

## **Recognising the need for change.**

**The Capacitybuilders Board of Directors, meeting on 4/5 September 2006, received the Durning report and recommendations concerning future options for the delivery of national ChangeUp services to local, sub-regional and regional infrastructure organisations in the voluntary and community sector.**

Chris Pond, Capacitybuilders' Chair, commented shortly following the meeting:

“We welcomed the Durning report on the National Hubs. Her analysis shows that if we are to achieve the vision for a transformed voluntary and community sector by 2014 then there will need to be change in the way national services are delivered to voluntary and community organisations.” He went on to say:

“Such services need to be more responsive to the needs of the sector, more flexible and easily accessible. The report has also made it clear that the sector wants

Capacitybuilders to take a more strategic role and the Board is willing to rise to this challenge.”

**The Board notes that all of the options contained in the report specify a greater role for Capacitybuilders in providing strategic leadership and management for the national element of the ChangeUp programme.**

**The Durning report relates to the national Hubs aspect of the overall programme but the Board re-stated its commitment to an enhanced role in providing leadership for the ChangeUp programme overall and sees the need for creating better links between the work being undertaken at a local, sub-regional level and the national scene.**

***The Durning Report recommendations are re-produced below, with each one interspersed with the Capacitybuilders' Board decisions:***

1. Capacitybuilders should refocus the direction of the national ChangeUp programme so that it aims to do less better, with a stronger focus on users, more integration between the different strands of the programme at national and with other levels, and a stronger emphasis on celebrating good practice within the sector as well as drawing from outside so that the programme has a continuing edge.

**The Board accepts that Capacitybuilders should take a greater role in providing coordination and strategic leadership for the ChangeUp programme as a whole, not just the national element, and agrees that it will take early steps to enhance strategic planning and management, including communications.**

2. It should put more emphasis on leadership of change; and should give a higher profile and stronger direction to the Leadership Centre, through a more direct relationship.

**The Board accepts the call for a higher profile within the work programme for leadership and management from Capacitybuilders.**

3. It should draw up a road map for sustainable delivery of the ChangeUp vision, with targets and milestones, in consultation with the sector.

**The Board accepts this recommendation. The Board acknowledges that this is a major piece of work involving the ChangeUp consortia around the country as well as the national elements of the programme. Given that this work will need to be done in consultation with the sector including with the Board's advisory committee, the Infrastructure National Partnership, and the time that might be required for this to be achieved, the Board has asked for a draft road map to be brought to its meeting on 22 November 2006 and then put out to the sector for formal consultation between 1 December 2006 and 28 February 2007.**

4. It should draw up guidelines on the role of the national programme in delivery to the frontline, in relating to large and small voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) in consultation with the sector.

**The Board accepts this recommendation. The Board believes this important work should be done in parallel with the previous recommendation and expects to be presented with draft guidelines at its meeting on 22 November. It is vital that**

**national services are shown to be valued and used by a wide variety of infrastructure organisations at local, sub-regional or regional level.**

5. It should draw up common frameworks for ChangeUp accounting covering spend and outputs against budgets, to improve accountability and help drive value for money, and for commissioning, drawing on best practice developed by the hubs.

**The Board accepts this recommendation. Cognisant of the heavy workload implied by the recommendations in the Durning report, the Board has requested that a draft common frameworks paper be brought to its meeting on 18 December.**

6. It should take responsibility for commissioning national programmes.

**The Board notes this recommendation. In its debate on 4/5 September the Board rejected the second delivery option – the creation of a full scale development agency for the sector – and continued to discuss the other two options (see background information : Annex 1\*). The Chair of Capacitybuilders has asked the Chief Executive to specify the implications and costs involved in adopting either option. A progress report will be presented at the next meeting of the Board on 6 October and final recommendations at the meeting on 22 November.**

7. It should invite the Finance, Governance, ICT, Performance and Workforce partnerships to continue as centres of excellence and advisory bodies, with small budgets to enable them to identify and promote good practice.

**The Board notes this recommendation. A final response to this recommendation is dependent on the recommendations referred to in the previous section.**

8. It should wind up the Volunteering Hub and commission Volunteering England to deliver a national volunteering programme. **The Board notes this recommendation and will make a decision at its 22 November meeting in line with recommendations 6, 7 and 9.**

9. It should make sure its own team is strong enough to deliver on these recommendations. **The Board accepts this recommendation. The implications for the staffing of Capacitybuilders will be one of the factors covered by the work referred to earlier.**

**ENDS.**

**Capacitybuilders Board of Directors**

**5 September 2006.**

**The full report and associated annex's are available on the Capacitybuilders' website : [www.capacitybuilders.org.uk](http://www.capacitybuilders.org.uk)**

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## **Background information.**

### **Delivery options : As detailed in Durning's final report.**

The main options for future delivery are :

- 1 Improvement of the present system: main national spend through the current hubs to continue, with more cross hub working and some common support services. This is favoured by the hubs and engaged stakeholders. It would minimise disruption early in the life of the programme. It would not resolve the tensions within the hub remits. Capacitybuilders would be able to drive forward priorities only by agreement with the hub partnerships. If the hubs continue, there are options for reconfiguration;
- 2 A central agency, on the model of the Local Government IDeA, which would pull in all the current national support providers. The hubs would be wound up. This could provide a strong centre with flexibility to respond to change, but existing infrastructure organisations would not agree to move their services into such an agency.
- 3 Centralisation of commissioning within Capacitybuilders. The hubs could continue with a more limited role, acting as centres of excellence, responsible for dissemination and exchange of good practice. This would strengthen the centre, and put Capacitybuilders in a position to drive priorities. It is opposed by the Hubs and engaged stakeholders.

### **Review of the National Hubs: Terms of Reference**

As intended, the review took place over July and August so that the Capacitybuilders' Board meeting in early September can consider its recommendations.

The fundamental questions to be asked are:-

- what do local, sub-regional and regional voluntary and community organisations need from a national set of services?
- what is the best way of delivering such services?

Any review should be able to address those fundamental issues. It should also be clear that the first question does not simply imply a “reactive” set of services. There is a role for leadership and example in working with local and regional organisations.

The review is not meant to focus on “achievements so far” as the national hubs are all fairly recent additions to the ChangeUp programme. Rather the review is designed to concentrate on the right configuration for offering national services if indeed they are required.

In this context, the following criteria for the review have been agreed:-

- evidence of the range of the added value that the national hubs may bring to the voluntary and community sector;
- extent and quality of support and training offered to generic infrastructure organisations;
- extent and quality of support offered to sub-sectoral, specialist, functional infrastructure organisations – including responses to the equalities and diversity agenda;
- extent and quality of commissioning – including direct commissioning and competitive tendering;
- evidence of leadership in developing/setting national standards in key areas of capacity building;
- evidence of supporting the development of good practice at the regional and local levels;
- extent and quality of engagement and partnership development work undertaken.