

## REPORT:

# Contribution of the VSE sector to LEP activities/priorities & Big Society

### **What is the LEP Board being asked to recommend and do?**

1. To consider the contribution made by the VSE sector to economic development and growth; acknowledge the excellence offered up by five exemplar VSE organisations; and increase understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing the sector in the context of the Government's 'Big Society' agenda and deficit reduction plan.
2. To note the progress of recent VSE Sub Group work, which is designed to facilitate the LEP's engagement with key VSE partners; and explore how this could be extended and deepened to maximise added value possibilities in the furtherance of the LEP's business plan priorities.
3. To agree that other Board members be invited, alongside the Chairman, to meet with VSE representatives from exemplar organisations on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July (2pm). Venue: TBC

### Reason for recommendation

In the context of the limited resources and capacity available, this report and proposals is expected to underpin a 'light-touch' and creative engagement between the LEP and VSE organisations, in the common furtherance of joint economic and social development objectives. It will help to ensure that the LEP is cognisant of the value the VSE adds locally to economic and social capital, and the opportunities for the LEP to work collaboratively with the sector. For example when the LEP is developing plans for the future use of Growing Places/EZ receipts, it is aware of the potential added value the VSE sector could provide in broadening the range of initiatives which address the LEP's objectives

### What are the key issues to consider?

4. Key issues that should be considered are the opportunities presented by the strategic LEP economic development work and actions; financial challenges exacerbated by economic recession and public spending retrenchment; the Government's 'Big Society' policy and funding agendas; and how, in the context of available capacity and resources, the LEP can help complement and maximise the potential offered up by the economic and social contribution of the VSE sector.

### What are the resource and risk implications?

5. At this time there are limited resource implications beyond the servicing of the quarterly Sub Group meetings and related activities, the secretariat costs of which have already been agreed and met by the LEP for 2012. A special event to engage and connect businesses and the VSE sector (penciled in for Autumn 2012) will require sponsorship and/or funding.

### Background & Recent Progress

6. The LEP has a clear and unambiguous focus on driving forward sustainable economic growth working with local business, education providers, the VSE and public sectors to achieve this. The Board has already signaled its recognition of the value it attaches to the VSE sector (and how it addresses several priority areas of thematic focus: Skills, Employment & Worklessness; and attracting inward investment and funding into LEP localities), initiating a programme of exploring what it currently is, and can, contribute to the achievement of its business plan and objectives. This builds on Government advice contained within the **Local Growth** White Paper: *"Partnerships will want to work closely with ...social and community enterprises, which play an important role in creating local economic growth through providing jobs and training, delivering services and helping create community wealth in some of the most deprived parts of the country."*

7. From desk research, contact with many in the local VSE sector including BITC it would appear that, so far, VSE involvement in LEPs across the UK remains patchy, at best. The GCGP LEP has a VSE representative on its Board, Dr Lynn Morgan. The initiation of this programme of engagement puts the LEP in the fast lane, and somewhat ahead of the curve presenting best practice possibilities. VSE sector consultants and Community Interest Company *Big Society Funding* have been commissioned to support the LEP and Dr Lynn Morgan, in this engagement process during 2012. Several meetings with individual VSE leaders and visits have already been held to underpin this engagement process, plus the first VSE Sub Group meeting. A directory of some 80+ VSE organisations working in areas of relevance to the GCGP LEP has been compiled to date.
8. In early Spring 2012 a scoping report alongside the formation of a Sub Group marked the commencement of a process of engagement to ascertain how the LEP can further add value (and vice versa) to what is already being contributed by the VSE sector in generating economic development and creating community infrastructure and social capital. A soundly based approach of building on VSE knowledge, expertise, capacity and potential (especially in terms of linking in communities, social businesses, capacity to build skills and tackle worklessness, and support effective decision-making) in the strategic activities of the LEP has been adopted. The VSE Sub Group comprises: key VSE 'drivers and can-do' leaders drawn from their fields of expertise working in the social enterprise and economic development domain; and these are as shown at [appendix 2](#). The notes of the first meeting are available on request. The comments and suggestions from VSE organisations at the Sub Group meeting, and subsequently, have assisted in the development of this report.
9. In the LEP area there is a particularly well-developed, dynamic and diverse VSE sector from which to build on further, and maximise collaborative opportunities. Locally, there is a strong culture, which is already geared up to an economic agenda and social enterprise; and a history of drawing down funding with an ability to work across sectors. The VSE Board lead, with *Big Society Funding CIC*, has identified five exemplars and their work is briefly outlined in [appendix 1](#) providing evidence of their economic development impact. These are: the **Papworth Trust**; **i-Trust**; **Groundworks**; **Rowan Humberstone**; and **Workwise**. Representatives of these organisations will be meeting with the LEP chairman in early July, and other Board members may wish to attend.

