



Voluntary and Community Sector Consortium Leading on Social and Economic Inclusion

Welcome to this second briefing on activity on Social and Economic Inclusion. As reported in the last newsletter, there is a clear expectation from Europe and the UK Government, that this work will be led by the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in partnership with Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations (VCSOs). In Worcestershire, after initial consultation with some of the VCS, the Worcestershire LEP (WLEP) has supported the setting up of a Shadow Consortium to lead in developing ideas and shape how initiatives can be achieved and delivered effectively.

In moving forwards, we need your help!

Mapping out - We are working to gather a range information and data about different needs across the County. Information held by Worcestershire County Council, WLEP, VCSOs, local Job Centres, NHS and College Providers, Housing Associations and others is proving invaluable. If you have information about any working age groups you consider 'socially and economically isolated', please contact David Irish at the WLEP who is co-ordinating this work and can be contacted on david.irish@wlep.co.uk or 01905 346180.

Identifying existing services - To ensure we deliver maxim benefit for beneficiaries and to ensure we meet European Social Funding rules requiring no duplication of existing provision or replacement of government funded services, we want to build up an understanding about existing services which help people into work and where the gaps exist.

There may be excellent services already but grant funding is coming to an end. If you work to help people into secured paid employment, please let us know by contacting seiconsortium@wlep.co.uk

What do people want? - Too often, new services or changes to existing public or VCSO services take place without any reference to customers and their needs. The Consortium is committed to involving customers and would like your support in collecting 'customer journeys' so that collectively, we have a greater understanding of needs and what service or intervention will make the biggest difference. We would also welcome the chance to come and meet with your client group to tell them about the Consortium and hear their ideas on how it could be invested.

Consortium Consultations

One of the most important tasks for the Shadow Consortium is to come out and talk to VSC and other partners about activities and proposals so that everyone has a chance to contribute and help shape how the Consortium could operate in future. We are kicking off with four consultation events as below and would be happy to attend any other events or meetings hosted by VCSO and other partners' groups if you can help arrange them.

6 th October 2014	8.30 am – 9.30 am	Wyre Forest - TCHG, Foley Grove, DY10 7PT
8 th October 2014	8.30 am – 9.30 am	Worcester (venue to be confirmed)
9 th October 2014	9.00 am – 10.00 am	Redditch Town Hall
13 th October 2014	8.30 am – 9.30 am	Malvern Fortis Living, Festival House, WR14 1GD

If you would like to attend one of these consultation events please email seiconsortium@wlep.co.uk to register. If you would like us to attend your own meetings, please tell us the venue details, who will attend and suggested dates and times so that we can line up a Shadow Board representative to attend.

Consortium News

Why a Consortium?

We believe that while the small and specialist Worcestershire VCSO's are ideally placed to 'reach' those who will benefit from this investment, multiple contracts to multiple suppliers is not a sustainable way to procure services. For beneficiaries, it also creates difficulties as they seek to find simple ways through a maze of different services.

The Consortium seeks to overcome both of these difficulties by creating a framework for 'single service access' to be commissioned but which is delivered by wide variety of connected local and specialist VCS partners rooted in Worcestershire. This makes it easy for Commissioners to invest in Worcestershire VCS and we can create a single pathway for clients without them having to constantly repeat their story or look for the right help to meet their particular needs. The Consortium is also working with some of the bigger VCS organisations, particularly the Housing Associations, who have similar aspirations to improve economic prosperity of those in need but are also large employers and investors in Worcestershire. As a result, they can open up many job and skills opportunities for people that the Consortium will be supporting.

The Consortium also recognises the shared interests and benefits in working with the public and private sector and have invited representatives to join the Consortium's Shadow Board. By working together, we can ensure that European money filters down to multiple VCSO and public sector interests delivering valuable co-ordinated front line support to help residents of Worcestershire.

Why a Shadow Board?

A Shadow Board is needed to start co-ordinating and developing the shared framework of services and offers. Under the Shadow Board's steer, the Consortium, with support from the WLEP, will undertake the following activities over the next few months:

- Build up an understanding of the working age population who could be described as socially and economically isolated. This is not just about long term unemployed but those who may be trapped in a cycle of multiple part time, low paid, temporary jobs.
- Map the existing provision of services for working age people who are economically or socially excluded
- Identify the range of existing and potential activities which will significantly tackle economic exclusion

The Consortium has a strong commitment to involve the widest possible number of VCS and other partners as well as beneficiaries in developing this work and future plans to shape the investment of European money.

Keeping in touch

In the next month the Consortium will be bidding for Lottery Grant to help deliver all this activity. In the meantime, the work outlined above is being supported by voluntary contributions of members of the Shadow Board and others. To ensure it is a success, please help with the tasks set out above.

If you have any questions or would like to help please email seiconsortium@wlep.co.uk

If you have been passed this newsletter from a third party and you would like to be on our mailing list for future information on the Consortium, please email seiconsortium@wlep.co.uk.



Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership