

IN THIS ISSUE: Volunteer expenses, Empowerment Fund consultation, Charity update, Real People, Real Power White Paper, My Place, Youth Opportunity Fund, Public Service Delivery, Mind the Gap, Children in Need

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THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF RCVDA

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the Way

Communities in Control - Empowerment White Paper Published



“Communities in control tells the story of power, influence and control and how people can use existing and new tools to access it. The White Paper looks at who has power, on whose behalf is it exercised, how is it held to account, and how can it can be accessed by everyone in local communities.”

More information and how to access the white paper inside

Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund

“The Youth Opportunity and Capital Funds provide discrete revenue and capital budgets for young people to control and decide how money should be spent on positive activities and youth facilities in their area. Funded activities must support the five Every Child Matters outcomes, benefit the local community and offer good value for money.” (everychildmatters.gov.uk)

See inside for information about the projects funded in Redcar & Cleveland over the last year and how young people have made a difference to their own community.

Volunteer mileage expenses

Many volunteer-involving organisations demonstrate good practice by reimbursing their volunteers' expenses when using their own vehicle. These expenses can be for journeys taken to and from the place of volunteering, and for any journeys made as part of the volunteering role, such as for transportation or driving schemes. HM Revenue and Customs sets tax-free mileage rates under the Fixed Profit Car Scheme (FPCS). This scheme allows for the reimbursement of mileage allowances without the need for either the organisation or the volunteer to keep detailed records. The scheme applies to both employees and to volunteers. They are set at a level to take into account depreciation and other running costs, as well as fuel.

HM Revenue and Customs approved mileage rates 2008-2009:

Cars and vans – 40p per mile for the first 10,000 miles, 25p per mile over 10,000.

Motorcycles – 24p per mile.

Bicycles – 20p per mile.

For further information see Volunteering England's Volunteer Expenses information sheet via our website http://www.rcvda.org.uk/volunteer_io.html

Empowerment Fund Consultation

The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) has launched a consultation on the new **Empowerment Fund** proposed in the **Communities in Control White Paper**

The Empowerment Fund is a £7.5m grant programme that will provide support for existing national third sector organisations operating across England to help local communities turn key proposals into practical action on the ground. £1.5m of funding will be specifically for organisations focusing on getting communities involved in planning.

CLG are consulting on the design and operation of the fund and are inviting your thoughts on the following questions:

- Are the proposed set levels of funding (see section 2.3 of the draft Prospectus) appropriate?
- Do the empowerment themes set out in section 3 of the draft Prospectus merit support from the Empowerment Fund, given that Fund's objectives?
- Should any of the themes in the draft Prospectus be omitted or others included if the Empowerment Fund is to achieve its objectives?
- Are different arrangements required for community involvement in planning?
- Do you have any comments on the design of the application form (see Annex A to the draft Prospectus)?

The Consultation closes on **30 September 2008**. To view the white paper and send email responses, please use the link below:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/empowermentfund>

Charities don't get credit for services, says CAF survey

Source: John Plummer, Third Sector Online, 28 July 2008

People benefit from charities far more than they realise, according to research published today by the Charities Aid Foundation. A total of 91 per cent of 1,001 adults surveyed by CAF said they had not benefited from charity in the past year. But when shown a list of charity-run services and organisations, 58 per cent said they had benefited from at least one of them in the past month alone.

The survey shows there is a wide gap between people's perceptions of charities and what they actually do. Of those who had benefited from charity service in the previous month, 43 per cent had bought items from charity shops, 19 per cent had gone to church or some other charitable religious institution and 18 per cent had visited stately houses or gardens run by charities. Other popular charity activities included visiting theatres, galleries and museums.

"This research challenges the commonly held view that charities are run for the few, not the many, and shows that most of us underestimate the broad role charities play in enhancing all our lives," said John Low, chief executive of CAF.

"I hope these findings will help people to think differently about supporting charities even in these tough economic times."

New Guidance from the Charity Commission

The Charity Commission has produced new guidance notes on some key issues for charities:

- Trustee payments
- Conflicts within charities
- Complaints procedures
- Inquiry reporting
- Reporting serious incidents

Trustee payments

This guidance; called "Trustee Expenses and Payments" clarifies the position with regard to the payment of trustees for the supply of services and the conditions which must be met before a trustee can be validly paid. The guidance also states that it is good practice for charities to have an expenses policy.