### **VSE contribution to economic development and growth**

10. In broad terms, the VSE sector is able to contribute to local economic development and regeneration in a number of ways, for example:
  - as local employers;
  - providing employment and training;
  - creating new innovative forms of enterprise - and reinvesting surpluses back into the community;
  - engaging individuals and communities in local development, giving them a greater say.

Based on a major submission to BIS from VSE regional organisation/s this can be further fine-tuned (with comments from the Consultants and VSE Sub Group members) by outlining how VSE activity is relevant to the LEP:

- **The VSE makes a significant contribution to the local economy:** contributes up to 3% of local GDP - and this doesn't take into consideration the additional and added value of volunteering. Formal volunteering in the UK is worth an estimated £21.5 billion per year (NCVO). Of course, VSE organisations also employ people, buy goods and services from other organisations and businesses and create demand for other organisations and business in a locality. The sector ensures resources remain within an area as they have a local focus including supply chains that are locally based, which helps prevent money leaking out of an area.
- **The VSE is a significant local employer:** almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  million people work in the sector; further research is needed to establish VSE numbers working in the LEP

area (but it is estimated up to 7% of local employees and growing). Currently, more people (in % terms) in the VSE sector are losing their jobs than the public sector.

- **The VSE supports social business start-ups and enterprise culture:** this has a particular impact on deprived communities and disadvantaged individuals: people with impairments, young people not in employment or training, ex-offenders and the long-term unemployed (viz. selected exemplars). Other innovative work focuses on apprenticeships. The LEP area is one of exceptional richness in social enterprise terms, and there are significant growth opportunities. With the challenges facing the public sector currently, there is an increased focus and reliance on the 'Big Society' and 'spinning out' public services into the VSE. The reality going forward is that the VSE sector will be required to deliver even more services to ensure that those in need of assistance receive it.
- **VSE organisations are key strategic partners in building local economies:** although often over-looked there is massive potential for the sector to increase volunteering, social action and other actions to improve pathways and access into employment for disadvantaged individuals. Interestingly, research has identified over half (55 per cent) of VSE organisations which believe they currently contribute to their Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) objectives, especially in relation to promoting enterprise, aspiration and social advancement.
- **VSE organisations play a key role in delivery as Learning & Skills Providers:** there is a solid track record of delivery for learners with disabilities, mental ill-health etc utilising, for example, European Social Fund resources. With demise of the Learning & Skills Councils, and other conduits of ESF related funding it is unclear how the sector can continue to deliver in this area of economic development.
- **VSE organisations play a key role in developing and delivering innovative initiatives to tackle worklessness:** there is extensive evidence of the sector playing a highly innovative role and the LEP area abounds with exemplars (well beyond the five we have identified) to illustrate how this can now be scaled up and nurtured. All VSE Sub Group members would wish to contribute to this further.
- **VSE, inward investment and scaling up to sub-regional working:** the sector brings in external funding and inward investment into an area, and develops flexible responses and solutions to local problems and circumstances; this expertise can be demonstrated from a history of sub-regional working. VSE Sub Group members are keen to assist the LEP in the provision of information to ensure social needs are properly identified and evidence of what works supplied.
- **Biggest divide is that between the private sector and the VSE:** perhaps a contentious point but creating and maintaining local connections is challenging terrain especially in the scramble for organisational survival; VSE strategic engagement with the LEP would significantly help to support such activity and cross-fertilisation. The VSE Sub Group members are very keen to harness the potential offered up by businesses within the LEP area and focus on improving collaborative opportunities. The VSE Board lead, and Big Society Funding CIC, are currently developing a proposal to progress this in autumn 2012.
- **Ensure VSE environmental expertise is incorporated in LEP structures:** there is considerable expertise available in the VSE sector, which can feed into planning, housing, economic development and transport. Environmental organisations have a key role in developing and providing 'green jobs' and a healthy natural environment underpinning successful sustainable economic development.

