



## **Update on 'Developing the Future of the Third Sector in Torbay'**

**Torbay Strategic Partnership – 16<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

### **1. What are we trying to achieve for our communities?**

#### **1.1 Combined Partnership Improvement Action Plan**

It has been 12 months since this 3 year plan was adopted by the TSP (May 2010; Report TSP/15/10). For Torbay to flourish it needs to be a place where the Voluntary and Community Sector (civil society, previously known as third sector) can thrive.

Recently, Communities Secretary Eric Pickles announced a new 'social responsibility' deal which will ask councils to give greater support to local community groups.

Under the new plan, councils will be expected to:

- Avoid disproportionate reductions in funding to community groups.
- Speak to organisations and the community about continuing services in different or more efficient ways.
- Work with organisations to shape the future of the service.

The successful outcome of this plan will increase the number of productive partnerships that can generate additional funding and capacity and clearly demonstrate a return on public investment. An update is therefore given below with a more detailed review to follow later this year.

The three key themes to be progressed and developed:

#### **1.2 Commissioning Civil Society Organisations**

- a) An understanding of what the commissioning partnerships will finally look like is eagerly awaited by the civil society.
- b) Some consultation with the sector on developing frameworks has commenced e.g. the Integrated Commissioning Framework for Children's services.
- c) Torcom, the Torbay Consortium is still keen to assist with reducing the burden of commissioning by administering small-scale grants.
- d) A 'Civil Society Research Project' (jointly co-ordinated with partners) is nearing completion, however due to the ill health of the consultant and the absence of a permanent CEO at CVA Torbay, this work has not yet been concluded. Some of the findings so far;

- (i) From a sample of civil society organisations surveyed across Torbay, for 100 paid employees contributing to the economy there are 1,100 volunteers engaged in supporting their communities.
  - (ii) There is a ripple effect of the work, not just the immediate identifiable beneficiary. Further impact is seen through families, friends, other organisations and the communities.
  - (iii) The public sector is seen as one of the beneficiaries to these services as the work identified assists with reducing social deprivation and ill health.
  - (iv) A typical response was 'By making people feel they are in a secure place it helped with building self-esteem as well as their skills and confidence to integrate and take part in their community'.
  - (v) On delivering the TSP's Community Plan; 100% of organisations felt they contributed to the aim of a 'stronger community' with 75% or more contributing to all other quadrants. Further analysis on whether the organisations fitted with the Community Plan showed that it was a 'shared vision' but that their operations were not reliant on the plan as they would continue with their activities, even if the plan were to change.
  - (vi) Formal monitoring and reporting is not always required of some organisations. However there was recognition that this would provide them the information needed to operate. It was noted that this was costly and there was also a training need here.
  - (vii) More localised training at a lower cost was needed across the sector rather than having to go to major cities throughout the UK to access it. Subsequently, CVA Torbay will be delivering a training programme this year.
  - (viii) In summary: All respondents felt they contributed to delivering the TSP Community Plan aims. Measuring and demonstrating impacts was widely recognised as an integral part of implementing a management and quality performance framework into their organisation. The need was identified to continue having a 'focus' for civil society organisations in Torbay, through a representative and advocacy body.
- e) CVA Torbay is able to communicate with the sector and has a database in the region of 400 groups. A review of this database is scheduled for August 2011. Through email and the Torcom website, CVA Torbay is in touch with around 200 groups on almost a daily basis.

### 1.3 **Building on the Compact**

- a) The Draft Renewed Torbay Local Compact is in its final stages.
- b) TTIG (Torbay Together Involvement Group) has agreed to act as a monitoring body for accountability.