<http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/publications/cc11.asp>

Conflicts within a charity

The guidance states that charities should use internal methods to resolve the problem as far as possible. The Commission can get involved as a last resort if there is "evidence of misconduct or mismanagement which puts the charity's assets, beneficiaries, integrity and reputation at risk; when the charity is being run by individuals who are not entitled to run it and are unwilling to put the situation right or when the charity can no longer operate.

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/conapp.asp>

Complaints procedures

The Charity Commission receives many complaints about trivial matters, this guidance explains how the Commission will assess each complaint "to determine how serious it is and the risk it poses to the charity, its assets, beneficiaries or reputation". Complaints which are serious, significant or unacceptable for any charity will be investigated.

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/publications/cc47.asp>

Inquiry reporting

This explains why the Commission reports the outcome of a formal inquiry and sets out the situations where it is not appropriate to do so.

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/inquiryreports/inqreps.asp>

Reporting serious incidents

The guidance explains that charities have a duty to inform the Commission about any serious incident which occurs. Charities with annual incomes of over £25,000 must include a statement about serious incidents in their Annual Return. The guidance explores what constitutes a serious incident.

<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Library/investigations/pdfs/rsinotes.pdf>



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Crime and policing

Local communities are to be given a greater say over deciding how policing is delivered and will be able to elect someone to represent their interests. The Policing Green Paper will be published shortly and will include a number of further measures to strengthen community engagement in policing.

Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) are also keen to support 'community justice' and 'community sentences' following recommendations in 'Engaging Communities in Fighting Crime' review.

There will be pilot projects to enable citizens to decide how sentences may give something back to the local community - 'community payback'.

Source: Simon Davidson, Tees Valley VCS Forum

Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power - the Communities and Local Government White Paper.

To read the full white paper or a briefing visit our website at www.rcvda.org.uk/whats_new.html

how2fundraise.org

www.how2fundraise.org is a free online toolkit for volunteer fundraisers from the Institute of Fundraising. It offers detailed guides on running fundraising activities and a forum for volunteers. The website aims to maximise success for volunteer fundraisers.

Neighbourhood Governance

Department for Communities and Local Government's (CLG) are keen to see more councils at a very local (neighbourhood) level, building on the experience of almost 9,000 Parish and Town Councils.

These new local council structures can be called neighbourhood, community or village councils. The White Paper also introduces a new right of appeal to the Secretary of State, where a request from the community to establish a community council has been rejected.

The current piloting of community contracts, that define the relationship between communities and service providers will be extended and evaluated. 'Community pledgebanks' where individuals commit ('pledge') to do something, are to be trialled and CLG want to hear from areas with an interest in setting one up.

Communities in Control – Empowerment White Paper

The government published its long awaited empowerment white paper – Communities in Control on 6th July.

The white paper has a focus on engaging with citizens and communities, with many proposals which could impact on the VCS, including:

- a commitment to consult on a new £7.5 million empowerment fund for national organisations helping local communities turn key proposals in areas such as community leadership, involvement in planning, and social enterprise into practical action on the ground.
- the announcement of a new £70 million 'Communitybuilders fund', focused on investing in and building community organisations (Community Anchors)
- support for the Community Allowance scheme which seeks to address the challenges faced by benefit claimants in being more actively involved. See www.communityallowance.org
- a new 'Take Part' local pathfinder programme, to identify and support local authorities working in partnership with the VCS and business to develop local programmes of activity on active citizenship. This will help build on the work which has been lead regionally by the original Tees Valley pilot. See www.takepart.org
- a proposed new duty on local authorities to respond to petitions on local issues will give residents in all areas of England a right to a response if they sign a petition. On the face a signal that the government is encouraging the VCS to campaign and lobby.
- Proposed new Third Sector Partnership Board

Source: Simon Davidson, Tees Valley VCS Forum

Community Anchors Programme now called Communitybuilders!

The previously announced (and much delayed) Community Anchors programme has been retitled as the *Communitybuilders Fund*, with £70m allocated to support community-led groups. A competitive tendering process will commence shortly to appoint an organisation to deliver the fund across England.

There are no practical criteria available as yet for the Communitybuilders programme but the following CLG published statement gives a flavour:

- provide more support for the role of local third sector organisations in unlocking the talent of local communities
- provide opportunity for secure investment funding and access to significant, high quality assets - enabling organisations to become more robust and sustainable;
- provide a source of investment for community projects throughout conception, development and delivery;
- offer a mixture of finance combining grants and loans, so organisations can access the type of funding that is right for them.



