

When telephoning, please ask for: Viv Nightingale
Direct dial 0115 914 8481
Email vnightingale@rushcliffe.gov.uk

Our reference:
Your reference:
Date: 08 July 2011

To all Members of the Community Development Group

Dear Councillor

A meeting of the COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP will be held on Monday 18 July 2011 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West Bridgford to consider the following items of business.

Yours sincerely

Head of Corporate Services

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Notes of the Meeting held on Monday 18 April 2011 (pages 1 - 4)
4. Cabinet Member Questions
5. Role and Remit

The Deputy Chief Executive (PR) will give a presentation.

6. Leisure Facilities Strategy Member Panel Update

The report of the Head of Partnerships and Performance is attached (pages 5 - 7).

7. Choice Based Lettings Progress Report

The report of the Head of Community Shaping is attached (pages 8 - 14).

8. Review of Service Level Agreements

The report of the Head of Community Shaping is attached (pages 15 - 18).

9. Work Programme

The report of the Deputy Chief Executive (PR) is attached (pages 19 - 20).

Membership

Chairman: Councillor N C Lawrence

Vice-Chairman: Councillor T Combellack

Councillors S J Boote, N K Boughton-Smith, L B Cooper, J E Greenwood,
M G Hemsley, Mrs M M Males, G R Mallender

Meeting Room Guidance

Fire Alarm - Evacuation - in the event of an alarm sounding you should evacuate the building using the nearest fire exit, normally through the Council Chamber. You should assemble in the Nottingham Forest car park adjacent to the main gates.

Toilets - Facilities, including those for the disabled, are located opposite Committee Room 2.

Mobile Phones – For the benefit of other users please ensure that your mobile phone is switched off whilst you are in the meeting.

Microphones - When you are invited to speak please press the button on your microphone, a red light will appear on the stem. Please ensure that you switch this off after you have spoken.



NOTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP
MONDAY 18 APRIL 2011

Held at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Pavilion Road, West
Bridgford

PRESENT:

Councillors Mrs J A Smith (Chairman), M G Hemsley, N C Lawrence
(substitute for Councillor J E Cottee), G R Mallender, J A Stockwood,
Mrs M Stockwood (substitute for Councillor B Tansley) and B Venes

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms G Jenkins Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

OFFICERS PRESENT:

C McGraw Head of Community Shaping
V Nightingale Senior Member Support Officer
P Phillips Environmental Sustainability Officer
P Randle Deputy Chief Executive (PR)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Councillors S J Boote, J E Cottee, T W Holt and B Tansley

The Chairman, on behalf of the Group, wished Councillor Holt a speedy recovery.

19. Declarations of Interest

Councillor J A Stockwood declared that he was the Council's representative on the Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy Implementation Group
Councillor B Venes declared that she was the Council's representative on the Rushcliffe Barn Owl Group.

20. Notes of the Previous Meeting

The notes of the meeting held on Monday 24 January 2011 were accepted as a true record.

With regard to the Council's application to be a vanguard authority Members were informed that the Council had been included within the second tranche of the Government's initiative, which had now been renamed Frontrunner. Funding of £20,000 had been allocated and work would be on going with Keyworth residents. Officers stated that they would also consider the work of other local authorities participating in the initiative.

In respect of the review undertaken by the Community and Local Government advisors on the Council's homelessness service Members were informed that the full report had just been received. This contained an Action Plan and officers would give the Group a further update at the next meeting.

At the previous meeting Members had requested further information on the Credit Union. The Head of Community Shaping explained that there had been limited success in Rushcliffe during 2010. She also explained that there were other similar initiatives and officers were considering which were felt to be good practice to take forward.

21. **Cabinet Member Questions**

There were none received.

22. **Nature Conservation**

The Head of Community Shaping presented a report outlining the Council's approach to nature conservation and its partnership with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. Members were informed that a strategy had been developed in partnership with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, Nottinghamshire County Council, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group - Nottinghamshire, Natural England - East Midlands, and Rushcliffe Community Partnership. The strategy had been developed to protect and enhance Rushcliffe's existing wildlife interest whilst also seeking to establish new links to allow the spread of plants and animals across the Borough. To achieve the targets set out in the Strategy the Borough Council had a service level agreement with Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust and this had enabled

- targeted work to be carried out,
- increased people's understanding of the natural environment and
- increased participation in conservation activities, especially by volunteers ie 'friends' groups.

