

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>NEWCASTLE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC BOARD</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>4 NOVEMBER 2008</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT – ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>DIRECTOR OF NEWCASTLE PARTNERSHIP</b>
<b>Report Type:</b>	<b>FOR DECISION</b>

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** VCS Infrastructure Support to Newcastle Partnership was previously resourced through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF). NRF as a funding programme has now ended and its replacement, Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF), is targeted principally at closing the economic gap and specifically at reducing worklessness and stimulating enterprise. The funding of VCS infrastructure is not therefore appropriate via WNF. Nevertheless, the city council has sought to use the limited flexibility within its Area Based Grant allocation to continue to support VCS infrastructure. It has earmarked £275k per annum for this purpose.

**1.2** This report presents proposals for the allocation of the resources totalling £275k made available for VCS infrastructure support within the Area Based Grant allocation for Newcastle.

## **2 Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS)**

**2.1** NCVS have been identified through the VCS review as the primary local agency for providing third sector infrastructure support. Key elements of this role include:

- Ensuring VCS representation across the Newcastle Partnership structure
- Providing support to VCS representatives across the Newcastle Partnership structure

NCVS currently have 3 full time Policy Officers providing support to the work of Newcastle Partnership.

- 2.2** Given the level of resources available it is proposed that an allocation of £100k be made available to NCVS to resource 2 full time Policy Officers plus a contribution towards the existing NCVS Information Team, administration and general running costs.
- 2.3** NCVS have indicated that a reduction in Policy Officer support from 3 full time posts to 2 full time posts will have an impact on their capacity to support VCS engagement with the Newcastle Partnership however they have experience of delivering a service previously with 2 Policy Officers and they are in agreement that support to VCS representatives on the various structures of the partnership remains the priority.
- 2.4** A copy of the initial submission from NCVS is attached for information at Appendix 1. Should the proposed allocation of £100k be agreed by Strategic Board a full ABG application will need to be developed.

### **3 Newcastle Healthy City (NHC)**

- 3.1** NHC will also play a key role in creating and developing the new participation and involvement framework envisaged through the recent VCS review. Key elements of the role for Healthy City include;
- The creation and development of a “Standing Assembly”
  - Encouraging attendance and participation at Ward Committees
  - Maintaining communication channels between Newcastle Partnership and local communities
  - Ensuring the engagement of communities of interest such as BME community, older people and people with a disability within the various structures of the partnership
- 3.2** Given the level of resources available it is proposed that an allocation of £125k be made available to NHC to resource a Community Engagement Manager and a Network Co-ordinator (£66,705) plus a contribution of £15,900 towards the NHC Executive, £23,395 towards general running costs and £18,000 to cover the costs of the Standing Assembly and associated publicity/communications.

- 3.4 A copy of the initial submission from NHC is attached for information at Appendix 2. Should the proposed allocation of £125k be agreed by Strategic Board a full ABG application will need to be developed.

#### **4 Area Based Support**

- 4.1 There are a number of area based groups contributing to the Newcastle Partnership VCS infrastructure support network namely East End Community Development Alliance, West End Community Development Consortium, Outer West Area Forum and Network North.

- 4.2 It is proposed that the remaining £50k be set aside to resource local area based working and engagement. In addition there are a number of existing Council services which can be deployed to complement the work of the independent VCS infrastructure support network, particularly at a local level, including the Community Development Unit and Ward Co-ordination activity. Indeed the Community Development Unit has a history of supporting VCS infrastructure through staff secondments.

- 4.3 The Newcastle Partnership Director will continue to work with the Assistant Chief Executive of Newcastle City Council and VCS partners to determine the way in which to allocate the remaining resources and establish the level of support available through existing Council services to complement the ABG allocation.

#### **5 Community Empowerment Framework**

- 5.1 Work has already commenced on the development of a Comprehensive Community Empowerment Framework. An update report on this work will be presented to the December meeting of Strategic Board. This work should also inform the way in which the remaining resources for VCS infrastructure support are deployed.

#### **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Board is recommended to agree the proposals for the allocation of ABG resources for VCS infrastructure support as outlined in this report and summarised below.

	£
<b>Total ABG allocation of:</b>	<b>275k</b>
NCVS allocation of:	100k
Healthy City allocation of:	<u>125k</u>
<b>Total allocated</b>	<b>225k</b>
<b>Remaining unallocated:</b>	<b>50k</b>

(to be set aside for locally based working/engagement)

## 6.2 **Next Steps**

Providing the above allocations are agreed by Strategic Board the next steps will be for:

- NCVS to work with the Newcastle Partnership Team and the ABG Team to prepare a formal application with agreed outcomes and outputs for ABG resources totalling £100k
- Healthy City to work with the Newcastle Partnership Team and the ABG Team to prepare a formal application with agreed outcomes and outputs for ABG resources totalling £125k
- The remaining £50k set aside to resource local/area working be allocated in accordance with the priorities identified through the Community Empowerment Framework.

Kehri Ellis, Director  
20 October 2008