

Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure support review – Project specification

1.0 Background

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in North Yorkshire invest in the provision of practical and strategic support (sometimes known as infrastructure support or local support and development) to facilitate a strong, diverse and vibrant voluntary and community sector across North Yorkshire that is equitable, consistent and sustainable. In order to help ensure that any future NYCC and CCG funding of infrastructure support is allocated in the most effective means possible a review is to be undertaken. This review will consider best practice, the views of providers and the views of a sample of voluntary and community organisations with regard to the current services they receive and demand for future support. The review will be focus on future demands not a measure of the quality of the current providers.

2.0 Scope

The review will research the support needs of the voluntary and community sector organisations within North Yorkshire from their perspective.

The review will look at support and development needs of voluntary and community sector organisations and will include the support which organisations require around volunteering, both in terms of strategic and practical support. However, it will not consider volunteering support from an individual volunteer's perspective.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Best practice review

The initial phase of the review will be to conduct an internet search for best practice in terms of infrastructure support. This will start with a review of <http://www.navca.org.uk/> and <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/>

3.2 Structured interviews with voluntary organisations

The second phase of the review will be structured interviews with a small number of voluntary sector organisations to help develop a much broader online survey of voluntary sector organisations. The survey will seek to ascertain their support needs, how they are fulfilling these support needs, any barriers they face in accessing support and what makes an effective support service. The focus will be on the type of support not the satisfaction with individual infrastructure organisations.

To ensure the views of a variety of different types of organisation are taken on board structured interviews will be carried out with 21 voluntary and community organisations, 3 from each district. The aim will be that within these 21 organisations there will be a mix of small, medium and large organisations covering a variety of activities, a variety of ages and a varied experience of infrastructure support (including some that have no experience). These interviews can be carried out over the phone or in person.

The aim will be to complete these interviews in person but may have to be conducted by phone due to time constraints.

The results of the structured interviews will be used to develop an online survey.

3.3 Online survey of voluntary and community organisations

The third phase of the review will be an online survey which will be opened up to all VCS organisations in North Yorkshire. The survey will be set up on SNAP and an invite to complete will be distributed by the various networks. The aim will be to get as many organisations as possible to complete.

3.4 Structured interviews with infrastructure support organisations

In addition structured interviews will be held with providers of infrastructure support services, both those who provide services under the funding provided by NYCC and CCG and other providers within North Yorkshire. Other providers would be accessed through the Thriving Third Sector Steering Group This will look at which services are most effective, areas of high and low demand, gaps in current services and areas for future development.

4.0 Timetable

3.1 Best practice research	July/August 2015
3.2 Structured interviews to develop online survey	September/October 2015
3.3 Online survey	October/November 2015
3.4 Structured interviews with infrastructure support organisations	October / November 2015

5.0 Resourcing

The review will be undertaken by Claire Lowery, Corporate Development Officer at NYCC.

6.0 Governance

A reference group will be set up to provide advice on the methodology, comment on the design of the questionnaires and the draft final report.

The reference group will be made up of commissioner and delivery representatives.

To ensure transparency the Project Specification and Final Report will be shared with the Thriving Third Sector Steering Group.

The owners of the review are North Yorkshire County Council and the North Yorkshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (Airedale, Wharfedale & Craven CCG, Hambleton, Richmondshire & Whitby CCG, Harrogate & Rural District CCG, Scarborough and Ryedale CCG, Vale of York CCG) who will use the information gathered to assist with future commissioning decisions. However, this will only be one element of any future commissioning decision and no formal process for making any commissioning decisions have yet been set out.

Produced: 28th August 2015

Appendix 1 – Draft structured interview

Information on the organisation will be assessed in developing a sample – this will consider type, client group, geographic area and size.

Name and role	
Organisation	

What support needs does your organisation have? *Prompt (Information and Advice, Access to financial management systems, Financial Management, Funding advice, tendering for contracts, employment advice, ICT, business planning, Governance and Legal, Joint working, Networking, Promotion, Training, Volunteering support for organisations, mergers, Other e.g. development of VCS strategies, representation, building partnerships for organisations to work together, coordinating joint-delivery of services, and coordinating joint-bids)*

What types of support has your organisation accessed in the last year? *Prompt (Information (regular e-mail updates, leaflets, word of mouth), Advice, Access to financial management systems, Financial Management, Funding advice, tendering for contracts, employment advice, ICT, business planning, Governance and Legal, Joint working, Networking, Promotion, Training, Volunteering support for organisations, mergers, Other e.g. development of VCS strategies, representation, building partnerships for organisations to work together, coordinating joint-delivery of services, and coordinating joint-bids)*

For any support services mentioned, ask which organisation did you access the support from? *Probe – why this organisation. (SFA organisations, RAY, TVCS, Parent organisation, Consultant etc)*

How effective did you find this support to be? *Probe: What it was that made it effective / ineffective? Was it prompt response? Was it a useful service/ product that met your need immediately? What impact did it have? If ineffective, how could it have been improved?*

Have you been unable to access any support services? *If yes, probe for details e.g. internal barriers, lack of knowledge of how to get support.*

Have you ever decided not to take up support services? *If so, why? Probe for details.*

Do you anticipate that your organisation will have different support services needs in the next 3 years? If yes, how would you like to see these services delivered? *Prompt (support to develop business-skills such as sales, marketing, market analysis, competitor analysis)*