- c) Compact Champions now need to be identified and trained from both public bodies and the civil society.
- d) Torcom, The Torbay Consortium is a specific group of civil society organisations who have joined together to bid for contracts to deliver services which work for mutual benefit and for the good of the whole community. Torbay Council and Torbay Care Trust both support and send representatives to its meetings.
- e) There are two sub-consortia being (i) Children and Young People (CYP) and (ii) Information, Advice and Advocacy (IAA). CYP is very strong at present and considering its own formal constitution. IAA is re-grouping to inform and work with the new TCT 'Active Living' agenda.
- f) Torbay Council contributed additional financial assistance to CVA Torbay in 2010/11 on specific development projects. The future sustainability and provision of support activities will need to be reviewed in this financial year. There is a current draft service level agreement for 3 years, ending March 2013. This is awaiting sign off by the newly appointed CEO at CVA. The total annual value of the agreement this year is 5k Torbay Council and 10k Torbay Care Trust.
- g) The CYP Consortium has begun developing a Workforce Development Strategy and a Safeguarding Strategy. A multi-agency volunteering strategy will follow with a view to developing and supporting volunteers across Torbay. Currently 18% of Torbay's population is volunteering. This is an increase of more than 3% over the 3 years to 2010.
- h) A Community Fundraiser has been employed for the sector to enable organisations to become 'Fit for Funding'. Part of this remit is to develop a sustainable fundraising strategy for Torbay.
- i) There are strong links between the public bodies and the civil society with events such as;
  - (i) Volunteers Day ~ celebrating volunteering (first Saturday in June).
  - (ii) Attendance at Candidate Café events for potential local councillors.
  - (iii) Contribution to the induction packs for new Councillors.
  - (iv) CVA Torbay will also be at the 'Working with partners' event on 8 June 2011.
  - (v) Torcom, The Torbay Consortium continues to work with Torbay Council and Torbay Care Trust to promote meaningful consultation on important community issues, via both its board and online.
- k) Some aspects of information and training that has been identified and delivered are:
  - (i) 'Outcome Based Accountability': Russell Knight, Torbay Council.
  - (ii) 'Love Your Tender': Children England.
  - (iii) 'Working in a Consortium': IAA Consortium.
  - (iv) 'Torcom Self-assessment': Bette Baldwin.
  - (v) 'Equalities & Diversity'; Colette Bennett, Equality South West.
  - (vi) A training needs analysis has been conducted for Children's Services also through the CYP Consortium.

## 1.4 Ensuring the Successful Development and Delivery

- a) CVA Torbay has just appointed a new CEO. During the previous 10 months of unexpected absence, the Deputy CEO has been acting up. The new CEO will play a large part in undertaking the development and delivery of this plan.
- b) A full review of the actions for all partners will be conducted within the next 3 months and an updated plan proposed after this process.

## 1.5 Future Direction

- a) CVA Torbay is the lead agency of Torcom, The Torbay Consortium. Through the 'Civil Society Research Project' and consultation with the members of Torcom, it has been identified that Torbay needs one strong influential sector lead. Therefore the role of Torcom, The Torbay Consortium will be incorporated as one of the core functions of CVA Torbay.
- b) With this combined strength, CVA Torbay would seek to enhance the provision of its existing services. We would ensure that the strong lead for the sector incorporates:
  - Development
  - Promoting
  - Volunteering
  - Liaison
  - Representation
  - Supporting
  - Provision of information
  - CVA Torbay Consortium (formerly TORCOM)
  - Back Office Functions

## 2. Relationship to Community Plan

2.1 All quadrants of the Community Plan Wheel

## 3. Recommendation for decision

- 3.1 The Torbay Strategic Partnership to review the Combined Partnership Improvement Action Plan over the next 3 months. Updating where necessary, thus committing all agencies represented to move forward in the successful development of the Civil Society in Torbay.
- 3.2 The Partnership supports the decision of the sector to combine the functions of CVA Torbay and Torcom, The Torbay Consortium into one entity.

Contact Officer: Rachel Martin  
Representing: Community & Voluntary Action Torbay (CVA Torbay)  
Telephone no. 01803 212638