Members were informed that for nature conservation there were 360 hectares of land, which included 8 sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) and 211 sites of importance for nature conservation (SINCs). Support for the management of these areas was included within the service level agreement and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust assisted 'friends' groups and other interested parties, including local farmland 'bed & breakfast for birds' sites.

With regard to education the Group was informed that, in the last year officers from Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust had worked with schools, nurseries and brownie & guide groups. Also six schools had received detailed advice on improving their school grounds, these had formed links to other initiatives eg Eco Schools and Forest Schools. The Trust also ran a Rushcliffe Watch Group at Rushcliffe Country Park, which was part of the Trust's junior section.

The Head of Community Shaping informed the Group of the Action Plan for the next five years, including key areas to:

- Promote an appropriate standard of management on nature reserves in order to maintain and enhance biodiversity- this includes a review of additional areas to be promoted as nature reserves in the future

- Identify additional Blue Butterfly sites in Rushcliffe
- Promote wildlife friendly management of SINIC sites outside of nature reserves
- Promote action for wildlife amongst Parish Council's and landowners
- Promote the creation of a natural history group in Rushcliffe
- Develop a green infrastructure directory
- Explore and Develop options for Landscape Scale Conservation in Rushcliffe

Councillor Venes was concerned about a development by a disused railway line designated as a SINIC, which had not had any remedial work from the builders. The Environmental Sustainability Officer stated that part of the site at Ruddington had been designated for wildlife and officers were aware of this issue.

Members felt that there had been a considerable amount of valuable work undertaken to preserve the countryside and natural habitat. Following a question the Environmental Sustainability Officer explained that Nottingham City Council provided a portal for people to view where sites were. Also he could provide information for Members on a ward basis. If it was felt that sites had not been included Members could inform the Environmental Sustainability Officer or the Biological Records Office at Nottingham City Council.

With regard to protecting hedgerows Ms Jenkins explained that if they were deemed to be species rich or of a historic nature local authorities would not permit their removal, however it was difficult to influence private landowners. She stated that the Trust produced a management leaflet which was available to all landowners.

Members AGREED that:

- a) the work that had been undertaken to support nature conservation was successful and offered value for money
- b) the approach should be supported in the future.

23. **Annual Review of Work Programme**

The Group discussed their annual report. It was felt that the presentation by representatives from Cropwell Bishop in respect of their village plan had been very informative. Members agreed that the village had been rejuvenated.

It was AGREED that the Group approved the report and it should be forwarded on to Council for consideration.

24. **Work Programme**

The Group included an update on the Choice Based Lettings scheme. The Deputy Chief Executive (PR) explained that the Government had introduced affordable rents, which was a model for affordable housing. It was felt that the

Group should consider the Council's strategy before it was presented to Cabinet. Other issues included:

- Items arising from the Council's 4-year plan
- The Localism Bill
- Service Level Agreements for Rushcliffe Council for Voluntary Service and Rural Community Action Network.

Members also felt that the Group should consider housing needs and the types of housing provided, although it might be more appropriate for this to be considered by the Local Development Framework Group.

Members were informed that the work programme items were considered by the Chairmen and Vice Chairmen's meeting to ensure that issues were scrutinised by the most appropriate group.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Action Sheet

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP - MONDAY 18 APRIL 2011

Minute Number	Actions	Officer Responsible
20. Notes of the Previous Meeting	Officers to give the Group a further update at the next meeting.in respect of the review undertaken by the Community and Local Government advisors on the Council's homelessness service	Head of Community Shaping



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

18 JULY 2011

LEISURE FACILITIES STRATEGY - MEMBER PANEL UPDATE

6

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE

Summary

1. Cabinet requested the Community Development Scrutiny Group (CDSG) to undertake a review of the Leisure Facilities Strategy. To perform this work the CDSG formed a Member Panel. A number of tasks were identified by the CDSG for investigation by the Member Panel and these have now been completed. The findings for each of the areas investigated are included below.
2. Having concluded the investigative element of the review the challenge is now to translate the findings into a strategic policy that will guide the development of leisure facilities in the future. The Member Panel has developed an understanding of the complexities and breadth of services and activities involved within the leisure portfolio which should be used to help form the new strategy.
3. The development of the strategy will require a series of decisions requiring Cabinet approval. For this reason it is suggested that a Cabinet led group may be the best way of taking this work forward.

Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that

1. Cabinet be requested to consider setting up a Cabinet led Member Group to develop and finalise the leisure facilities strategy and
2. subject to Cabinet agreeing to set up a Member Group, the Leisure Facilities Strategy Member panel be closed down.

Details of the Panel's Findings

Joint Use

4. The position in respect of the future funding of joint use facilities was agreed by Cabinet in January 2011.
 - The changing status of schools, to Foundation and Academy, is reflected in new joint use agreements. These new agreements are similar to those they replace, protecting community access to facilities and offering the same termination clauses (2 years notice by either party).

- The new agreements offer, for the first time, the opportunity to include the individual operational issues and arrangements that are specific to each site has within the agreements.

Community and Voluntary Enterprise Arrangements

5. Members considered a report detailing the history and growth of such management arrangements across a broad range of facilities and businesses. Whilst there has been no attempt to identify which facilities in Rushcliffe could benefit from this type of management arrangement it serves as a potential option to be considered in the future for the management of smaller facilities.

Audit of Current Provision

6. The panel hopes to establish a set of minimum standards for the level of leisure provision across the Borough. An essential tool in identifying the current level of provision and, any gaps in provision, has been the undertaking of a comprehensive audit of leisure facilities - indoor, outdoor, open space and play areas. The evidence arising from this audit can be used in developing evidence for the Community Infrastructure Levy (set to replace section 106 agreements in 2014); securing section 106 contributions in the interim period and to support funding applications by Town and Parish Councils in the future. Although Rushcliffe Borough Council is only directly responsible for the provision of play facilities and community leisure within the West Bridgford Special Expense area, members have identified that one of the key issues they wish to address through the new strategy is to provide an equal standard of play facilities across the whole Borough.

Housing Growth Issues

7. Further work to determine the impact on leisure provision will be necessary as the situation in respect to housing growth becomes clearer. As identified in the previous section there will be a need to present a clear and robust case for contributions to leisure provision arising from new developments within the Community Infrastructure Levy documentation. The completion and adoption of the Councils Development Plan will be essential in guiding the future strategy.

Future Trends for Leisure

8. The panel has confirmed that in the future facilities should be aimed at the 'community level' of activity and should not be aimed at providing for elite level sport such as the gymnastics centre at Rushcliffe leisure centre.
9. The Member Panel has heard how Ashfield District Council has rationalised its leisure centre provision, closing old joint use centres and building a new leisure centre in the last few years, resulting in increased usage and lower operational costs.
10. Parkwood Leisure also made a presentation to the Panel on developments across its' portfolio which has seen either new facilities built or existing facilities adapted to address the challenge of meeting future trends for leisure.

The accepted consensus on future trends is that swimming, and particularly learning to swim, will remain in high demand although no growth is being seen: health and fitness is very strong and accounts for over 30% of income generated: exercise classes continue to grow and become more varied with the current trend being for dance type classes.

11. Participation in outdoor activities is very popular and is predicted to remain so both nationally and within Rushcliffe, with three of the top five sports or recreational activities being outdoor based (walking, cycling & football). Source: National Survey of Culture, Leisure and Sport 2009
12. Any new facilities or adaptations of existing facilities should provide spaces that are flexible and versatile offering a multi-purpose solution to accommodating a variety of uses.

Next Steps

13. Having concluded the investigation works the next steps in finalising the new strategy will be to determine what, where and how many facilities should be provided; what management arrangements are appropriate and what level of capital spend and revenue support will be necessary to deliver the strategy.
14. The development of the strategy will require a series of decisions requiring Cabinet approval. For this reason it is suggested that it may be more appropriate for the Member Panel to be replaced with a Cabinet led Member Group.

Financial Comments

There are no direct financial implications at this time.
--

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act
--

Full account of the issues affecting crime and disorder will be considered in developing the strategy.
--

Diversity

The Leisure Facilities Strategy will be subjected to a full equality impact assessment before implementation.