### **VSE in times of austerity and public funding retrenchment**

11. The VSE locally and nationally is facing a precipitous decline in traditional sources of income, especially from formerly rock-solid local authority and other public agency funders. A recent State of the Sector report carried out by national VSE players with the *Third Sector* magazine would bear this out with many reporting a painful re-adjustment to the steep fall in statutory income. COVER, the East's regional infrastructure agency, has conducted several sector surveys, the latest called 'Hard Times' reported that, despite rising demand because of the economic downturn, over 40% of local VSE organisations were experiencing decreased

funding; and struggling to adapt to the new Big Society policy landscape and environment. By 2011 70% of VSE organisations report being adversely affected by the economic climate and income decreases, especially organisations that employ staff and those with larger annual incomes. Some in the VSE sector have also developed a relatively pessimistic outlook, which compounds income generation and governance challenges. The Consultants hope to report further on this following a survey it is conducting later in May 2012.

12. Expectations and the reality of reduced financial resources into the VSE sector in this, and future, financial years permeates the everyday operational workings of many organisations. Financial anxieties are high on the list of VSE priorities, and undoubtedly the fallout from reduced local authority budgets, competition from external funders and the pressures of 'earning' an income from Personalisation (direct payments from clients) will undermine the viability of several social enterprise organisations, and smaller charities which can be overly reliant on one or two main sources of financial support. Creating a sustainable income base, let alone growing it, is a top sector priority; proving and communicating the importance of their work to a wider audience and having an effective Trustee board also remain formidable challenges.
13. Nationally 723,000 people work in the VSE sector; and according to NCVO an estimated 25% of the adult population volunteer formally once a month (a slight decline from 29% in 2005). Whilst there are no available workforce figures for VSE organisations in the LEP area beyond estimates, latest available figures from the Labour Force Survey show that the number of people employed in the sector fell by 8.7% (70,000) in the year to September 2011; this fall in employment is double that of those in the public sector (4.3% decrease in the same period). Employment in the private sector increased by 1.5%.
14. In these chastened times, with austerity becoming the new buzzword, many VSE organisations are compelled to rethink how they approach their work and what they are doing; others are looking at partnership and collaboration (the latter in some cases focusing on mergers). The recent dismantling of the regional architecture has resulted in a paucity of arenas for the VSE to get together, and develop common platforms for shared working and networks; combined with the fact that the LEP area itself (covering one whole county, and five districts in five other different counties) does not lend itself easily to what were recently well-established and functioning networks; and therefore new networks will need engendering whilst not allowing any one locality to become overly predominant. The VSE Sub Group members recognised the merit of having a mechanism to channel their energies, and making a contribution to the development of LEP work activities. All now receive the LEP's regular e-bulletin and have been encouraged to sign up to the Twitter feed.
15. Some VSE organisations – those based in West Suffolk, West Norfolk, Uttlesford and North Hertfordshire - in the GCGP LEP area, possibly somewhat confusingly, have more than one LEP Board to respond to, namely: New Anglia LEP; Hertfordshire LEP; and New Anglia LEP. This means that even the most robust VSE organisations will often lack the capacity to respond to LEP activities in their areas of benefit/operation. Turning to the GCGP LEP itself, which like all other LEPs is primarily a commissioning rather than delivery body, it is recognised that it currently has limited resources and capacity. For the immediate future this lack of resource will constrain opportunities in the actual delivery of projects but it is anticipated that the LEP will want to bid directly for funds to allow the delivery of programmes and projects by other agencies. This engagement process with significant sections of the local VSE sector will allow for potential bidding opportunities to be captured and enhanced. VSE Sub Group members are ready, willing and able to make contributions as required to the submission of collaborative bids by the LEP.

