

Voluntary Sector Update

State of the Voluntary Sector in Nottingham 2015-2016

The findings of NCVS research conducted during summer 2016 were finally published in April 2017. This is the first opportunity to reference the "Feeling the Squeeze" report at this meeting. It was initially circulated via Nottingham City Council's Policy Digest bulletin.

Key findings from the survey, and from our engagement with groups in the city, indicate that continued austerity and reforms to public services push more citizens to seek the support of the voluntary sector.

Some headline statistics:

- 71% of respondents have experienced an increase in demand for their services.
- Only 48% have been able to increase their level of delivery.
- 22% have needed to reduce the volume of services due to cuts in funding.
- The majority of organisations who had received funding from Nottingham City Council or other public sector bodies reported a reduction in the level received.
- 41% of respondents reported increasing their income but only 28% reported that their income covered all of their costs.
- Of most concern, only one-third (34%) reported that they would describe their funding situation as stable. This is a reduction from 43% reported in the previous survey.

The new support model is variable across the city as the level of advice and support available to groups is dependent upon geography and the location of beneficiaries. This risks a system without parity of provision developing in the city. We identified a slowdown in the number of new community organisations starting up. One area where this trend is being bucked is among new and emerging communities and among refugees and asylum seekers where groups are being established to support the increasingly diverse communities in the city.

The sector is showing considerable resilience and creativity. Groups have been tenacious, innovative and resourceful in maintaining the work they do to support the citizens and communities across Nottingham who are increasingly reliant on them.

The full report and a summary report can be downloaded at:

<http://www.nottinghamcvcs.co.uk/stateofthesector.html>

Voluntary Sector Policy Forum on Food Poverty

Forty delegates participated in the Policy Forum on Tuesday 3 May, including frontline service providers and foodbank volunteers. Nottingham City Council was represented by Councillor Glyn Jenkins and Kevin Banfield. Attendees were keen for NCVS to host policy forum meetings on a quarterly basis, as well as to separately maintain the momentum of a Food Poverty Network. NCVS is now facilitating an email list of free/low cost food providers and others interested in tackling food poverty and food waste. Reference was also given to following up the social eating pledges of the city.

A priority action is to continue to map stakeholders, developing a database or listing of food providers which can be viewed and shared online. An event report is available on request.

Bank of England Roundtable

A third Bank of England roundtable with the voluntary and community sector was held at NCVS on Monday 26 June. Alastair Cunningham, Agent for the East Midlands, met with representatives from 10 local organisations to discuss changes in demand for services and ability to meet service users' needs as well as current states of indebtedness. Attendees reported that there is no evidence of economic upturn or recovery for service users; in fact, the opposite. Funding and support for the Advice Sector is still inadequate and has not caught up with need following changes to the benefits system since 2013.

Service users are presenting with increasingly complex needs, and services are not able to pick up or signpost appropriately due to cuts across the board. This is backed up by the recent 'Help Through Crisis' report published by Nottingham Women's Centre, and launched at their Inclusive Future event on Friday 23 June.

One Nottingham Voluntary and Community Sector Strategic Reference Group

The first meeting of the Strategic Reference Group took place on Thursday 29 June. Terms of reference were agreed and the group will be meeting again in August to set the work programme for the year.

We were able to feed in intelligence from our Policy Forum on Food Poverty which means even those in small organisations that don't have capacity to feed in at a city wide level can contribute a voice.

New Voluntary Sector representative selected for D2N2 Board

Jane Howson, Chief Executive at Autism East Midlands has been selected to replace Sylvia Green as the Voluntary Sector representative for the D2N2 LEP Board. A recruitment drive across the LEP area brought forward seven candidates who were interviewed by a panel from the Social Inclusion and Equalities Advisory Group.

Children and Young People's Provider Network (CYPPN) and Vulnerable Adults' Provider Network (VAPN)

Network membership continues to steadily increase. There are 232 members of the CYPPN and 298 members of the VAPN.

Work continues to be evenly spread between the Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group. Current work includes measuring the VCS input into the four key areas of the health and wellbeing plan, input into all JSNA chapters, work with public health, commissioning, children's services and housing / homelessness, Mental Health including Child and Adolescent Mental Health. For the CCG we are involved in the transformation agenda, personalisation, IPC and work on a new project to understand how we engage with Eastern European Communities. We continue to have representation on a range of task groups, steering communities and boards (over 50 in total).

We continue to provide safeguarding training for members and have trained over 100 since April 2017. We have been working with community cohesion and have 5 sessions of PREVENT training booked up to December 2017.

The funding for the networks for this financial year has not yet been resolved.

Improving Commissioning through a Single Point of Contact (SPOC)

On Thursday 22 June, NAVCA (National Association for Voluntary and Community Action) published a report highlighting how a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) commissioning model provides better services for people and communities, improves their wellbeing and can save money. NCVS have been involved in helping this work via the VAPN and CYPNN.

The problems commissioners have working with smaller charities are well documented and the Office for Civil Society recently set up a Civil Society Implementation Group (CSIG) to tackle them. This NAVCA report offers a solution. The report can be downloaded from

<https://www.navca.org.uk/resources/392-improving-commissioning-through-a-spoc>

Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) Update

Work continues on the voluntary and community sector response to the STP. Plans are being developed to work alongside the public sector to deliver on High Impact Area 1 – disease prevention. There will be some joint learning and there is a member of staff being recruited to work across the STP footprint.

NCVS and other VCS partners are part of the STP governance, sit on the advisory group that reports to the board, and are also involved in the steering group for HIA 1.

Practice Development Unit

NCVS will be running the Practice Development Unit (PDU) for Opportunity Nottingham. Julia Parker has been recruited as the PDU Coordinator, and she began in post on Monday 3 July. The aim of the PDU is to share good practice when working with people with multiple and complex needs. This multi-agency unit will see public sector, voluntary sector and private sector (where applicable) working to deliver joint training and learning events. The PDU is an integral part of the Opportunity Nottingham Programme and aims to provide online learning, action learning sets, and workshops. The impact of the unit will be independently researched.

Update on Chief Executive at NCVS

NCVS said goodbye to Dave Robinson (Acting Chief Executive) as of Tuesday 11 July. Louise Craig has been appointed as the new Chief Executive and she will be starting in post on Monday 17 July.