

## **SERVICE SPECIFICATION**

### **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Voluntary and Community Sector**

#### **Support and Development**



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) plays an important role in helping our Authorities and our communities achieve their priorities and plans. We want to build on the achievements of VCS Infrastructure Support Services that have to date strengthened, represented and supported the sector. The Authorities directly commissioning this service specification are Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and Peterborough City Council (PCC) [*The Commissioners*].
- 1.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Public Sector partners are working together to take a *Think Communities*<sup>1</sup> approach, which is a shared way of working with and alongside communities, taking account of local strengths and needs. The Think Communities principles are
- **People:** Resilient communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough where people can feel safe, healthy, connected and able to help themselves and each other.
  - **Places:** New and established communities that are integrated, possess a sense of place and which support the resilience of their residents.
  - **System:** A system wide approach in which partners listen, engage and align with communities and with each other, to deliver public service and support community-led activity.
- 1.3 This service specification sets out the provision of Voluntary and Community Sector Support and Development. The successful provider will be required to work in partnership with the authority and with commissioners to build and strengthen the capacity of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Voluntary and Community Sector, who play an important role in achieving the *Think Communities* approach and delivering services. The partnership will develop over time, but will include significant opportunity for discussion to shape and reshape the practical workstreams that need to be delivered as priorities evolve. The provider will ensure that the voice of the sector is brought into these discussions.
- 1.4 It does not include provision of support for Local Town and Parish Councils which generally requires specialist support such as that provided by the Association for Local Councils. However, this does not exclude community and voluntary groups affiliated to or fully funded by Local Councils from utilising the services provided for under the terms of this service specification (for example and not exclusively, TimeBanks, Good Neighbour Schemes, local Warden schemes).
- 1.5 The VCS Support and Development partner(s) [*the Provider(s)*] must have a good understanding of the principles of Think Communities, be able to navigate, build and facilitate relationships across different partners at parish level and through key strategic partnership across Peterborough City and Cambridgeshire County.
- 1.6 The Commissioners recognise the importance of supporting in particular small sized<sup>2</sup> voluntary and community organisations that in turn provide support to keep people resilient and able to live independently and prevent reliance on statutory services. The key role of the provider(s) here is to help voluntary organisations who need support, whether they be small

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities-localism/community-resilience>

<sup>2</sup> NCVO's Almanac defines 'small' charities as those with an income under £100,000

or larger VCS, to be sustainable and effective and develop solutions that combine the creation and delivery of voluntary and community led action and place based support, which enables people and families to:

- Feel safe, healthy, connected and able to help themselves and each other.
- Live in communities that are integrated and support the resilience of their residents.

1.7 The Provider(s) will provide what is sometimes referred to as ‘infrastructure support’.

*Infrastructure organisations are the backbone of the Voluntary and Community Sector – providing crucial guidance and resources<sup>3</sup> to hundreds of community organisations such as local charities, community groups, village hall committees, social enterprises and parish councils. A good infrastructure body will “offer the right mixture of support, challenge, leadership, resource, skills and knowledge. It will also help to foster relationships between the local voluntary sector, public bodies and local business. They also promote social action and make sure local communities have a voice”.*

1.8 The scope of the Provider(s) is as an enabler, a facilitator, supporting the growth and sustainability of community capacity in line with the Commissioners priorities and objectives over the next 5 years, helping to prevent needs from arising. We are not looking for replication or duplication of other separately commissioned services such as Community Navigators or those separately funded by other local Authorities (including Districts), but rather to enhance and compliment other provision. The expectation is that the Provider(s) will enable and support voluntary and community organisations to take community led social action in the context of our policy direction, support VCS growth in community capacity and foster strength based approaches.

1.9 The Provider(s) will assist a good relationship between the Commissioners and the community and voluntary organisations, building capacity in line with the Commissioners priorities, including Think Communities, Best Start in Life, Adults Positive Challenge programmes and the learning from Neighbourhood Cares Pilots<sup>4</sup> [See Appendix 2].

