

**Report of the Deputy Chief Executive****GRANT AID 2020/21 – VOLUNTARY ACTION BROXTOWE (VAB) AND RUSHCLIFFE COMMUNITY VOLUNTARY SERVICE (RCVS)**1. Purpose of Report

To consider a joint application for grant aid from Voluntary Action Broxtowe (VAB) and Rushcliffe Community Voluntary Service (RCVS) for consideration in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Grant Aid Policy.

This report was due to be presented at the Finance and Resources Committee dated 2 April 2020.

2. Grant Aid Application

The Council has supported Voluntary Action Broxtowe (although not regularly) with grant aid. The latest award was in July 2019 when a grant of £7,000 was approved towards the cost of providing volunteer services and network development support across the Borough.

VAB has now submitted a joint bid with Rushcliffe Community Voluntary Service (RCVS) for consideration towards this work in 2020/21. This is a joint bid as VAB will cease to operate at some stage later in 2020. Trustees have been planning for closure and are determined to leave a positive legacy for the community. The need for action has escalated due to the lease at its premises at Oban House ending on 31 October 2020. VAB will formerly tender notice on this building.

Initially, voluntary and community sector infrastructure support will continue to be delivered by VAB from Oban House. However, from 1 July 2020, the volunteer brokerage service, along with the Volunteer Co-ordinator, will transfer to and be managed by RCVS, subject to due diligence and approval by all stakeholders. The role will remain dedicated to Broxtowe and the employee will be located in the area with a partner organisation. RCVS is based in Cotgrave.

VAB and RCVS have jointly requested a grant of £7,000 towards their core costs to provide volunteer services and network development support in Broxtowe. Further details are provided in the appendices to this report.

3. Financial Position

Whilst the grant aid budget does not include any specific provision earmarked for Voluntary Action Broxtowe, there are sufficient funds available in the new year budget to cover this request.

**Recommendation**

**The Committee is asked to consider the request and RESOLVE accordingly.**

Background Papers

Nil



## APPENDIX 1

**VOLUNTARY ACTION BROXTOWE (VAB)**Executive Summary

A joint application for grant aid has been received from Voluntary Action Broxtowe (VAB) and Rushcliffe Community Voluntary Service (RCVS) for consideration. The request is towards the continued the voluntary and community sector infrastructure support for the Borough of Broxtowe.

This is a joint bid as VAB will cease to operate at some stage later in 2020. Trustees have been planning for this closure and are determined to leave a positive legacy for the community of Broxtowe. An accompanying Legacy Planning document submitted with the application is reproduced for Members at appendix 2.

Initially, voluntary and community sector infrastructure support will continue to be delivered by VAB from Oban House in Beeston. However, from 1 July 2020 the volunteer brokerage service, along with the Volunteer Co-ordinator, will transfer to and be managed by RCVS, subject to due diligence and approval by all stakeholders. The role and employee will still be dedicated to the Broxtowe area and located in the area with another partner organisation. This action has been escalated due to the lease for Oban House ending on 31 October 2020. VAB has met with the landlords to make them aware of the intention not renew the lease and will formerly tender its notice.

The Council has supported Voluntary Action Broxtowe previously (although not regularly) with the latest award being in 2019/20 when a grant of £7,000 was approved.

**For 2020/21, Voluntary Action Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Community Voluntary Service have jointly requested a grant of £7,000 towards their general running costs to provide volunteer services and network development support across the Borough. The grant aid budget does not include any specific provision earmarked for Voluntary Action Broxtowe. Members should note that the grant aid policy requires that grant awards of £5,000 or above may be subject to a Service Level Agreement.**

Background

Voluntary Action Broxtowe (VAB) is the current voluntary sector infrastructure support provider for the Borough. It provides a wide range of practical and advice services for local voluntary and community groups across the Borough.

The Rushcliffe Community Voluntary Service (RCVS), established in 1984, provides a similar service across Rushcliffe. RCVS is based at The Cotgrave Hub in Cotgrave.

