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The Council for Voluntary Service for Torridge District

Welcome to the Autumn edition of Torridge Matters, which I hope you will find useful and informative. As I write, we are looking forward to hosting our first Health and Wellbeing Forum for Voluntary and Community Organisations in Northern Devon. This is in response to ongoing changes to and debates around health and social care provision as well as a clear need for regular information and networking opportunities for groups working in the field of health and social care. We hope this forum will provide an important mechanism for funders and commissioners to engage with the sector and for the sector to influence emerging commissioning groups such as Health and Wellbeing Boards. If you were unable to attend the September forum, but are interested in joining, please contact Jenny Fish on 01237 420 131. If you are unable to attend meetings, but would like to be part of ongoing discussions and information sharing for this group, please let Jenny know.

Best wishes,
Penny Mason
Chief Officer

TTVS (Torridge Voluntary Services) invite members and supporters to their **Annual General Meeting** Thursday October 20th, 2011
11:15 am for 11:30 am at The Plough Arts Centre, Torrington.
The AGM will last until 12:30 pm and will be followed by lunch.
RSVP to Kate Shanahan on 01237 420132 or email administrator@torridgecvs.org.uk.

Business rates

The Government is reviewing how local authorities are funded. The Proposals for Business Rates Retention may result in less funding for areas with high levels of deprivation, although the Government sets out how it might mitigate the impact. Any changes to council funding is likely to affect a significant proportion of local voluntary and community organisations. NAVCA's briefing sets out the key issues and can be found on TTVS website www.torridgecvs.org.uk in our news section

The VCS Mentoring Scheme is now live!

The scheme has been devised with support from a mentoring and befriending specialist so that from the outset it will meet the Mentoring & Befriending Foundation's Approved Provider Standards.

Mentoring is a way of supporting individuals who need guidance on a particular issue relating to their role in their organisations. It is not supervision or free consultancy but a way of helping someone identify their own issues and goals, and helps them to find ways of resolving issues. It is additional and complimentary to development work.

- The Scheme is looking for Mentors – to volunteer to support individuals for up to 6 months, with a minimum of 6 face-to-face meetings (*a volunteer role but expenses are met*)
- The Scheme is looking for individuals who would benefit from mentoring – this could be a volunteer manager, a trustee, a Chief Officer, someone taking on a representative's role, or senior project worker. *It could be you!*

This is a pilot project running for 6 months, from September 2011 to February 2012 and the aim is to support a maximum of 20 mentoring relationships across Devon reflecting different types of organisations and issues. So please contact the Scheme Manager if you need any further information: **Beverly Jones - Programme Manager, Total Support Project for the Devon Consortium**, Teignbridge CVS, Forde House, Brunel Road, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ12 4XX
Tel: 01626 215914 www.devonconsortium.net

supporting voluntary action, empowering local communities

CommunityForce

There are lots of fantastic groups of local people making a difference in their community. You can probably think of some where you live. This is why Nat West want to appeal to you, to help spread the word about Community Force—a programme of funding and other support being offered by Nat West Bank.

In each of their local markets Nat West is offering **three** community projects the chance to win awards of £6,000 each. It is not NatWest who decide the winners, but local people, who know the projects and what will benefit your area most.

A number of local organisations have applied and already been selected for the chance to win an award in the South West and these are:

Bideford & Surrounds:

1. Bideford Bay Childrens Centre
2. Torridge, North Devon, Mid Devon & Bude Citizens Advice Bureau
3. Seize the Moment Training Cafe, Westward Ho!
4. Stepping Stones Six Sixteen Internet Cafe
5. Wings
6. Appledore & Instow Ferry

Torrington & Surrounds:

1. The Plough Arts Centre
2. 1st Torrington Scouts
3. Torrington Community Information Centre
4. Roborough Community Project

Holsworthy & Surrounds:

1. Haliwell Football Club

For more information about the projects and details on how to vote for your favourite project you can visit the Community Force website and click on the interactive map to locate our area.

Nat West Community Force is more than just financial support; it is about connecting people to projects. Groups can also ask for help in the shape of volunteering time and expertise from local people on their website - this also includes details on their employee volunteering scheme—a resource local groups may wish to tap into!

www.communityforce.natwest.com

Councils Receive New Statutory Guidance

The guidance sets out the expectations when they are considering changing funding to local voluntary and community groups

The Government wants to encourage public agencies and civil society to collaborate more, including greater involvement for voluntary and community organisations, as well as small businesses in the running of public sector services.

