

Welcome to the second edition of the ChangeUp quarterly newsletter – your update on progress, events and good practice.

Since the March edition, much has happened on ChangeUp. On the 22nd March the Home Secretary announced an additional investment of £70m for the ChangeUp programme and plans to set up 'Capacity Builders' a sector-led agency. Added to this, work has continued apace across the programme on a national level with ministerial sign off of the business plans for the following hubs: Governance, Finance, Volunteering, Workforce Development and Performance Improvement. For your information links to the hub business plans can be found at the end of the newsletter.

In this issue we also report on local and regional ChangeUp progress from the South-East and North West.

As always we welcome feedback on contents and structure. We are keen to hear from anyone that would like to publicise their work on progress. Please send your comments or updates to kate.murphy@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Capacity Builders: a stakeholder conversation

ACU facilitated a well received stakeholder event on the 16th June – **Capacity Builders: a stakeholder conversation**. The aims of the event were to:

- ensure learning from ChangeUp informs planning for Capacity Builders;
- identify areas of agreement and disagreement on the implementation of Capacity Builders;
- generate ideas to make Capacity Builders as effective as possible.

The event offered key representatives of government and the voluntary and community sector time to reflect on progress to date, whilst ensuring momentum was maintained. Stakeholders helped to shape thinking about how Capacity Builders can best equip the sector to deliver change on the ground. The day produced stimulating debate, and broad consensus was reached on the role of Capacity Builders.

Recommendations from stakeholders at the event for Capacity Builders were that:

- the agency should have a policy capacity, rather than simply being a fund manager;
- the agency should continue to allow significant local flexibility in the way ChangeUp is delivered within a national framework;
- ChangeUp should continue to be delivered through a commissioning model, which encourages partnership working rather than competitive bids;
- the investment should address gaps and areas of weakness, supporting all areas to come up to a baseline of service delivery for frontline organisations.

Following on from the stakeholder event in June, and further stakeholder liaison - Ministers have agreed to some transitional funding for local and regional elements of the programme for 2006/07 to ensure momentum is maintained around local and regional activity. The criteria for this spend will be developed with Government Offices and stakeholders. Further communication on the timetable for this process will be circulated in August.

For further information please contact kate.murphy@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Capacity Builders Update

On the 22 March 2005 the Home Secretary announced an additional £70m for the Changeup programme for the financial years 06/07 and 07/08 and plans to set-up a sector-led agency, Capacity Builders, by April 2006 to take on fund management of this investment. The setting up and running costs of Capacity Builders will be funded from the £70m investment announced.

Capacity Builders arose in recognition of the challenges of the current ChangeUp programme: the need for a sector focus for the programme and the need for greater co-ordination.

The initial focus for Capacity Builders will be to implement the ChangeUp investment programme during 2006-08. It will be responsible for:

- the overall programme design and programme management of ChangeUp;
- making grant decisions and performance managing grants;
- ensuring the programme is joined-up and co-ordinated;
- mainstreaming diversity into the design and delivery of activities;
- undertaking action learning and longer term evaluation programmes.

65% of spend will continue to be allocated to local and regional initiatives.

Legal Status

Ministers have agreed that Capacity Builders is established as a company limited by guarantee, 100% owned by the Home Office in a way that makes it easy to convert it to a Community Interest Company or a Charity at a later date if the board decide this is appropriate.

Board Structure & Recruitment

Ministers have agreed that the Capacity Builders board will comprise of six board members and one chair. A Chief Executive will lead on the management of Capacity Builders the company and the delivery of the ChangeUp programme.

Recruitment for the six board members, chair and chief executive closed on 11th July. 200 board applications, 25 chair applications and 57 chief executive applications have been received. Panel interviews for the board and chair will be held in September.

Governance Hub gets the go-ahead

Following Ministerial sign off of their business plan, the Governance Hub has begun the recruitment process for a staff team and a chair. Once in place the team will begin to lead and facilitate initiatives which improve the governance of voluntary and community organisations in England at a national, regional and local level. The main functions of the Hub will be:

- to support the sector's hundreds of thousands of trustees and committee members by offering ways to enhance their skills and knowledge
- encourage more people across diverse communities and outside of the sector to become trustees
- Increase the governance capacity of organisations.

By September, not only does the Hub partnership hope to have recruited this permanent staff team, it also aims to have:

- promoted the hub's work at meetings in all nine regions of the country
- promoted the new Code of Governance across the sector
- developed a website
- commissioned a base-line study to measure governance activity

Further information can be found at:

www.governancehub.org.uk

ChangeUp in Greater Manchester

Following the allocation of £1.4m its implementation, Greater Manchester's ChangeUp Action Plan was

launched on May 4th. For the first year of the Plan, eight main strands of work have been prioritised:

1. the development of local consortia and exploration of ways of working more effectively in partnership.
2. the development of a sub-regional network of specialist services.
3. mapping and needs analysis, and trial of a "casework" approach to support provision.
4. joint work on developing more accessibility for BME groups.
5. developing the ICT resources of infrastructure and trialling a circuit riders model for technical support.
6. improvements to premises used by frontline clients to access infrastructure support.
7. joint work with the national hubs on each of the 5 ChangeUp themes.
8. provision of new services to frontline VCS and/or research into feasibility or appropriateness of ideas for improving services.

