

South Derbyshire Local Strategic Partnership

Board meeting 18th March 2004

Agenda Item 8

Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Strategy

Derbyshire Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium

East Midlands Early Investment Programme

Developing sustainable infrastructure services

The government is making substantial sums available to the voluntary and community sector over the next two and a half years to develop sustainable infrastructure services to meet the needs of voluntary and community organisations. Government Office for the East Midlands has announced an Early Investment Programme to commission county consortia, made up of voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisations and networks, to develop investment plans for their county.

Formation of the Derbyshire Consortium

At a meeting on 12th February 2004, representatives of the Derbyshire Councils for Voluntary Service, Volunteer Bureaux and Rural Community Council, together with representatives from the churches, the Peak District Rural Deprivation Forum and North Derbyshire Voluntary Action, agreed in principle to form a Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium for Derbyshire and Derby City.

44 organisations and networks providing voluntary and community sector infrastructure services in Derbyshire and Derby have been invited to join the Derbyshire VCS Consortium. The Consortium will be registered with GOEM for accreditation in the week beginning 8th March 2004. Registration will include details of all organisations signed up by that date, others invited to join and how we hope to engage with funders.

Once it is accredited, the Consortium will be commissioned by GOEM to develop an Infrastructure Investment Plan for Derbyshire and Derby covering the two years 2004-6, which must be submitted no later than 25th June 2004.

Co-operation with funders

In developing its Infrastructure Investment Plan, the Consortium is required by GOEM to engage with organisations which provide funds for voluntary and community sector infrastructure, particularly the Local Authorities, Primary Care Trusts, and the Learning and Skills Council, as well as other public and private funders. The Consortium is contacting all funders to explain the programme and seek their support and commitment to the process of developing the Investment Plan for Derbyshire.

The Consortium has offered to make a presentation at the next meeting of the Derbyshire Partnership Forum on 12th March. This will be an opportunity for partners to learn about the Infrastructure Strategy and how voluntary and community infrastructure organisations and networks in Derbyshire and Derby are responding. Consortium members will be speaking to each funder individually over the next few weeks. It is hoped that all funders will be willing to

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participate in this programme and commit the necessary officer time to work with the Consortium in developing the Investment Plan.

Supporting information about the Consortium

Definition

GOEM's definition of voluntary and community infrastructure is:

"Voluntary and community organisations and networks that play a supporting, co-ordinating, representation, policy-making and development role for other voluntary and community organisations, including social enterprises. Infrastructure organisations exist at Regional, sub-regional (e.g. county) and local level and provide both generalist (e.g. capacity building, technical advice) and specialist support."

GOEM will only accredit one consortium in each county. In addition it will commission a regional consortium, consisting of regional infrastructure organisations and networks.

Additional early spend funding is available for mapping exercises and exemplar projects, which must be complete by 25th June.

Consortium management

Derbyshire Rural Community Council agreed to act as the Consortium's lead agent and South Derbyshire CVS agreed to be the accountable body to manage the early investment funds. Communication is through the email group Derbyshire Net, hosted by NACVS and managed by Derbyshire Dales CVS.

Information

Full details of the Early Investment Programme, the expected contents of Infrastructure Investment Plans and the process for commissioning consortia can be found on the GOEM website: www.eastmidlandsinfrastructure.info. Once Consortia are registered, each one will have a page on the website to post information about its programme and activities.

Members

A list of members signed up to the Derbyshire VCS Consortium by 1st March is appended. This will be updated regularly as new organisations and networks indicate their willingness to join. Once the Consortium is accredited, this list will be posted on the GOEM Infrastructure website.

Helen Lidgett
Chair
Derbyshire Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium