

Business Plan

2015-2018

Connecting charities, volunteers and businesses



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Introduction

We're a constantly evolving organisation which responds to the needs of the voluntary and community sector, whilst also connecting with volunteers, businesses and public sector organisations.

We're now three years old and immensely proud of what we've achieved since we started operating in 2013. This business plan describes our ambitions for the future, and will guide our work until 2018.

In developing this plan we've considered a number of factors: we've reflected on what we've achieved since our formation, and noted what we've done well and where we need to improve, and we've also explored new ways we can work which will better meet the needs of the voluntary and community sector, and aid our own sustainability.

We've also considered the external environment. We've looked at the needs of our stakeholders and considered the issues which will impact on the voluntary and community sector, such as changes in public sector funding and an increase in demand from local people for more support.

As part of developing this plan we've also refreshed our core values and how we work as an organisation. We're now satisfied that we're doing the right things for the right reasons and in the right way.

The findings of our annual members and supporters survey, which highlights for us which of the services our members and supporters find most useful and accessible, has informed the development of this new business plan and how we will improve the support we offer to voluntary and community organisations and our wider supporters.

We're confident that we're doing things right and that we have a critical role to play in supporting local communities, across Sussex. Since July 2016, we've started to support voluntary and community organisations in Adur and Worthing, as well as in Brighton and Hove. Our growth coincides with local plans for a Greater Brighton, which aims to spread economic growth across Brighton, Hove, Adur, Worthing, Lewes and mid-Sussex.

We're confident that our growth into Adur and Worthing will help to create efficiencies of scale and make best use of the limited resources available to support voluntary and community action, as well as enable closer working across Sussex.

Our trustees, members, volunteers and staff hold a wealth of experience that we will utilise to provide professional services to all our members and supporters, including our public sector partners who rely on us to bring the voices of local people and communities to their attention.

We know that it is not an easy time for organisations that support local communities and that there are challenges facing all sectors which are not to be underestimated. However, we believe that we are all stronger when there are opportunities for local people to work together on the issues that matter to us all.

Our vision is for voluntary and community action to have the greatest positive impact on people. This business plan sets out the role we will play in achieving that vision with you. We look forward to working with all of our members, supporters, partners and our local communities to achieve it.

Community Works Team
Updated, December 2016

Background

Our vision: why we exist

We want voluntary and community action to have the greatest positive impact on people.

Our mission: what we do

We create the support and networks that help people, voluntary and community organisations, and businesses to use their time and energy most effectively.

Our strategic aims: what we will achieve

- stronger voluntary and community organisations for now and for the future
- stronger and more diverse base for volunteering and voluntary activity
- partnerships which improve opportunities for local people
- stronger more sustainable organisation

Our values: principles we work within

- we **challenge** oppression and prejudice, and promote diversity
- we're **friendly** and make everyone feel welcomed and supported
- we're **creative** and find new ways of making voluntary and community action effective
- we're an **independent voice** for the voluntary and community sector
- we're **dynamic** and **work with purpose** to get things done and to achieve lasting impact

Our stakeholders: who we connect with

- voluntary and community organisations
- volunteers
- businesses
- public sector
- the public

About us

Voluntary and community action makes our society and local areas better. We want to make sure that it does. And, that it has the greatest positive impact on everyone. To achieve this we create the support and networks that help people and organisations to use their time, expertise and energy effectively.

We give voluntary and community organisations the support and platform they need to make a difference to local lives and issues. This includes helping them with the running of their organisation and ensuring their needs and views are represented. Helping to strengthen their work and amplify their voice.

We help people who want to volunteer their time to find local opportunities that make the most of their abilities and ambitions. Through our volunteer centre we help people find meaningful ways to contribute their time, skills and energy to voluntary and community organisations and other initiatives locally.

A strong society is one where everyone works together. That's why we connect local businesses with voluntary and community organisations so they can both benefit. We also work with the public sector to ensure they connect with local voluntary and community action.

The support and networks we create between organisations and people help to build stronger and fairer local areas for everyone.

Who we are

We are a membership organisation for voluntary and community organisations in Brighton, Hove, Adur and Worthing. We have over 500 members, and the numbers continue to grow. Our members are involved in steering our direction and work, and their needs and feedback constantly inform and shape the support and services we provide.

Being a membership organisation helps to ensure that we're led by those who're most involved in local voluntary and community action, and this ensures that we're best able to respond to and meet the needs of voluntary and community activities.

Our members empower people to take control of their lives. They work with under-represented communities to tackle poverty and disadvantage, address inequalities and improve the environment. We bring their energy and expertise together to achieve change at a local level.

We're led by a representative, skilled and professional board of trustees who delegate operational responsibilities to a dynamic volunteer and staff team.



Our history

We were set up in 2013 following the merger of the Community and Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF), the Volunteer Centre, the Performance Development Service and Skills Exchange.

Our strategic purpose and priorities were developed through the Transforming Local Infrastructure Project (2012-2013). The project assessed the needs of voluntary and community organisations and specified the services which would best meet their needs. It also prioritised the need for us to generate income so we can be sustainable, because in recent years a number of support organisations eg Business Community Partnership and Working Together Project have closed as a result of a lack of funding.

Whilst we are a new organisation, we've built on the experiences and legacies of our founding organisations and the expertise of their members, trustees, volunteers, staff and stakeholders who've worked in the field for many years.

We've been supporting voluntary and community action in Brighton and Hove for over 15 years. And, since 1 July 2016, we've started supporting voluntary and community action in Adur and Worthing too.



*“We would not have as much confidence in what we do without the knowledge that **Community Works** is there behind us with good information, advice, support and a fundamental knowledge and understanding about our sector. We need their services now more than ever.”*

Clair Barnard, The Early Childhood Project

Strategic analysis and direction

External analysis

The current policy climate is fundamentally reshaping relationships with the public sector. Residents are losing services and resources from within their communities whilst reforms to welfare are increasing the need for support. Reduced public finances, shifts in commissioning and new delivery models also require careful navigation by voluntary and community organisations. With less public funding available we, and our membership, have to find other sources and methods of resourcing services and remaining sustainable. This may result in tensions between us and our membership as we find we have to compete with our members for a shrinking pool of resources.

The ability to maximise partnerships with members, businesses and other intermediary organisations requires significant skills and capacity. Managing contracts which may include frontline service delivery will involve a departure from our traditional role and may create tensions. We will prioritise continuing to be mindful of the needs and experience of smaller groups and organisations, and those whose voices are less often heard.

The role and culture of the voluntary and community sector is also being challenged and there is increased pressure on the sector to deliver more services and make greater use of volunteers. We cannot assume all voluntary and community organisations want to pursue these opportunities as it may be inconsistent with their values or aims.



New technologies will be needed to engage people in innovative ways as both the current and next generation of donors, funders, volunteers and supporters migrate to new online platforms. The market for change and development in this area is fast and we must not be outpaced by it, but develop our ability to use technology effectively and support others to do the same. High-quality and targeted marketing and communications will build our profile and increase our supporters which will sustain what we do, and by doing so help to maximise the ambitions of local residents to build better places for everyone.

There are a number of other community, support providers. We recognise the diversity of need among people, communities, groups and organisations, and respect the diversity of ways in which such needs are addressed. We will continue to collaborate with other providers and build on the Prospectus Partnership in Brighton and Hove and work with other providers in Adur and Worthing, to further develop services to address gaps. World events have placed a spotlight on faith, race and challenges around social cohesion, and we will also prioritise working in these areas.

The environment for infrastructure

In 2015, NAVCA and NCVO published a report on the future of local infrastructure¹. It recommended that infrastructure support to the voluntary and community sector be redesigned and creatively resourced to meet the challenges of tomorrow: infrastructure *'needs to be leaner, meaner and more technologically savvy'*. It recommended infrastructure providers:

- make sure they have the necessary skills available to help them navigate change effectively, build strong relationships, enable good management, focus scarce resources, demonstrate their value and support others in doing so