Background Papers Available for Inspection:

Interim reports to the Community Development Scrutiny Group
Reports to the Leisure Facilities Strategy Member Panel



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

18 JULY 2011

CHOICE BASED LETTINGS PROGRESS REPORT 2011

7

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY SHAPING

Summary

The report provides Members of the Community Development Scrutiny Group with an update on the implementation and operation of the Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) during the past three months. The report also provides an overview and some analysis of the level of housing need in the sub-region and how Homesearch CBL is managing to address this need.

Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that: Members of the Community Development Group consider the report on the operation of CBL and make any additional recommendations for its further development.

Background

1. Central Government set a target for all local authorities to have adopted a Choice Based Lettings Scheme by 2010.
2. On 28 March 2011 'Homesearch', the sub-regional CBL Scheme, went live in three local authority areas: Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and Gedling. Full details on the CBL scheme were provided in a Cabinet report of 18 May 2010.
3. Homesearch provides applicants for social housing with an opportunity to bid for vacant social rented properties that become available in the sub-region. The scheme provides applicants with a greater understanding of the way homes are allocated which helps to give a more realistic understanding of the likelihood of them being rehoused in the Rushcliffe area.
4. 14 Registered Providers (RPs), also known as Registered Social Landlords, are taking part in Homesearch. The benefits of the sub-regional scheme are that it provides customers with greater consistency and increased opportunities, improved choice and mobility through the use of a common allocations policy and housing register application form. The scheme also provides additional benefits to landlords through improved management reporting information enabling them to manage their stock effectively.

Housing Register and Allocations Policy

5. Prior to the implementation of CBL each local authority administered their own housing register. Since the implementation of CBL each of the three authorities use the same IT provider (Abitas) and share one central housing register. All applicants are assessed and banded in line with the common

6. New applicants joining the housing register are sent a 'Homesearch Scheme Guide' and 'How to Bid Scheme Guide for Properties'. Properties are advertised on a fortnightly basis on the Homesearch website (www.homesearch.org.uk) and a newsletter is distributed at local offices, libraries and support providers' accommodation.
7. At the end of the two weekly cycle, the landlords analyse the 'bids' received and allocate each property following a prioritisation and selection process in accordance with the common Allocations Policy. Properties are offered to the applicant in the highest band, who has been registered the longest and who has bid for the property. This is done automatically by the system creating a prioritised "shortlist" for each property. A staff member then provisionally offers the tenancy to the applicant at the top of the shortlist, unless there is a reason to bypass them and move to the next applicant. The results of the bidding activity of each property advertised is then published on the website and in the newsletter at the end of the fortnightly cycle so that applicants can see how many other people bid, what priority band and waiting time the successful applicant had, and thus gauge their chances of success with similar bids and assess their housing options accordingly.

Banding Priority of Applicants

8. The four bands on the Homesearch scheme apply as follows:
 - **Band 1 – Urgent Priority** (urgent social priority, urgent property factors, severe overcrowding, severe violence/threats of violence, under occupation of a social housing property with two or more spare bedrooms, urgent temporary accommodation move)
 - **Band 2 – High Priority** (homelessness/homelessness prevention, urgent management cases, 16/17 year olds leaving care, overcrowding, under occupation by one spare bedroom)
 - **Band 3 – Moderate Priority** (lodgers with dependant children, moderate social need, intentionally homeless, general overcrowding, families in flats)
 - **Band 4 – Low Priority** (anyone who is eligible for rehousing but does not meet Band 1-3 criteria, including, lodgers without dependent children, social housing and private tenants wishing to move, owner occupiers)
9. Applicants are prioritised in each band according to the date that they moved into that band, irrespective of the reason they have that priority. This means that an applicant in Band 4 with a local connection to Rushcliffe Borough Council would be considered for a property which became available in Rushcliffe ahead of Band 1 priority applicant with a local connection to Broxtowe or Gedling Borough Councils.
10. Each applicant can place a maximum of 3 bids per fortnightly advertising cycle, withdrawing and re-bidding as many times as they choose to having regard to the other expressions of interest.

Bidding Activity

11. By 29 June 2011, 13,006 individual bids had been received from 1,878 different applicants (including those that were later withdrawn). The partnership has undertaken a lot of work to promote the CBL scheme and encourage engagement. Each applicant who had not placed a bid since the launch has been contacted to establish why and given more information to assist them to engage where needed.

Bidding Methods

12. Prior to the launch of CBL, the partnership undertook extensive consultation with vulnerable stakeholders to ensure they were not disadvantaged by the introduction of CBL. The partnership has also undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment, taking into account performance data and customer experiences of the system.
13. The web is overwhelmingly the most popular method of bidding with 95% of bids placed this way. Of the other methods, 18 unique customers have placed bids using the telephone system and 119 by text message. Although these numbers are fairly small, they are important as they allow customers without internet access to take part in Homesearch.

Method	Number of bids
Website	12,392
Text message	394
Phone	85
Autobid	135
Total	13,006

14. Vulnerable customers can nominate a proxy to bid on their behalf, and staff can also set up auto-bidding. This means that if they have not used their three bids at the end of a letting cycle, the system places bids on any properties that they are eligible for in an area they have chosen. 17 active applicants currently have auto-bidding enabled (14 in Gedling and 3 in Rushcliffe).
15. Fortnightly newsletters advertising vacant properties are distributed at various locations across the three Boroughs. Customer feedback has shown that, although customers are aware that these methods exist, they prefer using the website.

Lettings Performance

16. Implementation of CBL has resulted in significant changes in operational working practices for all officers involved. For landlords, the average time that it takes to relet a vacant home is a crucial performance indicator. The partnership is keen to know what effects, if any, CBL has on void performance and average times spent in temporary accommodation for applicants homeless/threatened with homelessness and will continue to monitor this at regular partnership meetings.
17. It is too early to draw out any conclusions in relation to lettings performance and void periods, however, we are currently working with RPs to develop procedures to ensure processes are transparent and performance targets are

monitored. To reduce void periods, the partnership has agreed to reduce the current fortnightly bid cycle to a weekly bid cycle from 4 August 2011.

Waiting List

18. Waiting list times are very difficult to predict and it is considered too early to draw any meaningful conclusions from the data provided. The partnership will continue to monitor performance in this area.

Conclusion

19. The Homesearch CBL scheme has been successfully implemented across the sub-region. People are able to see the number of properties that are available and make informed choices about housing options available to them.
20. Early performance data indicates the scheme is meeting its overall objectives, however it is too early to draw meaningful conclusion from all of the data given the relatively short period since its launch. An annual report on the progress of CBL will be presented to Community Development Scrutiny Group in March 2012.

Financial Comments

The current budget includes provision for the ongoing revenue costs of the scheme, including the additional part time post. The budget also assumes that RBC will receive £12,000 contribution from Spirita.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act

The CBL Scheme and Housing Allocations Policy aim to develop a more transparent and equitable housing allocation process to assist in creating balanced communities and delivering against our Section 17 obligations in the reduction of crime and anti-social behaviour.

Diversity

The CBL Scheme has undergone an Equalities Impact Assessment and the outcomes and actions included in the scheme implementation and final policy. Ongoing customer consultation will assist in ensuring the scheme continues to meet the needs of various community individuals and groups.

Background Papers Available for Inspection: Nil

Housing Register**Table 1 - Numbers in Each Band by Authority**

Band	Broxtowe		Gedling		Rushcliffe		Total	
1	36	2%	39	3%	34	4%	109	3%
2	138	9%	163	11%	84	9%	305	9%
3	449	29%	307	21%	216	24%	972	25%
4	915	60%	929	65%	574	63%	2418	63%
Total	1538		1438		908		3884	

Count of all active applications at 28 June 2011. Two applications had no band – these are not included.

1. All partners have similar proportions of applicants in all four bands. This in part will be reflected due to applicants being prioritised within bands according to local connection and therefore preventing a disproportionate number of lets in any one particular area. This also demonstrates that the common Allocations Policy is being applied consistently
2. Bands 1 & 2 include applicants with an urgent need to move and those households homeless or threatened with homelessness where the authority would have a statutory duty to rehouse. The majority of applicants fall within Bands 3 and 4 which reflect applicants with moderate or low needs. This is to be expected, particularly in Band 4, which includes applicants considered to be adequately housed. Some applicants in this Band may be treating Homesearch as a 'safety net' without any immediate desire or need to move
3. It is too early to draw any meaningful conclusions in relation to banding trends, however, the new bands appear to reflect and prioritise applicants with more urgent housing needs compared to previous banding categories where a higher number of applicants were registered within one Band (equivalent now to Bands 2 and 3)

Bidding Activity

4. The partners have undertaken work internally to target homeless households and those threatened with homelessness to engage with bidding. In addition there will be a revision to the Allocations Policy to reduce the time required for Band 2 applicants considered to be statutory homeless to bid actively from 12 weeks to 6 weeks.

Table 2 - Bidding Activity by Band

% of Bidding Activity by Band	Broxtowe		Gedling		Rushcliffe		Total % of Bidding Activity Across all Partners	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Band 1	47%	53%	67%	33%	35%	65%	47%	50%
Band 2	58%	42%	71%	29%	76%	24%	58%	33%
Band 3	44%	56%	54%	46%	58%	42%	44%	50%
Band 4	30%	70%	33%	67%	37%	63%	30%	67%
Total	37%	63%	42%	58%	45%	55%	41%	59%

Report run, 29 June 2011

5. Table 2 represents the percentage of the bidding activity broken down by band. For example, the RBC figures show that out of all the applicants on Band 1 35% were actively bidding and 65% were non bidders. Two possible factors which explain why high band applicants have not been actively bidding are a lack of suitable properties or vulnerable groups not being able to access the system.
6. Measures are taken to encourage and support the non bidders to access the system. This has been done by writing to all Band 1 & Band 2 applicants offering support. In addition regular contact is kept with the supporting agencies, including First Contact, Sure Start, Women's Aid etc, to support the vulnerable groups.
7. The partnership will continue to monitor bidding activity to establish if factors such as a mis-match of property types and sizes are a factor in applicants bidding activity, or if households under-occupying need further encouragement to release family homes.

Lettings Performance

Table 3 – Lettings Performance

	Broxtowe		Gedling		Rushcliffe		All Authorities	
Band 1	13	8.4%	17	28.3%	13	25.5%	43	16.2%
Band 2	51	33.1%	26	43.3%	14	27.5%	91	34.3%
Band 3	66	42.9%	9	15.0%	14	27.5%	89	33.6%
Band 4	24	15.6%	8	13.3%	10	19.6%	42	15.8%
All Bands	154		60		51		265	

Report 106, run 29 June 2011

8. Homesearch has advertised 648 properties in the first three months of operation. (The discrepancy between this number and the 265 households housed consists of properties being advertised in the current letting cycle, properties where the shortlist is being processed by the landlord, properties with a tenant lined up but which are not yet ready for occupation and properties that have been let but where the landlord has not yet updated Homesearch.)
9. A letting is recorded when a household confirm they accept an offer. This is different from the tenancy start date. A let status may change if an applicant decides not to sign from or move into a property. The table above shows that the majority of lettings and those housed for all partners are from Bands 2 and 3.

Table 4 – Properties Let by Types and Sizes

	Broxtowe	Gedling	Rushcliffe	All authorities
Bedsit	5	4	1	10
2 bed maisonette	1	1	2	4
1 bed bungalow	13	1	3	17
2 bed bungalow	1	2	8	11
All bungalows	14	3	11	28
1 bed flat	58	15	18	91
2 bed flat	45	11	11	67
3 bed flat	0	1	0	1
All flats	103	27	29	159
2 bed house	14	8	4	26
3 bed house	26	8	8	42
4 bed house	1	0	0	1
All houses	41	16	12	69
Total	164	51	55	270

Report 106, run 4 July 2011, with Property CRM State set to Offer Accepted *and* Tenancy Commenced.

10. This data along with average bids can be analysed by landlords to give an understanding of what types of property are required. This can also provide a better understanding of desirable/non-desirable areas and allow landlords to resolve and issues that may be causing undesirability.

Cross Partner Lettings

Table 5 – Number of Applicants Moving to a Different Local Authority

		Applicant Registered with			
		Broxtowe	Gedling	Rushcliffe	Total
Property located in	Broxtowe	153	5	4	162
	Gedling	1	49	1	51
	Rushcliffe	0	6	46	52
	Total	154	60	51	265

11. Of the total properties advertised by partners 6% have been let to cross border applicants. Eligible applicants from any of the three Boroughs can bid for properties advertised on Homesearch, however, priority will be given to applicants with a local connection to the authority the property is located in except in circumstances such as applicants fleeing domestic violence.