Implementation of the plan will be staggered through the year but first project briefs have been approved and work is beginning on priorities 1, 5, and 6. The Consortium has also discussed how to work more strategically with funders and is now looking to begin work on priorities 3 and 4 as well how to approach the governance theme in ChangeUp.

For more information, contact www.gmchangeup.net

Local networking? Yes please!

In early June 30 representatives from 13 of the 20 local consortia from the South East came together to discuss progress, swap ideas and learn from each other. GOSE organised the event on behalf of the Regional Consortium who are helping GOSE shape and deliver the ChangeUp programme.

The event allowed GOSE, and regional partners, to hear first hand both concerns and good practice from the ground. Many difficult issues were discussed and key emerging issues included:

- what happens after March 2006 to both funding and consortia;
- the need to be proactive in engaging with frontline organisations;
- better engagement with the statutory sector at a local level and;

- the need for better communication and information on ChangeUp from national and regional levels to local consortia.

As well as being well received, the event identified local consortia representatives both to help regional partners assess capital programme applications and to improve communications. Further network events were requested - particularly at a sub-regional level to cement the cross-consortia links made at this event.

Department of Health - Consistency Project

The ChangeUp investment programme included an allocation of £4m to support the development of specialist voluntary and community sector infrastructure and targeted capacity building in 5 priority public service areas:

- Older people's health and social care
- Correctional Services
- Ethnic Minority employment
- Homeless hostel provision
- Parenting support services

Relevant government departments have now developed programmes of work under each of these areas which have been agreed by Home Office ministers.

The Department of Health are leading on 'Older people's health and social care'. This public service area will support the strategic objectives of Change Up and 'Independence, Wellbeing and Choice' the Green Paper on the future of adult social care in England, the Department of Health propose a range of VCS capacity and infrastructure investment pilots. One of which is the 'Consistency Project'.

The **Consistency Project** aims to develop guidelines and advice for use by NHS and Social Care organisations to facilitate the establishment of volunteering schemes and ensuring consistency of procedures. The guidelines are aimed at:

- facilitating the establishment of volunteering schemes and;
- ensuring consistency of approach and good practice in volunteer management

A copy of the draft guidance for the Consistency Project is available on the Volunteering England website at www.volunteering.org.uk/hsc. Guidance and training packs should be available by December 2006.

PERFORM

As part of its ChangeUp initiative, the Government is focusing energy on both improving the quality and the outcomes of work carried out within the voluntary and community sector. Against this background PERFORM is being developed. PERFORM is an outcomes-focused performance improvement framework for VCS infrastructural organisations, which seeks to supplement the work being done by the many infrastructure organisations who are developing and implementing their own quality and outcomes orientated systems. Steered by a group of VCSIOs and other advisors, under the management of NCVO, the challenge is to develop something which works for all infrastructure organisations at national, regional and local, rural and urban levels, irrespective of their size, focus of their work and client group.

COGS is the independent consultancy organisation which has been contracted to undertake this work, and over the last year has developed the current content of the PERFORM framework following a series of consultation events across England involving a wide range of VCSIOs, individuals and funding agencies.

This current draft framework is now being piloted by twelve infrastructure organisations across the country. The piloting organisations are a mixture of national, regional and local, rural and urban organisations of various sizes supporting both specialist and generalist groups. The piloting process aims to test out and contribute to the further development of PERFORM and explore:

- the extent to which the proposed high level outcomes are relevant and appropriate;
- the accessibility of the framework and ease of use;
- the value and usefulness of the framework as a planning and review process;
- what else might need to be added to the content;
- the ways in which the outcomes can be evidenced.

The current piloting process runs until September 2005 and a multi-stakeholder event will be held in November.

If you would like more information and/or would like to join the email reference group for consultation purposes, please email COGS; mail@cogs.solis.co.uk

Joining up ChangeUp event – 21st September

ACU plan to hold a second 'Joining up ChangeUp' event on 21st September.

Agenda items will focus on the joining up plans at national and regional levels. Further details about this event will be circulated shortly.

Hub Links

Details of business plans for the national hubs of expertise can be referenced from the following websites -

Governance

www.governancehub.org.uk/?About_us:business_plan

Volunteering

www.volunteering.org.uk

Performance Improvement

www.performance-improvement.org.uk

Workforce Development

www.voluntarysectorskills.org.uk

Finance

www.cafonline.org/policy

ICT

www.ictconsortium.org.uk