¹ www.navca.org.uk/commission-report

- redesign their 'offer' to focus more on brokering relationships, especially in co-production², and with potential corporate sector partners who can offer pro bono support through volunteering, mentoring, and by being board members
- promote and support other socially-active organisations and groups. Work together in solidarity across local and regional geographies, for best possible support and representation, to influence decision-makers at all levels
- demonstrate their social value, economic contribution and communicate their impact to funders, their local council and other public bodies, local business, and the general public
- insist on their seat at the planning tables which affect their communities and use their influence on them effectively and accountably

Internal analysis

We're just three years old and in a short amount of time we've learned a great deal about who we are, what we do and why. Bringing together different organisations and services has presented us with ongoing change management challenges and priorities, approaches, cultures and systems have needed to be reshaped and redefined. We've explored new ways of working and developed our services in response to need. We've not always got things right the first time, but we've remained driven by our commitment to succeed and to achieve a positive outcome for the groups, organisations and individuals we support.



Our achievements, 2014-2016

- 529 people from 256 organisations benefited from attending our training and learning opportunities and increased their skills and knowledge, in employment practice, governance, monitoring and evaluation, data management, fundraising and bidding, adult safeguarding, equality and inclusion, and volunteer management
- 554 people from 220 organisations benefited from attending our seven members' conferences and benefited from networking, learning and influencing together around income diversification, monitoring and evaluation, equality and diversity, safeguarding partnerships and collaborations, managing change, volunteering
- 45 people developed professionally, through our mentoring programme
- 160 volunteer managers benefited from peer-support and learning opportunities to improve their volunteering programme development by attending our volunteer co-ordinators forum
- 568 advice and support interventions were given to 265 organisations
- 68 organisations received free professional expertise worth £132,333 from our business volunteers
- 31 organisations received help from our volunteers and staff to submit funding bids. So far, 20 of these have been awarded a total of £1,816,328 in funding for services and projects in Sussex
- we supported voluntary organisations to form 24 consortias, and also supported some of these to bid, which successfully brought in £4,992,943 of funding for services and projects in Sussex
- 72 strategies, services and plans were improved by us, and by our members through us eg open spaces strategy, joint strategic needs assessment, council tax reviews, health and wellbeing strategy, youth services review, children's centres review, rough sleeping strategy, financial inclusion strategy
- we were heavily involved in, and supported our members to participate in a number of pieces of work eg fairness commission, council's third sector investment programme, collaboration framework, council budget setting plans, better care integration, transformation of primary care, the new early help hub and multi-agency safeguarding hub, and police commissioning processes
- we co-ordinated the development of a new social value framework

² Co-production means designing and delivering services through an equal and reciprocal relationship between professionals, people using services, their families and their neighbours

- we led updating Taking Account, the social and economic audit of the local voluntary and community sector, and promoted its findings
- we led refreshing the volunteering strategy, and promoted the new vision for volunteering: The Power of Volunteering
- we ran a celebration event to celebrate the impact of volunteering in 2015
- 250 people from across all sectors came together with us to celebrate voluntary and community activity at our Sector Star Awards ceremony in 2014 and again in 2016
- 566 volunteering opportunities were advertised through us and we supported 3,987 applications for a volunteering opportunity to be made with 245 organisations looking for volunteers through us
- 1,125 pieces of tailored support and advice was given to people looking to find the right volunteering opportunity for them
- we worked in partnership with a number of local organisations to increase awareness, understanding and the number of accessible, equitable, high-quality volunteering opportunities available
- we increased our connections with businesses and encouraged more to volunteer their time and provide their expertise through us, and we worked jointly with businesses on a number of projects
- we developed the Sector Support Services Network which brings together local support organisations to work together to shape infrastructure support and to fill gaps in services
- we developed a faith partnership to reach out to and engage with faith organisations and projects
- we supported the development of a network for small groups working with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people
- internally, we prioritised work around equality and diversity. Our staff and volunteers attended equalities awareness training, we benchmarked our membership against census data, we developed and began to implement a plan to reach out to voluntary organisations supporting communities which are less well represented in our membership
- we successfully bid to lead a partnership of five local organisations to develop new services to support adults across Sussex to develop employability skills and to look for work

*“Being a member of **Community Works** has helped us to survive and thrive. Without them and their support we would probably not have sustained our activities.”*