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My Place

Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities sets out the Government's vision for improving youth facilities. **myplace** aims to kick start this process by delivering £190 million of Government capital investment through grants of between £1 million and £5million.

For more information on myplace visit www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_myplace.htm

The story so far in Redcar and Cleveland

In early June 2008 a multi-agency steering group and a young persons steering group were formed and an open invitation was sent out through various networks for additional members. It was recognised that with such a tight timescale we would need to utilise the existing results of consultation with young people that had been undertaken earlier this year as part of the youth offer in the Borough. This evidence showed that within Redcar and Cleveland there is a shortage of facilities where young people can make and record music, engage in a range of creative arts and go to watch live entertainment. This was confirmed by a needs analysis exercise and the young peoples' steering group. It was agreed that the focus of activities within the proposed myplace building should be based around creative and performing arts. Nine potential sites were identified across the borough, three in each of the localities i.e. East, West and Central. The young peoples' steering group (who come from across the borough) discussed the merits of each site and agreed that for the proposed centre to be accessible from all areas within the borough the ideal site would be Central Redcar. Further consultation with young people will take place over the next three weeks to determine what activities should be included in the proposed building. It is also intended that young people should be able to access a range of advice and guidance services alongside the proposed activities, in the same building.

At present the local authority is co-ordinating the meetings and has identified officers who will complete the application form however as part of the multi-agency partnership working the bid could potentially be led and managed by a third sector organisation, a private company, the local authority or other public bodies e.g. PCT, Police etc. The lead organisation will have ultimate managerial responsibilities for the building should the application be successful.

The purpose of this article is to make you aware of the opportunity for your organisation to become involved in the application by:-

- becoming the lead organisation (either VCS or private sector)
- becoming a partner on the steering group
- either lead, or be involved in, the delivery of a range of services within the proposed building (areas identified by the YP steering group include advice regarding further education, enterprise, finances, sexual health etc.)
- expressing an interest in young people accessing the facility should the bid be successful

If you would like any further information please ring Fran Golightly (01642 444398) for an informal chat.

This is a competitive bidding process and we cannot guarantee that our application will be successful.

Does your organisation work with children and young people?

You may be interested in a new course "Introduction to Working with Children and Young People", which has been developed through the support of the Children's Workforce Development Council and will be delivered by a range of partner organisations from the voluntary and statutory sectors. This course includes a range of issues for volunteers/staff working with anyone aged 0-19 including:

- Keeping children and young people safe
- Communicating with children and young people
- Child development
- Working with children and young people from different groups
- Emotional well-being
- Information sharing

The course will be delivered through eight 3-hour sessions. There will be one session per week between October and December 2008 in central Redcar.

The course will also be repeated in other areas of Redcar & Cleveland in 2009. If you are interested or would like more information please contact:Stella Pate on 01642 456721 or at pate8@msn.com by 1st September 2008.

Myplace Stakeholder event

The Young People's steering group are holding an event on Thursday 14th August at 25k, Ayton Drive, Redcar from 2pm to 4pm to seek support for their bid. If you would like to attend contact Sarah Moses on 01642 444279

Youth Opportunity Fund/Youth Capital Fund 2007/08

The Youth Opportunity Fund and Youth Capital Fund are administered by Redcar & Cleveland Youth Service who also supports the young people who make up the grant panel. Grants are available for individuals up to £400.00 and groups (up to £8000). The grant panel is made up of various young people from across the borough who have received training to enable them to make decisions on the grant applications. Projects funded through this fund include:

- money to support young people with learning difficulties or disabilities to engage in a range of sporting activities
- funding to set up a portable mini music studio to enable young people to build an interest in music skills
- an individual grant to enable a young person to set up a business providing printing and design
- funding for a group of young people to set up a youth club in a neighbourhood where there was no youth provision

For more information on how to apply to this fund contact Aggie Scott on 01642 476367

Public Service delivery: what trustees need to know and do

Source: Governance, Issue 19, July 2008

“Charities have always played an important role in the delivery of those services that we consider to be ‘public’. What should trustees of charities delivering public services be taking into account?”

Charity law requirements

Trustees legal duties do not change when the charity is delivering a public service. Trustees must consider the interests of the charity and its beneficiaries and ensure that the proposed public service activities are within the charity’s powers and in furtherance of its objects. The trustees must maintain their independence, particularly where funders seek to influence decision-making. Any conflicts of interest of the trustees will need careful management.

