

North Yorkshire Strategic Partnership - Executive**15 April 2010****NYSP Thriving Third Sector Steering Group: Interim report****1 Purpose of report**

- 1.1 The report sets out the progress of the NYSP Thriving Third Sector Steering Group.

2 Background

- 2.1 On 8 January 2009, the NYSP Executive endorsed a report which outlined five principles, proposed activities and indicators to support the environment for a Thriving Third Sector in North Yorkshire (NI7). The Thriving Third Sector Steering Group was established, with membership drawn from across the NYSP and with equal representation from the voluntary and community sector and the statutory sector. Four sessions were facilitated through the IDeA Partnership Improvement Programme (PIP) and an additional meeting was held on 23 November to finalise the action plan.

3 Why a thriving third sector?

- 3.1 NI 7 sets out a target to improve the environment for a thriving third sector, measured through a perception survey of a sample of registered charities and not-for-profit organisations in North Yorkshire. It measures satisfaction with recognition by and support from, statutory sector organisations, among other points.
- 3.2 The third sector (commonly referred to as the voluntary and community sector in North Yorkshire underpins sustainable communities in North Yorkshire, supporting individuals and communities to be resilient as well as drawing additional resources into communities. It is a diverse sector - many organisations have no or few paid staff, manage large numbers of volunteers and seldom engage with statutory organisations. Some seek grant funding through the various statutory funds, or share resources such as premises. Many draw in funds from trust and grant bodies, adding value to the local economy. Others are larger and deliver public sector services through contracts. All have different needs, both from third sector infrastructure and the statutory sector. By improving the environment for a thriving third sector, we can deliver outcomes for our communities more effectively and enable our communities to become more resilient

4 Recommended NYSP objectives for a thriving third sector in North Yorkshire

1. To share information and communicate in a way that is accessible to all;
2. To work together in partnerships to develop strategy;
3. To develop joint solutions to meet community needs;
4. To ensure consistent messages are given from both sectors;
5. To share skills and expertise.

5 Asks of NYSP partners

Resourcing

1. Commit to a review of the principles of effective representation of the VCS through organisation and partnership structures. This should be based on the existing guidance and principles from CLG, other statutory bodies and the National Associations of Voluntary and Community Associations. This will clarify expectations and resourcing issues
2. Multi-year funding arrangements (3 years) to enable the effective planning, development and deployment of resources
3. Analysis of what the public sector spends on VCS to establish a baseline of investment by type and motivation for funding,
 - Investment to support a thriving third sector (infrastructure)
 - Grant funding provided to promote community sustainability – which may not be a statutory requirement but deemed important for community development /cohesion
 - contracts to Third Sector organisations providing public services,
4. To create opportunities for joint agency training, work shadowing, volunteering opportunities and secondments for staff to gain knowledge and experience of the challenges facing all partners

Commissioning

5. Determine how monitoring criteria/systems for grants and contracts can be streamlined/standardised to reduce outcome-focussed monitoring costs for both sectors
6. Adopt commissioning and procurement practices that are consistent and Compact compliant across all NYSP partners. Task and finish group to join-up national and existing North Yorkshire good practice on VCS involvement and disseminate to partners in both sectors.

7. To establish a mechanism for the effective and efficient resolution of issues and concerns relating to commissioning and funding practices and processes. This may be through a sub-committee of the TTSSG.

Strategic planning

8. To discuss service review with NYSP partners, including VCS to avoid unintended impacts on partners and communities.
9. To contribute to a rolling 3 year forward plan for priority-setting, strategy review and commission timetables to maximise opportunities for collaboration

The VCS and the statutory sector recognise our shared responsibility to work more efficiently and creatively to meet the needs of our communities in a tougher economic environment.

The TTSSG will develop guidance for partners on how to implement these asks, and will monitor the progress partners are making.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The NYSP Executive is invited to;
 - a) consider and commit to the 'asks' set out above.
 - b) endorse the TTSSG continues to work on behalf of the NYSP with reviewed membership, reporting to the Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership.

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