Caroline Jurdon, Homeopathy in the Sussex Community



Needs of voluntary and community organisations

We know from our membership data analyses that there is high demand for:

- particular support eg around finance, governance, monitoring, evaluation, impact measurement, HR, strategic and business planning, fundraising, equalities and diversity, volunteering development
- bespoke advice and support
- workforce development across a wide range of subjects
- space where organisations can come together to learn, network and influence
- support which helps organisations adapt to the changing socio-economic environment
- brokering partnerships and collaborations between organisations, although this is becoming harder to achieve in the current operating context

- support to social start-ups, although we believe other providers are better suited to provide this support
- structures through which the views, knowledge and experience of organisations and their communities is used to improve local areas and lives

It is difficult for us to cater for all these needs and for the diversity of the voluntary and community sector. Demand for support is exponential and our resources are both limited and likely to further reduce in the coming years as public sector spending continues to decrease. Also, the specialist support required by organisations is not always held within our volunteer and staff team, but is held by expert providers which we need to work with in order to ensure that we can offer the best quality service to local organisations.



We've learned that our staff's time can most effectively be spent brokering support from expert volunteers or partner organisations to our members, rather than staff providing support directly. This is consistent with the vision for infrastructure support services set out in the NAVCA report. Our staff will, however, continue to have a close connection to organisations and maintain regular communication and contact, which is necessary to ensure there is a good understanding of organisations needs and how it can be met by brokered support.

Our small staff team of 8.5 FTE is deployed in three small teams: advice and support, representation and partnerships and central services. Each team has worked effectively to establish its role, priorities, approach and to juggle increasing demands and reducing resources. All three teams lack the capacity required to meet both internal and external expectations. This means we need to prioritise only the services we know we deliver really well and the activities that will achieve the greatest impact.

Working with others

Working in partnership is at the heart of our success. We work with other organisations strategically and operationally and with agencies across the public, business, and voluntary and community sectors.

Capacity within our staff team has been invested in developing trust, relationships and a strong, shared understanding amongst our Prospectus Partners and with our business colleagues, in order to achieve a collaborative approach to supporting voluntary and community organisations.



Our relationships with the public sector continue to be full and varied and this business plan sets out many of the opportunities we need to create in this area and in the context of a changing external environment.

We are, however, an independent charity and we are positioned for our membership for whom we're here to support and for whom we're honoured to lead. This means we will work with our members to seek out the opportunities they want to pursue around developing voluntary and community action locally.

Our future approach and commitments

We've reflected on both our successes and the areas we think we need to develop further. In the future:

- our role will be more about brokering support and facilitating and managing the relationships needed for this, rather than providing support directly. To achieve this we'll work closely with partner organisations to ensure effective signposting and referrals. We'll monitor support services and only fill gaps that fit with our goals and expertise, and with the resources we have available

- we'll target support to medium-sized organisations and those who support identified equalities groups particularly those supporting lesbian, gay or bisexual people, trans people, black and minority ethnic people, disabled people, people of faith, children and young people and their families, and groups which connect with chronically-excluded people
- we'll work to ensure that organisations accessing our services and those within our membership reflect the diversity of the local voluntary and community sector and its communities
- we'll expand our membership to strengthen our voice and partnership development role
- we'll require all voluntary and community organisations accessing our services to join as members
- we'll be flexible in our response to emerging needs, and develop support that takes a holistic approach and makes good use of technology
- we'll prioritise supporting voluntary and community organisations around:
 - governance
 - fundraising
 - monitoring and evaluation
 - equalities
 - volunteering
- we'll invest resources to better connect with businesses. And we'll specifically target business volunteers with the skills that meet the needs of the sector eg around fundraising, strategic development, business planning, governance, monitoring and evaluation. This will ensure win-win partnerships for businesses and for voluntary and community organisations
- we'll build our internal volunteering programme by engaging a diverse pool of volunteers that is representative of our membership. This will enable us to support our members in as comprehensive a way as possible as we'll have a range of skills, experience and energy which we can draw upon
- we'll offer a high-quality volunteering experience for those volunteering with us
- we'll reframe our consultancy service so that we are clear about the differences between consultancy opportunities that might raise income for us and those that support our members
- we'll facilitate partnership work within the voluntary and community sector and across all sectors in many diverse ways. We'll operate at many different levels from supporting the sector to have strategic influence, to developing services and enterprises, and supporting partnership delivery. We'll prioritise partnership working that will have the greatest impact on:
 - reducing inequalities
 - bringing about whole system changes
 - increasing partnerships that will help voluntary and community organisations to deliver services
 - generating income and raising funds for the activities we deliver
- we'll provide leadership to the voluntary and community sector. We'll ensure that they're informed about the issues that matter to it and its communities, and that it's able to respond to local agendas
- we'll lead the local volunteering agenda and be a driving force behind the local volunteering strategy. We'll invest in the volunteering champions groups, and ensure our own volunteering development services are quality accredited
- we'll train our workforce to supervise volunteers, secure public service contracts and manage delivery chains. We'll also ensure all our workforce are equalities and inclusive aware
- we'll better celebrate our own impact and share our learning by providing more regular updates on what we do and who it benefits. Our marketing and communications strategy, which is currently being developed, will help raise awareness of us and why our role is so vital
- we'll continue to develop our use of technology to effectively communicate with stakeholders. We'll maintain but refresh our traditional methods such as our email groups and newsletter, increase our use of facebook and twitter, and develop new communication channels such as using Linked In to connect with businesses, consultants and trainers who can support our work

Our strategic aims: what we will achieve

We'll ensure that voluntary and community organisations are run effectively, and that the voluntary and community sector's workforce is able to manage current and future economic and social changes. We'll also make sure that they know where to go to access the support they need.

Strategic Aim 1: Stronger voluntary and community organisations for now and for the future

				Inputs	Activities	Outputs (per yr)	Outcomes	Outcome
Communications and Marketing Strategy	Volunteers and consultants	CRM for logging support needs, support given and impact of support	Support Services Framework, Membership Strategy, Business Engagement Strategy	Recruit business volunteers	Broker one-to-one support and advice	200 support interventions, with 100 of these for priority groups	Increase the number of voluntary and community organisations which are more effective as a result of support received	Stronger voluntary and community organisations, for now and for the future
				Recruit consultants	Broker one-to-one support and advice for priority groups			
				Recruit volunteer bid readers	Provide a read a funding bid service	10 bids read		
					Write policy briefings	4 briefings written		
					Write guidance/resources to help organisations run themselves	4 guides/resources written		
				Recruit trainers and volunteers to deliver workforce development	Provide workforce development opportunities eg training, workshops, action learning sets, conferences	15 opportunities run	Increase the number of voluntary and community sector leaders who have the skills and knowledge needed to run more effective organisations	
						150 attendees at opportunities		
						200 attendees at conferences		
					Provide opportunities for peer-support for trustees/committees	4 governance networks run		
				Recruit volunteer mentors	Provide a mentoring programme	20 people receive 12 hrs each		
Work with prospectus partners	Write VCS support services directory	50 downloads from website	Increase the number of voluntary and community organisations who access support from support providers					
Support the Support Services Network	Refer VCS to other providers/resources	50 referrals made						