1.10 This Service Specification describes 2 lots, the shared purpose, collective principles, values and behaviours that will support the VCS. These are shaped from conversations, surveys and workshops with service leads, stakeholders, VCS groups, the learning from the Neighbourhood Cares Pilot report and the development of Council priorities.

1.11 Part one of this specification of requirement sets out the overall requirements for the Provider(s) for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Councils.

1.12 Only the local authority geographical areas covered in each lot differs:

**LOT 1 covers Cambridgeshire local authority area**

**LOT 2 covers Peterborough local authority area**

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<sup>3</sup> Sir Stuart Etherington, chief executive of NCVO (31 Oct 2012)

<sup>4</sup> Neighbourhood based operating model - seeking to address issues of social isolation and improve choice and control by delivery of support through neighbourhoods and local services and networks, working in tandem with the Think Communities programme. Learning from the two Neighbourhood Cares pilots in Soham and St Ives.

- 1.13 Provider organisations may bid for one or more of lots, or may work in collaboration with other provider(s) to bid for one or more of the lots. If providers do work in collaboration, one partner will be the lead organisation responsible for meeting the contract requirements and partnership and/or subcontracting arrangements.
- 1.14 Providers of the two lots will be expected to work in a mutually beneficial way with one another in order to provide a consistent level of service for the Voluntary and Community Sector across all geographies and provide an integrated service in partnership with each other.
- 1.15 During the lifecycle of this contract, other public sector partners may wish to be involved or fund aspects of this service. This expansion will be part of a variation to the contract agreed with all parties.

## **2.0 LOT 1 AND LOT 2**

### **2.1 A Shared Principle**

The overarching principle is to deliver placed based Voluntary and Community Sector support and development so that communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are safe, healthy, good places to live and are the cornerstone for early help and preventative support for all generations: children, young people and adults. The Commissioners and the Provider(s) agree to work together in a constructive partnership to ensure the 'Think Communities' approach is successful. Commissioners require the Provider(s) to focus on delivering this support and development service.

The Provider(s) are expected to encourage and support the local VCS organisations to bid and/or apply for funding and delivery opportunities. The Provider(s) must not compete with the local VCS organisations for funding to deliver the same services, as this could jeopardise the relationships and trust with those they are commissioned to support. The Provider(s) must take steps to ensure that the approach to their own organisation's funding does not conflict with the aims of their role as provider of VCS Support and Development.

### **2.2 Outcomes and Values**

Delivering better outcomes is a shared achievement as many are interconnected, overlapping and are the result of people, organisations, processes and cultures interacting together. Communications and open dialogue, relationships and collaborations are the repeated themes highlighted through workshops and surveys. Taking these themes and the strategic priorities, the outcomes for this service are:

#### **(1) To have sustainable, well run voluntary and community sector organisations**

- Ensuring good governance, strong financial management, business planning, strategic planning and project management
- Have robust safeguarding policy and practices
- Have well managed community assets including community and village halls
- Have good volunteer management with effective policies and practice which enable good levels of recruitment and retention
- Be representative of the diversity in the local population
- Have a good understanding of how to successfully apply for funding or response to formal tender opportunities.

**(2) To have effective collaborative partnership and networks which work together across sectors using strength and asset based approaches, fostering a unified approach to shared priorities**

- Sharing knowledge and practice through peer learning
- Working with other organisations in a place based way
- Connecting local people, networks and services
- Coming together on specific topics at conferences or networking events, working together on joint funding applications
- Working together across the VCS to agree and provide suitable representation for the sector with funding and public sector partners and share the priorities of the Commissioners with the VCS

**(3) To have new and established groups and projects which support both local community and Commissioners priorities**

- Supporting the creation, development and continuation of Community Groups that will meet the priorities of Commissioners and their local delivery area
- Developing a shared understanding of health, social care and other local principles and priorities
- Making sure activities are diverse, inclusive and accessible to all
- Encouraging people to take social action and learn from each other, to feel able to develop innovative approaches which meet local needs
- Helping people to live independently and prevent reliance on statutory services