Focus

It is important that charities maintain a focus on their objects and purposes, and do not suffer from what the Charity Commission refers to as ‘mission drift’. Trustees are personally liable for money spent outside charitable objects.

Independence

Charities must not compromise their independence. Charities play an important role in the reform of public service delivery and should not simply take on the role of delivery. A charity’s values, relationships and expertise are all extremely valuable and provide important negotiation tools.

Summary

Trustees and chief executives must have in mind the importance of delivering their charity’s mission, as envisioned by the trustees, and must only operate within the charity’s objects; they must assess the risks and take steps to mitigate them; they should understand the true cost of delivery; and they should have confidence in the charity’s ability to deliver the public service in its own way.

Mind the Gap: Developing third sector people and skills

The Workforce Hub is hosting a national skills conference on October 21, 2008 at Central Hall Westminster, London and is looking for organisations to facilitate round table workshops.

If you can answer yes to the following questions and enjoy sharing your learning and good practice with others in the sector

- Do you regularly identify the learning and skills needs of people in your organisation and, do you develop a plan to meet these needs?
- Do you get the resources you need to do this from building the cost into your funding bids and/or contracts?

They will pay all costs for the day for those who are keen to facilitate one of our round table discussions. These discussions will involve giving a brief description of how you identify and acquire the resources to invest in skills.

For more information about the conference visit:

www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/mindthegap08.

Contact:

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www.ukworkforcehub.org.uk

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workforce@ukworkforcehub.org.uk



Ask the expert

Q. I have a long serving employee. Recently his behaviour has become erratic; he loses his temper at his co-workers and has turned in late for work on more than one occasion. This is totally out of character and his track record has been impeccable. I do not want to dismiss him but I do want to get to the bottom of the problem. What can you advise?

A. Poor attitude or erratic behaviour at work may be down to a number of reasons writes Russell Smith, Consultant at Peninsula. The cause may be work-related or the employee may have problems with his health or personal life. It is also possible that there is no underlying cause.

The first step in attempting to resolve the situation is to talk to your employee. I suggest you invite the employee into your office for an informal private discussion.

Remind him how important he is to your business and express your concern about specific recent examples of undesirable behaviour. Ask whether he has any explanation for his uncharacteristic behaviour. His response will help you decide what your next course of action should be.

If no explanation or excuse is offered, I would advise that you warn him informally that certain aspects of his behaviour are unacceptable and must stop. Explain that if they re-occur formal disciplinary action may be taken. You may wish to confirm this in writing.

If he gives work-related reasons such as pressure of work, unclear objectives, changing work practices etc. you may need to consider whether these are justified. You should look at what support can be given or changes made to get him back on board as well as giving him the informal warning referred to above if that seems appropriate.

If he gives health reasons, then a number of possibilities arise which largely depend on the severity of the health problem. This can be a complex area, involving medical reports and formal capability procedures

If the employee's unacceptable behaviour continues then you will need to consider formal disciplinary or capability action as appropriate to the circumstances in accordance with your own procedures. It is unlikely that you would be able to dismiss the employee without first having given a series of formal written warnings. If you do get to the stage where you are contemplating dismissal, you would need to ensure that you comply with the standard statutory dismissal procedure as well as any contractual disciplinary or capability procedure you may have.

For further information please contact Russell Smith on 07976922314, or via email, russell.smith@peninsula-uk.com



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The Children in Need team in the North of England would like to invite you to participate in a funding workshop this autumn.

The workshops are designed to increase your group's chances of success in applying to BBC Children in Need.

The workshops are absolutely free. All that they ask is that you are a fully constituted group that works with Young People and that you are considering an application to BBC Children in Need.

The workshops are designed to be fun and creative and will focus on the following areas:

- Project Planning
- Defining disadvantage
- Involving Young People
- Defining Outcomes
- Creative Monitoring

Local events will be held as follows:

Newcastle – Thursday September 11, 2008

Teesside – Friday September 12, 2008

York – Thursday September 25, 2008

All events are 10:00 – 13:00

Other dates are available at venues across the North East and North West. To access a booking form go to :

www.rcvda.org.uk/whats_new.html

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“wish I’d taken the tag off the suit before I left the Teesside Hospice shop”



Thanks to Carole Hughes of Teesside Hospice for this suggestion

Sudoku puzzle courtesy of Rachel. Solution will be on our website from the middle of August. Good luck

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	8			4	9	2		
1					5			

The information in the Interaction is published in good faith but RCVDA accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracy in the items.

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