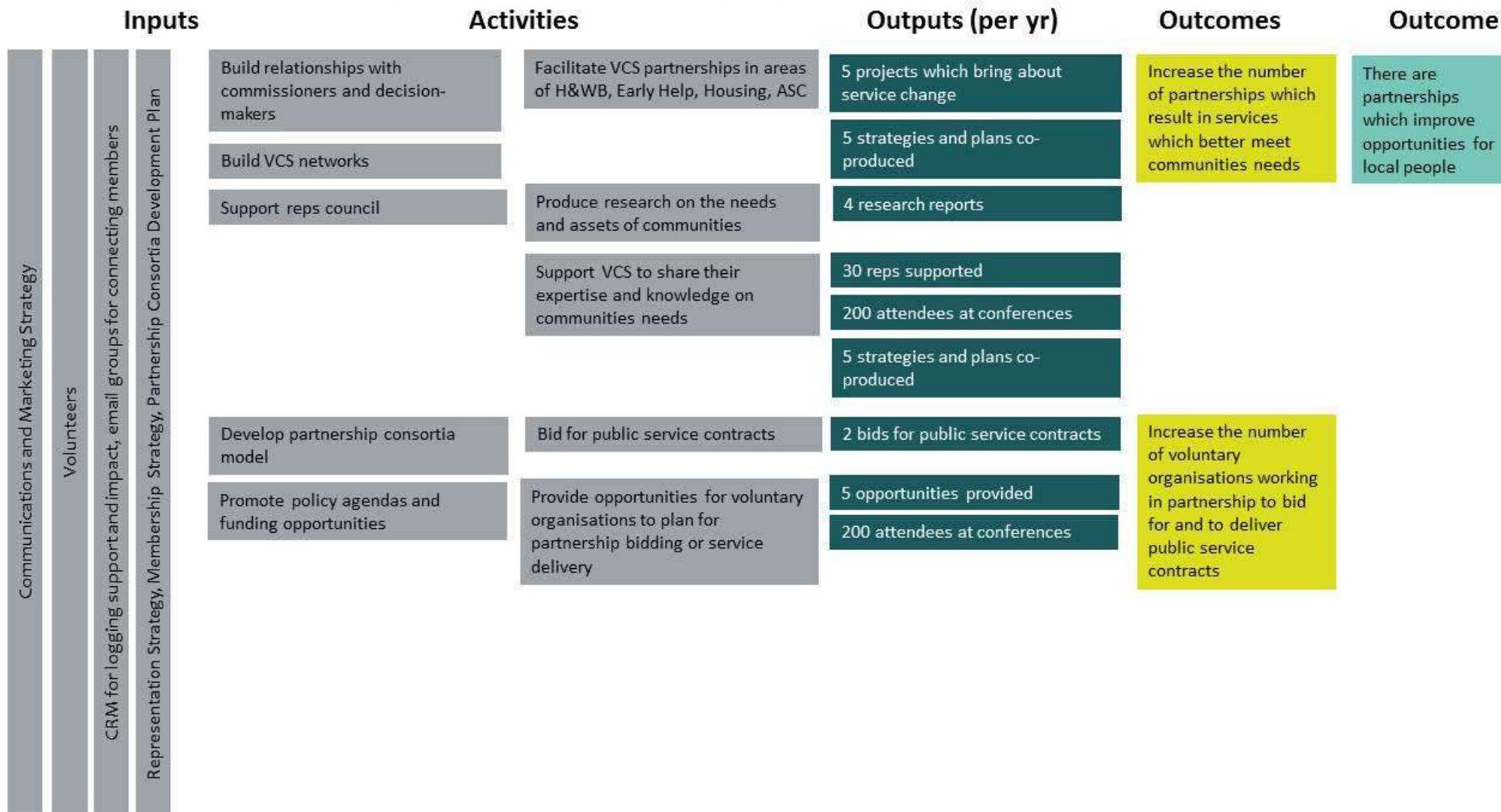
We'll make sure that people wishing to volunteer are able to access a range of fulfilling opportunities, and organisations wishing to involve volunteers are able to find them. We'll also ensure that volunteering programmes run by organisations who involve volunteers are high quality, and that commissioners and decision makers understand the value of volunteering to volunteers, organisations, and to our local areas.

Strategic Aim 2: Stronger and more diverse base for volunteering and voluntary activity

Inputs		Activities	Outputs (per yr)	Outcomes	Outcome	
Communications and Marketing Strategy	Volunteers	Recruit volunteers	Publish cross-sector volunteering opportunities	500 opportunities published and promoted	Increase access to volunteering opportunities locally	Stronger and more diverse base for volunteering and voluntary activity
			500 people supported to apply for an opportunity			
		Support brokerage working group	Provide volunteering brokerage training workshop	15 attendees	Increase the number of organisations providing quality volunteering programmes	
			Broker support and advice for target groups	30 support interventions to target groups		
			Write briefing on volunteer management	1 briefing		
			Maintain good practice guide	100 people access guide		
			Provide volunteer co-ordinators forum meetings	100 attendees		
			Provide an online space for volunteer co-ordinators	100 people part of email group		
			Support volunteer champions group	Refresh local volunteering strategy		
		Run campaigns on volunteering	2 campaigns			
Write case studies on impact of volunteers	6 case studies					
CRM for logging, Do-it website, website	Volunteer centre Quality Assurance Mark, Citywide Volunteering Strategy					

