

New chapter dawns for North East Lincolnshire’s “not for profit” sector

A new approach to maximise opportunities within North East Lincolnshire’s voluntary, community and social enterprise sector is to be developed in consultation with the sector next month.

This review aimed at making the most of resources available across the entire sector, is being jointly led by North East Lincolnshire Council, the local Clinical Commissioning Group and Humberside Police.

A range of issues affecting the sector will be examined and look to move away from the traditional public sector-led service delivery, as councils and other organisations face increasing austerity cuts.

Included in the review will be:

- The current state of play and effectiveness of the “not for profit” sector in North East Lincolnshire
- The capacity of current organisations with a track record of delivery to undertake more activity
- The potential of organisations to move from grants of service level agreements to contracts and/or managed loans
- The potential of social enterprises which the sector can support
- Best practice models locally or elsewhere which can be utilised to help communities.

Cllr Ros James, portfolio holder for Citizens and Inclusion, said that the sector receives financial and other support from the public sector, in addition to successfully bidding for grants totalling many more hundreds of thousands of pounds.

“We need to look at a 21st century model to make the most of the terrific people who work in this sector,” she explained, “but we also need to take into account the reducing capacity of the public sector to deliver and directly fund this vital activity.”

To do that properly, we need to gather the views, ideas and most importantly, the aspirations of everyone involved and see how we in the public sector can best marry those ambitions with our own, of creating a successful economy and vibrant communities.

It is hoped that the review, which will be led by a prominent organisation in the field, will help draw up a plan to create a new infrastructure for the sector and develop a series of options for delivery.

“We look forward to support from the sector in contributing to the success of the review to build a sustainable infrastructure for the future benefit of North East Lincolnshire.” added Cllr James.

Cathy Kennedy, deputy chief executive of the Clinical Commissioning Group said:

“Our health and social care services have long benefitted from some fantastic support from volunteers, and we see this becoming increasingly important over coming years as we seek to meet the ever increasing needs of our communities and people from tightening funds”.

Tony Forbes, chief superintendant of Humberside Police said:

“We have a long tradition of dedicated, hardworking people who contribute a huge amount of valuable time and effort to make our communities stronger, safer and healthier, we are conscious that we must not lose their goodwill and support. However, we recognise that in the current environment every part of our work needs to be reviewed, including volunteering, to ensure we are capturing and maximising what is working well as well as considering if there are opportunities to work more cohesively to maximise the benefit to local people.

It is hoped the consultation will take place during April 2014 with a report and recommendations expected by July 2014.

Background note to editors

The council is in the process of reviewing all services that it currently provides through its savings programme. This review is initiated by the need to drive forward the move to creating a stronger economy and stronger communities and in particular by promoting and developing co-production as an approach. Co-production has at its heart citizens as assets which means that the public sector should actively engage citizens in the design and delivery of services which enhance their wellbeing, with a focus on preventative rather than intervention based activities.

A co-production approach will create a bigger 'cake' of resources with not just public sector staff and budgets, but also service users, families, neighbours, voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations and the wider community in a 'total service' which releases new energies and skills. It means that commissioned services and self-organised support can work alongside one another rather than operating in isolation. It should also enable the move away from grants and service level agreements to contracts and payment by results.