### **VSE contribution to Big Society**

16. The VSE already does Big Society in bucket loads, and has a proud and robust history of further social welfare and ensuring economic inclusion for vulnerable and disadvantaged communities and individuals. There remains some confusion about what is meant by 'Big Society', and the nature of the Government's intentions. Our understanding of Big Society is that it means favouring local autonomy and people being able to take control back over their own lives; that it means understanding that 'small is beautiful'; and it involves the state

enabling things to happen and develop rather than controlling them or (much worse) preventing them. There does appear to be an element of tribal hostility to the Big Society among some who see no or little potential in it. This could result in missing its possibilities and its wider appeal.

17. In the Government's white paper, [Local growth: realising every place's potential](#) a broader vision for LEPs is outlined, in the context of the Big Society: giving greater power to communities, as well as councils and businesses, *'recognising that where the drivers of growth are local, decisions should be made locally ... widening the diversity of players in local economies, making it easier for the voluntary and community sector to compete in markets'*.
18. This report is supportive of the Government's ambition to release the potential of individuals and communities to shape their own futures through the Big Society concept, and believe that LEPs generally could well be significant players in helping to achieve these aims. For the Big Society concept to be implemented effectively, it is important that leading members of the VSE sector, alongside the private sector, engage closely with and inform economic development strategic-level discussions and decision-making. This will improve the quality of evidence and deepen the experience and expertise available to inform decision-making. The VSE Sub Group could play an important role in being the conduit of views and experiences on the ground to businesses. In fact, members are keen to embrace this role wishing to act as a critical friend and providing specialist advice and guidance. Many also wish to play a role in helping the LEP with its work in other Sub Groups and business plan formation.
19. The Government, via its Office for Civil Society, has made it clear in pronouncements that the sector should not, and can not be, immune from cuts as it seeks to implement its national deficit plans, but at the same time – and somewhat contradictorily - is expansive in what it wishes to see the VSE sector achieve as part of its wider Big Society agenda. Furthermore, whilst the country faces serious economic and social challenges, the Government itself recognises the value of the VSE sector in contributing to social and economic development, and play an essential part in delivering its Big Society policy vision: individuals, business and communities working together to achieve our collective well-being. The Government's Office for Civil Society is responsible for co-ordination of action to further the VSE's ability to champion Localism, connect better with local businesses and their leaders, deliver Public Services in new ways and encouraging social action to build 'social capital' and community resilience. Civil Society Minister, Nick Hurd MP, issued an open letter to the sector setting out the various components of this agenda, and initiatives which would flow from this, specifically:
  - The **Localism Act** this builds on ethos of Big Society agenda as outlined above.
  - **Opening up public services** and encouraging a greater diversity of providers including from the VSE; giving every encouragement for VSE organisations to deliver public service contracts by making it easier to run a charity or social enterprise, work with the state and get more resources into the sector.
  - **Encouraging more Social Action** and the building of social capital; this includes increasing giving (money and as volunteers) from individuals and businesses to the sector; improving service delivery from infrastructure agencies; a Social Action Fund; a National Citizen Service for young people; and a Community Organisers network and programme. There is also a keen desire to improve the links between business and the VCSE, namely, with Business in the Community and creation of a network of Business Connectors.
20. **Business Connectors**: This is a significant, and comparatively recently launched, initiative spearheaded by Business in the Community (BITC) which has particular resonance to the VSE and LEP. Business Connectors are staff on secondment, recruited from business, supported and trained by BITC to work in partnership with VSE organisations. It has considerable private sector backing. It has yet to be rolled out in the GCGP LEP area. Furthermore, BITC East is co-ordinating a regional-wide day to promote volunteering opportunities to businesses, and this is scheduled for Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012 (called 'Give & Gain Day'). BITC also promotes a programme of business support to the sector called ProHelp.