We'll ensure that partnerships make best use of the skills, knowledge and experience of the voluntary and community sector and the communities it supports. We'll do this by ensuring current services better meet communities needs and that more voluntary and community organisations work together to bid for and to deliver public services. Working in partnership to create, nurture and facilitate partnerships will be key to ensuring our success.

Strategic Aim 3: Partnerships which improve opportunities for local people



We'll ensure the internal capacity and sustainability of our organisation by working to diversify our income and to involve more volunteers and consultants in our workforce. We'll particularly seek to increase our connections and work with local businesses. We'll also make sure that more people and organisations across all sectors are aware of us and our role, our services and the impact of our work.

Strategic Aim 4: Stronger more sustainable organisation

		Inputs	Activities	Outputs (per yr)	Outcomes	Outcome		
Communications and Marketing Strategy	CRM for logging activities and impact, website	Business Plan, Fundraising and Income Generation Strategy, Internal Volunteering Strategy, Membership Strategy, Membership Outreach Plan, Business Engagement Strategy, Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, IT Development Plan, Learning and Development Plan	New Business Plan	Develop a Fundraising and Income Generation Strategy	Strategy with income generation targets	Increase the amount of income generated from different resources	Our organisation is stronger and more sustainable	
				Market consultancy service to VCS	£10,000 in unrestricted funding			
				Market consultancy service to public sector	£10,000 in unrestricted funding			
				Develop Membership Strategy	Develop associate membership	£10,000 in unrestricted funding		
				Develop Internal Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan	Recruit volunteers	20 volunteers		Increase the number of volunteers and consultants in our workforce
				Develop Business Engagement Strategy	Set up Business Engagement Steering Group	10 business champions		
					Recruit businesses	20 business volunteers		
				Develop consultants recruitment process	Recruit consultants	15 consultants		
				New Business Plan	Develop Communications and Marketing Strategy	Strategy and implementation plan		Increase awareness of our services and the impact of our work
						450 members receive marketing		
				Develop Membership Strategy	Develop Members Outreach Plan	Outreach Plan		
						50 new members		
				New Business Plan	Develop Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	Framework and implementation plan		
			5 case studies					

Key Performance Indicators

In order to monitor our progress against achieving our strategic aims, our trustees will regularly review our performance in a number of areas:

Our financial performance

- income against budget
- % split between grants, contracts, trading activity

Our operational performance

- number of new members
- total number of new members
- number of organisations supported
- number of interventions provided
- number of consultancy contracts
- value of consultancy contracts
- number of learning and development activities provided
- number of participants in our learning and development activities
- number of volunteer opportunities brokered

Our internal capacity

- % of members saying their group or organisation has developed or improved as a result of our support
- number of volunteers involved in our work
- % of staff, volunteers, and trustees who say that we're a good place to work

External impact

- % of members saying we helped their organisation to develop partnerships
- % of members saying we helped them to develop skills, knowledge and confidence
- % of members saying we effectively represent their views
- % of participants engaged in the routes project