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY SHAPING

Summary

This report seeks Members' views as part of a review of how we achieve service delivery through working with the voluntary sector, in particular Rushcliffe Community Voluntary Service (RCVS) and Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire (RCAN). The Borough Council provides funding to RCVS and RCAN to deliver services in the Borough on the Council's behalf. This funding arrangement is set out in Service Level Agreement's (SLAs) with both organisations. The SLAs have run for three years from 2008-2011. As part of the Four Year Plan a review of the SLAs is now underway to ensure the needs of the community are being met and that Council priorities are funded appropriately.

Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that Members have regard to the Council's priorities and comment on the services that the voluntary and community sector could provide to meet the needs of residents in Rushcliffe.

Background

1. RCVS works with community and voluntary groups within Rushcliffe to:
 - support and develop voluntary and community activities throughout Rushcliffe, providing training, advice, guidance and support and information on accessing funding
 - represent the voluntary sector and ensure they have a voice when strategic decisions are taken
 - engage fully in strategic partnerships, such as the Rushcliffe Community Partnership
 - provide opportunities for organisations from all sectors to meet and exchange views and ideas

2. RCAN works with rural communities and groups to provide a range of services including:
 - Community planning, such as parish plans and 'planning for real'
 - Working with groups to bring about real changes, such as new village halls, new affordable housing etc
 - Advice on accessing funding
 - Enabling rural communities to access advice on a wide range of issues such as services and learning
 - Undertaking research and providing information and advice on all aspects of rural living.

3. In 2008, Rushcliffe Borough Council entered into a Service Level Agreement with RCVS and RCAN to deliver services on the Council's behalf over a three year period (2008-2011). The Borough Council agreed to pay RCVS £131,042 and RCAN £126,317 respectively. The service level agreement sets out the services to be provided (see paragraphs 4-7), and the expected activity outputs or outcomes.
4. The SLA with RCVS includes:
 - Promoting and facilitating volunteering across Rushcliffe
 - Identifying funding streams and assisting groups in accessing them
 - Assisting the Council in delivering the diversity and inclusion agenda, such as the Community Cohesion Network
 - Promoting and managing the Voluntary Transport Scheme
 - Assisting with the delivery of the Rushcliffe Community Strategy
 - Communication with community organisations.
6. RCVS relies almost entirely on public sector grants. The organisation has recently had its funding cut significantly from Nottinghamshire County Council from £50,000 to £20,000 and has therefore cut its budget and staff hours accordingly. Any further reduction in its budget could significantly jeopardise its future. RCVS is a member of the South Nottinghamshire Alliance, a consortium of other Community and Voluntary Organisations including RCAN. The Alliance is currently working to identify opportunities for future joint working to minimise costs.
7. The SLA with RCAN funds a dedicated rural officer in Rushcliffe to deliver specified services including:
 - Providing advice and assistance to rural groups, including town and parish council's on behalf of the Borough Council in relation to parish planning
 - Providing an efficient grant finding scheme
 - Providing input and assistance with the Local Strategic Partnership
8. The two key benefits for the Council and Rushcliffe residents of working with RCAN have been:
 - The access to a wide knowledge base in terms of developing parish plans
 - Access to grantfinder and a network of grant information and advice which over the past three years has generated over £1m in funding to benefit rural communities in Rushcliffe.
9. As part of the Council's Four Year Plan to address budget savings required and to improve services to customers the Council has undertaken to review these Service Level Agreements. In addition, the Council's Rural Officer (funded through the SLA with RCAN) is due to retire on 31 July 2011, this therefore presents an ideal opportunity to review all opportunities for the future.