**(4) To have strong vibrant communities with good community spirit**

- Building capacity and resilience so people can help themselves and each other
- Fostering and harnessing community energy and spirit, supporting spontaneous local action to participate in a safe and effective way.
- Learning from the local lived experience during Covid19, providing a legacy to local action by supporting the creation and development of place based community led actions.
- Helping people feel safe and healthy

## **2.3 Who is this service for?**

This service will capacity build and work with voluntary sector organisations, community and faith groups and others delivering services in the geographical areas covered by each lots:

LOT 1 covers Cambridgeshire local authority area

LOT 2 covers Peterborough local authority area

Some providers will cross these geographical lots and as a consortium of Provider(s) may wish to split the delivery by service requirement. It is therefore up to the Provider(s) to be integrated to avoid duplication and to work most effectively and efficiently for the good of those they serve.

## **2.4 Funding**

Lot 1: The maximum annual budget available for this service will be £128,000 per annum.

Lot 2: The maximum annual budget available for this service will be £40,000 per annum.

- 2.4.1 The Provider(s) will support the VCS to think beyond statutory funding. Including working with the local authority on partnership bids.
- 2.4.2 The Provider(s) will be required to include 6 monthly financial returns relating to the funding relating to this contract. The information will include:
- Direct staffing costs (e.g. number of positions, vacancies, pension contributions, NI, hourly rates)
  - Indirect staffing costs (e.g. travel, training, mobile phones etc.)
  - Non staffing costs –(premises, rates utilities, corporate overheads)
  - Any match funding

To carry forward any financial underspend at the end of year, a robust business case is required that includes demand for services, costs, options, affordability and financial sustainability. The Commissioners will consider and assess such a request.

## **2.5 Quality Assurance**

Commissioners expect to develop collaborative and transparent working arrangements with the Provider(s) through the use of Open Book Accounting. Commissioners expect to work with the Provider(s) to understand the cost base and identify efficiency savings throughout the life of the contract.

The Provider(s) shall ensure that any financial information supplied adheres to the principles Open Book Accounting. It shall include as a minimum:

- Direct staffing costs e.g. number of positions, vacancies, FTE status, NI/ Pension contributions, marginal hourly rates, etc.
- Indirect staffing costs e.g. travel, training, mobile phones, etc.
- Non-staffing costs e.g. premises costs, rates, utilities, corporate overheads, contribution to surplus, etc.

## **2.6 Performance Measures and Monitoring Requirements**

This service will use learning as the driver for performance improvement and capture of outcomes. The Commissioners understand that working effectively and collaboratively requires the ability to adapt and change in response to the dynamic nature of communities. What works is a continuous process of listening, learning and adapting. This means the role of the Provider(s) is to use a variety of both quantitative and qualitative data to learn and share their findings. Commissioners will work with providers to evolve a way of defining achievements (and their measurements) to avoid weaknesses in a measurement system.

To enable the new practices and Think Community approaches, data, stories and measurement play an important part i.e. for enabling learning. Commissioners would like to see how we can do this learning together. The Provider(s) will be expected to have good data analysis skills. Commissioners will expect the Provider(s) to work together and with us on this. For this reason we have therefore not set traditional performance indicators or targets.

The Provider(s) will evidence and report on outcomes and the difference that is being made from strength based and asset based approaches. The Provider(s) will collect independent feedback from VCS, communities, Local Councils and authorities, evidencing achievements and challenges, enablers and barriers. This information and analysis will inform where work is prioritised.

The Provider(s) will capture social value, added value and cost savings to statutory services.

The Provider(s) will work with Councils to apply cost benefit analysis for example, such as the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (formerly New Economy) Cost Database<sup>5</sup> to calculate its value and savings to public sector services. This is a requirement during the life of the contract.

The Provider(s) must produce and share an annual service report. This annual report shall summarise activity, analyse data and trends (including emerging trends), and detail the learning and adaptations that have occurred. The use of Case Studies will benefit the report. The Provider(s) will also detail their actual expenditure at year end and identify areas for operational improvement. It will include a workplan and a budget profile for the year ahead.

