
NCVS are part of a working group looking at how the Voluntary Sector engages with the D2N2 LEP post Brexit. We want to ensure that we can influence future funding from central government and keep up the dialogue with the LEP regarding the importance of the sector in economic development. We have influenced the LEP to ensure there are Inclusion Reps on the main Board and on each of the sub board structures. There are 5 inclusion reps on all Advisory Boards.
- Practice Development Unit:
The PDU is a partnership between Opportunity Nottingham and NCVS. Its aims are to promote and facilitate collaborative learning and the sharing of good practice and expertise amongst professionals in Nottingham and neighbouring areas, who work with people experiencing multiple disadvantage (such as mental health, substance misuse, homelessness and offending).

We do this through standalone learning events, as well as ongoing Communities of Practice - a space where practitioners can come together to share ideas and support each other in implementing practice and system change.

PDU members can also access a range of resources, including tool kits, reports and presentations, with both a local and national focus.

Please join the portal for more information at: www.pdunottingham.org