Policy Framework

10. As part of the Big Society agenda, central government is increasingly looking to the voluntary sector to provide services in the future. This may be through volunteering where low level support is provided, such as 'activity friends' or the Voluntary Transport Scheme or it may be commissioned services, such as the Whatton Prison Visitor Centre (previously funded by Nottinghamshire County Council.)
11. The Localism Bill seeks to give communities and therefore voluntary groups new powers to deliver local services for themselves. Many community and voluntary groups do not have the infrastructure to support the work they wish to undertake, such as assistance with administration, legal advice, procurement advice, etc. RCVS fulfil a role in ensuring these groups are 'fit for purpose' supporting their development and the delivery of services. Additionally, RCAN have fulfilled an important role in relation to empowering communities to act for themselves through advice and assistance and this role could potentially be enhanced in the future through the Localism Bill.
12. The Localism Bill will also bring forward proposed changes to the way the planning policy framework is developed. In the future, we will need to consider how community led plans (or parish plans) link into, or may potentially be replaced by, Neighbourhood Plans. At present, RCAN deliver parish plans in partnership with community groups and there would therefore need to be consideration as to what their role would be in the future.

Outcomes

13. The key services delivered by RCAN in the past three years include:
 - the delivery of 8 parish plans and a further 4 plans in development
 - £1.6m accessed in funding to support a wide range of projects across our rural communities
 - support provided for the development of 1 community shop, 9 play areas, 4 new developments of affordable homes, and a range of allotments
 - support provided to setting up a range of community groups, such as local choirs, walking groups, etc
 - a range of training services provided including Vetting and Barring, setting up community groups, play ground inspections etc
 - supporting 12 Town and Parish Forum's and 3 Town and Parish Conference's
14. The key services delivered by RCVS in the past three years include:
 - setting up and facilitating a range of voluntary and community groups across the Borough including providing advice and training, assisting them in accessing funding, etc
 - delivering the First Contact Signposting scheme
 - delivering the Housing Choices project
 - delivering the Community Cohesion Network
 - working with Activity Friends
 - delivering Rushcliffe Voluntary Transport Scheme

- delivering the visitor centre at HMP Whatton
 - delivering the Community Outreach Advisor Service
 - working in partnership with Principia
 - working as a key partner in the Community Partnership to deliver the partnership priorities
15. In the future both partners will need to work more closely together to align their services and avoid any potential duplication. With the advent of the Localism Bill, it is predicted there will be a growth in the social sector and RCAN and RCVS will have a role to play. As part of the four year plan, the Council is committed to working to considering the potential to deliver services in new and innovative ways, including investigating the potential to set up social enterprises and the social sector will have a key role in ensuring these are delivered.

Conclusion

16. In light of the changes to the national policy framework, the need for all public sector organisations to make significant financial savings and the constant strive to deliver high quality services the Council must now consider the future relationship with both organisations. Members are asked to consider the value of the services provided by RCVS and RCAN to give views on the prioritisation of these services for the future and make suggestions as to what other services, if any, could be delivered by the voluntary and community sector in the future.
17. Officers will report the outcomes of this review, including proposals for how services should be funded, back to this group in September before any final decisions are made by Cabinet in October.

Financial Comments

Rushcliffe Borough Council has provided £257,359 to RCVS and RCAN over the past three years to commission services from both organisations; this is contained within existing budgets.

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act

RCVS and RCAN work closing with the Community Safety Partnership as part of the Local Strategic Partnership. Both organisations consider the implications of the Crime and Disorder Act as part of their day to day functionings.

Diversity

RCVS and RCAN receive funding from the Council to assist in tackling equal opportunity and diversity issues in the Borough and consider diversity in all their work.

Background Papers Available for Inspection: Nil



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

18 JULY 2011

WORK PROGRAMME

9

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (PR)

Summary

The work programme for the Community Development Group is developed around the corporate priorities that fall within its remit and takes into account the timing of the Group's business in the previous municipal year and any emerging issues and key policy developments that may arise throughout the year. It is anticipated that the work programme for the new year will be developed in line with the priorities identified in the 4 year plan for budget savings.

Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Group notes the report.

Date of Meeting	Item
18 July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role and Remit of the Community Development Group • Leisure Facilities Strategy Member Panel Update • Choice Based Lettings Progress Report • Review of Service Level Agreements • Work Programme
	•
19 Sept 2011	•
21 November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Rents
16 January 2012	•
26 March 2012	•

Financial Comments

No direct financial implications arise from the proposed work programme

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act

In the delivery of its work programme the Group supports delivery of the Council's Section 17 responsibilities.

Diversity

The policy development role of the Group ensures that its proposed work programme supports delivery of Council's Corporate priority 6 'Meeting the Diverse needs of the Community'.

Background Papers Available for Inspection: Nil