In September 2011 the Department of Communities and Local Government published new Best Value Statutory Guidance for use by Councils.

The guidance sets out some reasonable expectations of the way authorities should work with voluntary and community groups (and small businesses) when facing difficult funding decisions. It allows them the flexibility to exercise appropriate discretion in considering the circumstances of individual cases, without trying to predict every possible variable. It gives a new, clear prominence to requirements on dealing with the voluntary and community sector and small businesses, helps build the confidence of these organisations in holding public agencies to account, and is explicit about the scope for Best Value authorities to consider social value in their functions. It does not replace Local Compacts between local authorities and the voluntary and community sector.

Best Value Guidance

- Best Value authorities are under a general Duty of Best Value to “*make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.*”
- Under the Duty of Best Value, therefore, authorities should consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. As a concept, social value is about seeking to maximise the additional benefit that can be created by procuring or commissioning goods and services, above and beyond the benefit of merely the goods and services themselves.
- To achieve the right balance – and before deciding how to fulfil their Best Value Duty – authorities are under a Duty to Consult representatives of a wide range of local persons; this is not optional. Authorities must consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. Authorities should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation. This should apply at all stages of the commissioning cycle, including when considering the decommissioning of services. In the interests of economy and efficiency, it is not necessary for authorities to undertake lifestyle or diversity questionnaires of suppliers or residents.
- Authorities should be responsive to the benefits and needs of voluntary and community sector organisations of all sizes (honouring the commitments set out in Local Compacts) and small businesses
- Authorities should seek to avoid passing on disproportionate reductions - by not passing on larger reductions to the voluntary and community sector and small businesses as a whole, than they take on themselves - and in particular:

- An authority intending to reduce or end funding (where 'funding' means both grant funding and any fixed term contract) or other support to a voluntary and community organisation or small business should give at least three months' notice of the actual reduction to both the organisation involved and the public/service users.
- An authority should actively engage the organisation and service users as early as possible before making a decision on: the future of the service; any knock-on effect on assets used to provide this service; and the wider impact on the local community.
- Authorities should make provision for the organisation, service users, and wider community to put forward options on how to reshape the service or project. Local authorities should assist this by making available all appropriate information, in line with the government's transparency agenda.

Source: *Communities and Local Government, Best Value Statutory Guidance*

Devon County Council, Adult Social Care Market Position Statement

Devon County Council have published their market position statement for Adult and Social Care. The document sets out their current understanding of social care need, service patterns across the county and updates the interim position statement published in September 2010. Over time, it will become a vital reference point for all those who play a part in social care in Devon and is aimed at both existing and potential providers but will also be of value to those who are interested more generally in the future of local social care markets.

The document contains many references to the voluntary and community sector and acknowledges the added value of voluntary and community sector organisations. It states (amongst other things) that there will be:

- co-production – involving communities in the design of services and other responses
- responding to community-led planning (for example, where a community has a plan, developed with clear evidence of the participation of local people, like a town or parish plan and where it wishes to develop solutions to improve health and wellbeing).
- encouragement of a robust voluntary and community sector infrastructure that can reliably deliver services and other opportunities

A copy of the statement can be obtained by calling 0845 1551 007 or online at www.devon.gov.uk/market-position-statement

Big Society Capital. Glossary of terms

There is a lot of talk of the Big Society Bank (BSB), known as Big Society Capital, but much of it involves terms that we may not be familiar with. NAVCA asked Alastair Ballantyne of Portland Place Capital to prepare a glossary of terms.

Bond: normally the term is used to describe a debt security issued for a period of more than one year which pays a fixed or floating rate of

interest with the principal repaid at maturity. For example, 'gilts' or 'gilt edged bonds' are pound sterling denominated UK government bonds. NB. A 'social impact bond' is not a 'bond' in the traditional sense of the word.

Co-investment of equity or debt: BSB could make an equity investment in, or lend money to, a project or fund alongside, and on the same terms as, other private sector investors.