21. Social Action Fund: This has been created by the Government to promote social action and involves funding based on a Local Focus and/or increased giving/volunteering from schoolchildren, university graduates and the newly retired.
22. The barriers to maximising the VSE's contribution to the Big Society can be summarised as: fragile and declining income streams; lack of effective support to ensure they can evidence impact and concomitant raising of organisational profile; recruitment and retaining of volunteers and skilled trustees; finding time-efficient networking and partnerships opportunities. VSE organisations are desirous of strategic support on commissioning and procurement policy issues to ensure that they too can benefit from any move from grants to more commissioning (a major Big Society agenda issue). Many would like further advice and training to help access and win public sector contracts.
23. As contracting and commissioning becomes a more important source of income, VSE organisations will be compelled to place more emphasis on how they demonstrate their impact. As VSE consultants, and via surveys, we are aware that too few organisations are able to respond to questions about their quantitative impact. Systematic collect of data on outputs – such as number of beneficiaries, number of job starts, number of courses completed and qualifications gained, and number of organisations supported to start up would be a good start. Active encouragement will be required to ensure that more VSE organisations think in more discrete economic development terms. Whilst many have social objectives, they could increasingly consider their economic contribution, particularly in relation to the priorities being established by the LEP; and where they then might be able to align their activities without experiencing “mission drift” they should be encouraged to do so. The possibility of the LEP identifying new revenue streams, via future loan repayments income in the Enterprize Zone and through Growing Places which might be applicable to the VSE economic development activities as well, may well provide the added encouragement and fillip the sector requires.

<b>LEP Sub Group:</b>	Voluntary & Social Enterprise Sector (VSE)
<b>BOARD Meeting Date:</b>	17 May 2012
<b>Board Lead:</b>	Dr Lynn Morgan (CEO, Arthur Rank Hospice Charity)
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**APPENDIX 1 – VSE EXEMPLARS OPERATING IN THE GCGP LEP AREA (BASED ON INFORMATION PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO THREE KEY QUESTIONS) EXCEPTING THOSE MARKED \*\***

**a) PAPWORTH TRUST**

- **As a VCSE organization please identify those aspects of economic development to which you contribute?** The Papworth Trust is well placed to contribute to the LEP and its objectives having been established in the region for over 95 years. We are closely linked with its history and have been part of the changes that this region has experienced over the period. Papworth Trust started as a small tuberculosis settlement but is now a nationally recognised pan disability organisation which supports disabled people to have equality, choice and independence. While locally focused, we influence and advocate on a national level to inform Government policy and challenge prejudice. We are members of national bodies such as ERSA, ACEVO, NCVO and VODG. We are also members of numerous Government consultative groups and regularly meet with local and national politicians. As an organisation, Papworth Trust is used to contributing constructively to groups such as this one.

- **LEP Business Plan objectives – how can your organization address some of the priority areas of focus e.g. Skills, Employment & Worklessness; and increasing funding into the LEP area?**

The services that we offer cover a broad range of areas, most of which overlap with the LEPs own strategic focus areas. And it is because of our breadth of service delivery that we have a genuine understanding of the local economic environment and the factors that contribute to the wellbeing of the local population. In summary we:

- Provide over 650 homes as a Registered Social Landlord and our Home Improvement Agencies, called Home Solutions, help thousands more people stay in their own homes.
- Deliver quality care and support to our customers with Adult Social Care needs
- Run youth clubs for over 200 young people every week
- Deliver high quality, choice-based day services all over the East of England
- Are a Government Work Choice and Work Programmes provider forecast to support in excess of 3,000 job seekers
- Provide career support to individuals and employers
- Offer a unique national Vocational Rehabilitation Service.

All in all Papworth Trust currently serves over 20,000 disabled people each year. We employ about 500 staff, of which 16% declare they have a disability. About 220 volunteers work with us on a regular basis in a number of different roles. We spend nearly £20m annually on delivering high quality services across the Eastern region, North London and Northamptonshire. We operate out of 25 centres and staff offices.

- **Please identify any opportunities to expand and develop further your contribution to economic development?**

What is unique about the Papworth Trust, and I believe will make its contribution to the LEP even more useful, is our vision for growth over the next five years. Leading up to our centenary, Papworth Trust has an ambitious strategy, which will see it raise its contribution to the local economy to £50 million by 2017. Furthermore we aim for £10 million of this to be gained through donations, grants or volunteering.