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognised track-record and history as lead infrastructure and volunteering agency in B&H • established relationships and trust with local VCS organisations • continuity and consistency of service delivery • strong partnership working with other VCS support providers • strong links with networks across B&H • positive, constructive relationships with funders • business involvement to date has had a high impact, and member feedback is positive • 16 organisations have accessed consultancy support. It raises our profile. Informal feedback has been good quality, meets our core aims • experienced and committed volunteer and staff team, and trustee board • 70 volunteers in post across a range of roles with additional roles being developed and recruited to • new focus seeks to target resources effectively where we can have greatest impact • targeting support for medium-sized VCS organisations in transition 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • potentially reducing support to small groups and lack of support more broadly by others • approach to business involvement and consultancy is adhoc. It is confusing and things fall between the gaps • we are competing with others for business volunteers and engagement • a proven and well-respected track-record in contract management is yet to be established and contracts yet to be secured • potential loss of relationships with key public sector staff and sector/service user voice, as a result of changing representation/partnerships • lack of capacity to deliver on existing commitments limits ability to plan for and respond quickly to new opportunities • time to support volunteers with additional support needs is limited or absent with a lack of diversity in volunteer base • volunteers recruited faster than development of good practice or policy • lack of current theory of change and full monitoring and evaluation framework
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the Volunteering Strategy to sustain our profile of volunteering • consolidate our learning to date to develop more structured and targeted business relationships which support our members and our internal capacity and help us to become sustainable and less dependent on public sector funding • harness skills from businesses that enable groups and organisations to survive the changing environment • restyle the consultancy service, increase charges proportionate to client and shape and target consultant pool to meet VCS development needs • raise funding for specific bespoke activity related to Health and wellbeing, Early Help, Housing and Adult Social Care • recruit more volunteer reps • generate 10-15% off any contracts which we can secure and manage • prospectus funding from 2016 will have strong emphasis on supporting a VCS in transition which we are well placed to deliver on 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public spending cuts remain a threat. In particular divestment in the VCS and infrastructure. Need to diversify income creates tensions between us and our members • increased pressure to be delivering more for less at the frontline affects our member engagement • consortia may present challenges around ownership as subsidiary independent. There is a need for skills and capacity development in contract management, finance and safeguarding. Profits may not be adequate to re-charge costs • consultancy opportunities are not as significant as anticipated and current contracts dry up • flexibility to provide free consultant support is removed unless specific grant funding is found • development of strategic partnerships with business requires heavy internal resources • other infrastructure organisations could seep into our space and erode our funding • we lose credibility with our membership • public sector expectations not met and therefore commission threatened • there is a loss of voice for the VCS, who are no longer seen as a key player

Our partners: who we will work with

Internal

There are many people within our organisation who help deliver on our vision:

- trustees, who provide strategic leadership and govern our organisation
- volunteers and staff, who manage and deliver services and maintain our systems and processes
- elected representatives, who advocate on behalf of our membership to influence strategy and policy
- consultants, trainers and business volunteers, who provide expert skills, knowledge and bespoke services
- our members, who share their experiences, expertise and work collaboratively with us to achieve change

Our internal policies and documents describe how all our internal stakeholders are involved in our delivery, strategic development and decision-making. We are committed to feeding back to our stakeholders on what we have collectively achieved.

External

Our external stakeholders are vast and varied, on account of the cross-sector and multi-agency nature of our work. They include:

- voluntary and community organisations not in our membership, who we hope will try our services and then, in order that they may benefit the most from our services, join as members
- businesses not yet involved in our work, who we'd like to develop our relationships with so we can develop mutually-beneficial projects and partnerships
- our commissioners within statutory services, who've commissioned us to deliver on particular outcomes
- statutory colleagues in all public sector agencies, who we collaborate with to achieve our strategic aims and to support the delivery of theirs
- funders, who we've developed a strategic relationship with on account of our role, in addition to being a grant recipient, which include Amex, Sussex Community Foundation, Erasmus and the Big Lottery Fund
- other sector support providers involved in our Prospectus Partnership, the Strategic Support Services network, and more widely in Brighton, Hove, Adur and Worthing, whom we work with to improve support services for voluntary and community action
- national partners, who we share learning with and seek advice on good practice and policy from. We are members of NCVO and NAVCA and participants in the IVAR Social Value Programme

Our underpinning plans and strategies

To achieve the aims of our Business Plan we have, or are developing, the following plans and strategies:

- Membership Strategy
- Support Services Framework
- Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
- Communications and Marketing Strategy
- Risk Management Strategy
- Fundraising and Income Generation Strategy
- Business Engagement Strategy
- Partnership Consortia Development Plan
- Internal Volunteering Strategy
- Power of Volunteering Strategy

If you need this information in a different format just get in touch to discuss your needs.

Voluntary and community action makes our society and local areas better. We're here to make sure that it does.

Community Works is a registered charity in England and Wales (no 1087481) and a company limited by guarantee (no 3895635).

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