Debt: an obligation or agreement to pay money under an agreement. The cost of debt is the interest paid on the loan. In general, companies use debt in their financial structure because they are able to use the money they borrow to generate revenues that are much greater than the cost of the debt.

Equity or quasi-equity investment: equity investment means having ownership rights and sharing in the profits of a business. Some businesses do not have shares but it is possible to structure financial instruments that have similar features to equity in terms of participating in the upside if the business is successful in generating income and being an investment that can lose all its value if the business fails.

First loss: if an investment loses money it is possible to have different tiers of investors so that one set of investors accepts that it will lose the money it invested before any of the other investors loses any money. For example, BSB could take the first 20% loss on a loan portfolio. If the loan portfolio declined in value by 10%, BSB would take all this loss and the other investors would be paid in full. If the loan portfolio declined in value by 30% BSB would take 20% of the loss but the other investors would share the remaining 10% loss between them.

Intermediaries: organisations that intermediate or help bring together bodies that need capital, and bodies that have capital and want to invest it. Intermediaries in the social investment market include funds, financial institutions or other organisations that arrange financing for end-user social organisations.

Liquidity: From an investor perspective, the liquidity of an investment or investment portfolio refers to the ability to transform that investment into cash quickly with little or no loss in value.

Social Impact Bond: A financial instrument also known as a 'pay for success' bond. Investors buy a bond to achieve a particular social outcome (such as helping to reduce reoffending by prisoners). The money raised by the bond issue is used to pay for programmes to help address the problem. The government (or local authority) agrees to pay the bondholders a return on their investment that reflects how successful the intervention has been and the cost savings achieved by government as a result (eg the need for fewer prisons). If the programmes are unsuccessful, the investor receives no payment.

Underwriting risk: BSB could agree to buy a financial instrument that was intended to be on-sold to end-investors. If the sale to other investors was unsuccessful BSB would have the risk that it owned the instrument.

Venture capital fund: venture capital is an approach to investment that involves making an equity investment in a start-up or small and growing business with the investor also actively providing management and strategic advice. A venture capital fund invests in a number of small businesses to spread its risk to make a more consistent return by having a portfolio of what are normally highly risky investments.

Wholesale investor: an investor that makes larger investments in funds or financial organisations that will themselves invest smaller amounts in a number of frontline end-user social organisations.

Source: *navca circulation Autumn 2011 Issue 422*



The Council for Voluntary
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MATTERS
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**Do you know someone who is
not getting this newsletter?
Call Kate Shanahan
01237 420130**

TORRIDGE RESOURCE CENTRE INCORPORATING VOLUNTARY ACTION AND VOLUNTEERING: Provides practical support, advice and information to any organisation, activity or self-help group working or wishing to work within the voluntary/community sector; Enables local people of all ages to become involved in a range of voluntary activities and links people and groups who need practical help with those volunteers able to give it: Develops the voice of the voluntary/community sector in decision-making on local and countywide issues. Contact: JENNY FISH 01237 420131 or BARBARA GRANT 01237 420138

TAW & TORRIDGE CARING: Offers advice, information, practical and emotional support to local carers and their support groups. Contact: SUE PIRRIE 01237 459337

CAREWISE: Supports the needs of Young Carers. Through the use of trained volunteers, a range of practical skills and emotional support is made available to any young person with a caring responsibility. It also helps to encourage Young Carers to articulate their concerns and to find appropriate ways of supporting these. Contact: CATHY KINGHAM 01237 479380

TorrAGE: Incorporating the Neighbourhood Links Project, provides services and support for older people in Torridge. Contact: ANNA MALONE Development Worker or LINDA BEALEY Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01805 622666

FAMILY CARERS OF ADULTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES: Supporting Forums for Family Carers of Adults with Learning Difficulties. Contact: LAURA CLEMENTS 01237 420137

TTVS is an accredited Volunteer Centre, a Member of Volunteering England, NCVO, and NAVCA and is an Approved Provider with the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation

Bideford Resource Centre, 14 Bridgeland Street, Bideford
Open Monday to Thursday 10.00am to 3.00pm.

Torrington Volunteer Centre, 22 Cornmarket Street, Torrington
Open Thursday morning 10.00am to 1.00pm

Holsworthy, find us at Holsworthy Memorial Hall every Wednesday morning.

Look out for outreach opportunities in the local area.

DISCLAIMER

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