Quarterly Monitoring Meetings will include all lead Provider(s) of these service.

## **2.7 Partnership and/or Consortium Arrangements**

Commissioners acknowledge that the lots in this VCS Support and Development provision may be delivered by a single provider or by a partnerships/consortium of providers with or without sub-contractors. If a partnership/consortium, the service must be managed by a lead provider.

Commissioners will assess the robustness of any collaborative arrangements including shared data and communication systems. The Provider(s) will put mechanisms in place to approve and monitor subcontractors.

Where a consortium or group of Providers wishes to bid, there shall be clear working protocols and partnership agreements in place. These shall include clear accountability, including accounting for finances, contract delivery and management of partners. Partnerships/consortiums must ensure consistency and quality of services across all partners in the consortium.

## **2.8 Interdependencies with other services**

Due to the diverse range of organisations, people and places covered by this service, it is essential that the Provider(s) encourage all to proactively engage and collaborate in order that the principles and behaviours of the service are met. Building positive relationships with the sector is key as well as engaging with a range of partners. But also to facilitate specialist VCS representation where needed.

## **2.9 Sustainability**

The Provider(s) will show evidence of succession planning and show how their work is generating sustainability for the future.

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<sup>5</sup> [Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(GMCA\) Research Team \(formerly New Economy\)](#)

## APPENDIX 1 PRIORITIES FOR PROVIDER(S) RESOURCE AND SUPPORT

### Priority Areas

The Commissioners are keen to work with the Provider(s) to determine how best to build capacity across a number of priorities listed below and the Think Communities priorities shown in Appendix 2.

1.0 We recognise that funding and resources for the Commissioners, the public sector and indeed the voluntary sector are limited and can be easily outstripped by the demands we face. We understand that it may not be possible to focus on all of these priorities listed at the same time, but we do expect the Provider(s) and the sector to work with the Commissioners, provide good evidence and intelligence so that together we can make choices about where to focus resources and support.

- **People**
- **Places**
- **Systems**

### 1.1 People

#### Children and Families

Aim: To reduce the number of families in social care and criminal justice system, give families the Best Start in Life and improve the wellbeing of children and young people experiencing mental health issues such as anxiety, stress and autism. To enable Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's children to thrive in their families, schools and communities and to build their resilience.

We anticipate input from the Provider(s) might include:

- a. Broker linkages and facilitate Council, voluntary groups and communities to work together, sharing perspectives, insights, learning and feedback.
- b. Connecting people and providers i.e. grow the skills and capacity of the sector to work more closely with others e.g. local multiagency teams.

#### Youth (11 to 19 years old)

Aim: To foster a strengths-based attitude to young people within communities, championing their voices, engagement and ensuring that they have equal weight when thinking about solutions to challenges faced across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

We anticipate input from the Provider(s) might include:

- a. Support the development of a safe and quality Youth Sector by giving advice and guidance to emerging or existing groups, including recruitment and retention of volunteers to get involved with youth projects, highlighting opportunities for local and national training (level 2 and 3 youth based qualifications and safeguarding).
- b. Develop and facilitate networks and forums for the sector actively contributing to the creation of local youth partnerships which actively bid for national and regional funding to support sufficiency and sustainability.
- c. Support the wider VCS to understand challenges faced by young people today and signpost them to information, advice, guidance and training on these issues. E.g:- Child criminal exploitation, County lines and Mental Health.



### Adults

Aim: To build on the concept of integrated systems that understand the unique values communities can bring to preventing people needing statutory health and care services. So that people with ongoing health conditions can, for example, continue to live in their own home rather than move into a residential care home.

To support the investment in prevention and early intervention across the voluntary sector that increase opportunities to build flexible volunteering, focussed on person centred community outcomes.

Building on what is important to people and their strengths, that will support the development of sustainable communities that are key for adult independence and can respond and support communities as society adapts to living with the consequences of the Covid 19 pandemic.