What sets us apart, and will enable us to meet this huge aim, is our approach. We are **economic realists**, trying to bridge the gap between our charitable values and a commercial approach. We pride ourselves on being **pace setting** and we are first and foremost passionate about what we do and the people we do it for. Customers are at the heart of defining what we do and I think that the perspective that we would bring because of this approach would add value to the LEPs discussions.

## **b) i-TRUST (East of England)**

**As a VCSE organization please identify those aspects of economic development to which you contribute?**

We work in distinct areas:

- Service provision (employing staff to provide ICT service contracts to SE and SME's across the county.
- Employment, Training and placement opportunities for disability, long-term unemployed and ex-offenders.
- Assisting charities and SE's in improving sustainability via better use of technology and assistance in new venture start-ups.
- Searching for and obtaining funding to improve our office and factory buildings to improve/increase all of the above.

**- LEP Business Plan objectives – how can your organization address some of the priority areas of focus e.g. Skills, Employment & Worklessness; and increasing funding into the LEP area?** Really a repeat of the above especially in the worklessness area in the 18months of full operations we have created 27 full time jobs provided 32 volunteer positions and have put 53 placements through our course of which 13 were employed.

**- Please identify any opportunities to expand and develop further your contribution to economic development?**

- We are working with both City and Guilds and the National Apprenticeship scheme on having our current course accredited and added to the National Framework.
- Grow the size of the workforce by gathering further and larger new contracts.
- Expand our ability to provide more placements and courses by extending our facility

## **c) GROUNDWORKS (East of England)**

**- As a VCSE organization please identify those aspects of economic development to which you contribute?** As an environmental charity Groundwork works in an integrated way across themes such as education, employment, business, youth, landscape and community to create innovative opportunities and interventions for local people to change places and change lives. For example Groundwork works with small businesses to help them to cut their carbon, make resource efficiencies and address the impacts of climate change. In doing so we help them save costs and disruption, making their businesses more resilient and viable as a result, while highlighting potential new business opportunities. Examples include 1-1 Resource Efficiency Audits, Farmers Workshops on climate change impacts and the Suffolk Carbon Charter accreditation scheme for small businesses.

Groundwork works closely in partnership with many organisations, including local authorities, statutory bodies, housing associations and other voluntary organisation. Our approach is to support partners in funding local, regional, national and European development work and bids and to use our networks with corporate organisations to help sponsor and support our projects. Our national development team brokers relationships with national and multi-national organisations that wish to work with Groundwork as their charity of choice.

**- LEP Business Plan objectives – how can your organization address some of the priority areas of focus e.g. Skills, Employment & Worklessness; and increasing funding into the LEP area?** In local neighbourhoods Groundwork works with community groups to improve their environment. We use the environment as the inspiration for engagement with all age groups, including young people; developing volunteering, pre-employment, apprenticeship and ready for work initiatives. We employ local people to help us in our behaviour change projects to address fuel poverty, resource efficiency issues in the home and sustainable travel in the wider neighbourhood. Such work has direct impacts on helping communities become more active (less likely to be unhealthy and place demands on the health services), more self-sufficient (reduce impact on resources and fuel) and more engaged in their community. Typical proven projects include our Green Aiders, Green Doctor and Green Behaviour programmes. Our programmes with young people offer training and acquisition of skills and qualifications, leading to opportunities to develop social enterprises.

**- Please identify any opportunities to expand and develop further your contribution to economic development?** Typically, Groundwork plays many roles, leading and



managing programmes, delivering a part of a wider programme, supporting other organisations or simply facilitating the interface between the local community and wider organisations, ensuring that the views of local people are heard and embodied into thinking of ideas for change. Groundwork's strength is in working with partners to develop bespoke solutions to problems using their experience of delivering projects in the region and elsewhere in the UK. The ideas can be scaled up into LEP wide thematic programmes or be specific to a geographical area.