We anticipate input from the Provider(s) might include:

- a. Provide capacity building support, advice, training and influence to VCS to enable local action.
- b. Support the priorities of the Authorities whilst we take learning from Neighbourhood Cares and influence the Adults Positive Challenge Programme by providing comment on the continued development and delivery of
  - i. Changing the conversation
  - ii. Preventing carer breakdown
  - iii. Influencing commissioning.
- c. Support voluntary and community sector groups to engage with and apply for formal opportunities within the Local Authority such as the Early Intervention and Prevention Pseudo Dynamic Purchasing System being procured by Peterborough City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough CCG.
- d. Endorse these principles and communicate them clearly to the wider voluntary sector community.

### People with disabilities and autism

Aim: Have voluntary and community groups that are inclusive with all disability groups. Enable access to voluntary and community sector organisations to improve physical health, mental wellbeing and support for those with disabilities and autism.

We anticipate input from the Provider(s) might include:

- a. Be mindful that small voluntary sector organisations provide many services that are key to physical health, mental wellbeing, support and advocate for families and adults with disabilities and autism.
- b. Encourage inclusivity and representation of all disability groups, including those with learning disability, so that people with lived experience can be represented in the improvement and development of the health outcomes of local communities.

## **1.2 Places**

Aim: To have communities united by a sense of place, where services match need, and opportunities exceed expectations. To encourage and empower communities to be responsible for their own lives and the places where they live.

We anticipate input from the Provider(s) might include:

- a. Work with funded partners and communities to help identify, map and develop community assets within specified places.

- b. Work together to develop ways of strengthening those assets and supporting their sustainability.
- c. Build capacity to support greater community involvement in the management and maintenance of their natural and built assets, such as highways, village and community halls, shared open spaces and environment.

### **1.3 Systems**

Aim: To have a unified approach across a place.

We anticipate input from the Provider(s) might include:

- a. Facilitate a relationship between the Authorities, VCS and Local Councils that result in co-designed community based approaches to meet local need.
- b. Support networks to have the space to share insight into local and national policy, sharing of ideas, ambitions and aspirations by and for the sector.
- c. Support the delivery of the Think Communities shared approach and any other local VCS development plans, facilitating discussions and contributions from the sector to support improvement.

## APPENDIX 2 LOCAL CONTEXT: INFLUENCING STRATEGIES AND SHARED PRIORITIES

The following influences are key strategies and shared priorities that the Council has developed with its partners. This service will ensure that the Council and the Sector are strategically aligned in working towards strengthening communities and community based interventions across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough based on Think Communities Principles. To enable people to remain independent with support from their Community, helping the person or family to stay resilient and less dependent on public sector services.

### Think Communities

The service will deliver support to the sector in line with the Think Communities approach:

- **People:** Resilient communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough where people can feel safe, healthy, connected and able to help themselves and each other.
- **Places:** New and established communities that are integrated, possess a sense of place, and which support the resilience of their residents.
- **System:** A system wide approach in which partners listen, engage and align with communities and with each other, to deliver public service and support community-led activity.

The Think Communities: A Unified Approach in Action refers to priorities



Figure 1: Think Communities Unified Approach: Priorities Sept 2020

### Best Start in Life

The Best Start in life work will focus on the wider early year's system with a strong emphasis on community involvement and creating the right conditions for long term system change i.e. one in which people (including families), communities and services can work together effectively.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/giving-children-in-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-the-best-start-in-life>

### Adults Positive Challenge

This programme will look to positively manage demand by addressing people's needs earlier to prevent them from escalating, enabling people to do more for themselves and forming resilient communities which will mean that people have greater independence and better outcomes, with transformed or less intervention from statutory services.

### Taking forward the learning from Neighbourhood Cares Pilots as example of good practice

The Neighbourhood Care Pilots took place in Soham and St Ives. They demonstrated the importance of: working together based around place ie *knowing the neighbourhood (7.4), awareness of others that work/live there*, creating connections and making the most of local assets, co-develop with service users and partners priorities, plans and local solutions), collating place based data.