#### **d) WORKWISE\*\***

**- As a VCSE organization please identify those aspects of economic development to which you contribute?** Established 25 years ago Workwise is a mental health and wellbeing charity and social enterprise providing employment and training opportunities for adults with mental health problems in West Suffolk, and further afield. It provides work-based training and work experience, supported by re-skilling activities and opportunities to take qualifications. Working with over 500 people each year it progresses them into employment, mainstream education, accredited training and voluntary work opportunities. It has links with 278 employers across Suffolk. Income is now mainly via Personal Budgets and other contracted income.

**- LEP Business Plan objectives – how can your organization address some of the priority areas of focus e.g. Skills, Employment & Worklessness; and increasing funding into the LEP area?**

To Follow

**- Please identify any opportunities to expand and develop further your contribution to economic development**

To Follow

#### **e) ROWAN HUMERSTONE\*\***

**- As a VCSE organization please identify those aspects of economic development to which you contribute?** Set up in 1985 Rowan Humberstone is a Cambridge City based charity and arts centre established to bring artists and people with learning disabilities together in the production of fine artwork and crafts; while providing opportunities for self-expression and creative exploration. Using arts and crafts as a vehicle, the staff team enables participants to become empowered and more independent through raising their confidence, self-esteem and feelings of self-worth by:

- Providing opportunities for independent living and social skills development and maintenance
- Recognising each person's individual skills and abilities
- Treating everyone with dignity and respect
- Encouraging self-expression and the development of latent creative skills
- Providing a positive and safe environment
- Promoting social inclusion and community cohesion at Rowan and the wider community
- Enriching people's lives by opening up new and different opportunities

**- LEP Business Plan objectives – how can your organization address some of the priority areas of focus e.g. Skills, Employment & Worklessness; and increasing funding into the LEP area?**

To Follow

**- Please identify any opportunities to expand and develop further your contribution to economic development**

To Follow

**APPENDIX 2 - VSE ORGANISATIONS INVITED TO INITIAL SUB GROUP MEETING IN FEBRUARY:**

Organisation	Name	Position	Attended/Apologies offered	Requested to remain informed & invited to subsequent meetings	Recommended as VCSE Exemplar
Peterborough CVS	Sarah Fletcher	Asst General Secretary	Attended		
Young Lives	Lynn Hogarth	CEO	Attended		
Groundwork East of England	Judith Grice	Regional Director	Attended		X
Suffolk Family Carers	Jacqui Martin	CEO	Apologies	X	
Big Lottery Fund – Eastern	Sara Betworth	Head of Region	Attended		
Suffolk Foundation	Stephen Singleton	CEO	Apologies	X	
I-Trust	Paul Ruskin	Business Development Manager	Attended		X
Cambridge GET Group	Tim Cracknell	Manager	Attended		
National Trust – East of England	Richard Powell	Director	Apologies	X	
East of England Faiths Council	Jenny Kartupelis	Director	Attended		
Cambridge Housing Society	Gary Lashko	Community Services Director	Attended		
Rowan Humberstone	Des Trollip Judith Jones	Director of Operations Marketing & Fundraising	Attended		X
Suffolk Association of Voluntary Group	Jonathan Moore	CEO	Apologies	X	
West Norfolk Voluntary & Community Action	Heather Farley	CEO	Apologies	X	
Workwise	David Dawson Valerie Beresford	Chair CEO	Attended		X
Cambridgeshire Community Foundation	Jane Darlington	CEO	Attended		
Business in the Community East	Mike Brophy	Director	Attended		
Heritage Lottery Fund - Eastern	Robyn Llewellyn	Regional Director	Attended		
Cambridgeshire YMCA	Jonathan Martin	CEO	Apologies	X	
Cross Keys Homes	Mick Leggett	CEO	Attended		
UK CEED	Gareth Jones	Operations Manager	Attended		
Future Business	Martin Clark		Attended		
Voluntary Action Rutland	Lindsay Henshaw-Dann	CEO	Attended		
Deafblind UK	Jeff Skipp	CEO	Apologies		
Cambridgeshire ACRE	Kirsten Bennett	CEO	Apologies	X	
Papworth Trust	David Martin	Director, Strategy & Marketing	Attended		
SEEE	Chris Lee		TBC		