VAB effectively fulfils all the functions of a Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) with its mission to “provide high quality infrastructure support to local organisations and

through this, help strengthen communities and deliver more appropriate and effective services for the residents of Broxtowe”.

The stated aims and objectives of the charity are to promote the benefit of local inhabitants by associating together the inhabitants, local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to improve the quality of life of said inhabitants and in particular, not exclusively, to:

- advance the education, learning and skills of volunteers through the provision of training, advice, assistance and associated activities so that they are better equipped to carry out their role and provide a valuable contribution to their community
- promote the voluntary sector and volunteering generally, the provision of education, learning and skills and services for the social benefit of the local community and similar charitable activities, and to enhance those services provided by the statutory sector by providing a wide range of infrastructure support services including the setting up of networks and forums to facilitate partnerships.

VAB is a fully accredited Volunteer Centre providing volunteer recruitment, support, training and placement with other organisations. The benefits of volunteering are considerable as it enables people to overcome the challenges they face, to learn skills through specialist training and find solutions that benefit the wider community. For older people volunteering is a social activity and thus provides a means to counter social isolation and loneliness. Local organisations also benefit from the experience, expertise, capacity and commitment of older people. Volunteering is a recognised route back into paid employment. VAB assists young people, typically students, with volunteer placements to assist them in gaining work experience and new skills.

VAB responds to over 1,000 enquiries for volunteering each year. VAB directly supports specialist volunteer placements, currently include 80 placements. It has developed specialist volunteering opportunities through an innovative Day Service Framework Agreement. This service offers training and volunteer opportunities with health and social care support for people with disabilities and long-term conditions.

VAB also delivers a preventative support service to people over-75 who live in Broxtowe who are socially isolated. Caring Companions is a staffed by trained volunteers who visit isolated older people in their own homes on a weekly basis to provide company and to monitor their well-being and safety. This service links to the Vintage Cafe providing further support to this cohort of service users.

Over 600 individual residents and volunteers from across the Borough benefit from VAB services each year. These include around 40 people, aged over 75 years, who are isolated and receive befriending services on a weekly basis to provide company and to monitor their well-being and safety.

Another scheme, 'Move It', assists older people when moving into residential and care homes, as well as supporting families who require low cost services to move locally. Around 150 people per annum benefit from this service.

VAB has established ESOL classes, employment workshops and a language café promoting social integration. These interventions enable resettled people such as Syrian refugees to learn English and employment skills to fully integrate into the community. The project promotes social inclusion; contributing to Community Safety by raising awareness of the value cultural differences can bring. Participants speak 35 different languages. A range of partners are involved with the project: Public Protection, Police Fire Service, Sure Start, schools and Broxtowe Celebrations Community Group.

VAB currently supports over 200 voluntary and community sector organisations across the Borough. VAB helps to ensure that these groups are kept well informed, well-funded and are working safely and in line with current charity legislation. VAB has provided essential courses and qualifications in health and safety, first aid, food safety and health awareness to over 200 volunteers and staff from a range of community organisations.

VAB also provides free, dedicated meeting space for small business start-ups and fledgling community organisations to develop and deliver business ideas. These measures contribute to a more vibrant town centre, attracting new visitors and local businesses to Broxtowe. Six local organisations operate from Oban House, namely Age Friendly Nottingham, Barnardo's, Beeston Shopmobility, Chilwell and Toton Neighbourhood Forum, Beeston and District Local History Society and Global Grains. VAB also provides a weekly vintage tea room for older people to meet and socialise.

In 2010, VAB moved into Oban House on Chilwell Road in Beeston, having secured a 10-year lease from private owners. The decision to move to Oban House provided VAB more spacious accommodation and provided the opportunity to diversify and maximise a greater variety of income streams through renting out meetings rooms, training facilities and office space to other community groups and charities.

VAB has provided its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 for scrutiny. The charity separates its accounts between restricted and unrestricted funds. Total income generated in the year amounted to £81,569. This included £57,624 of unrestricted core funding from grants and donations, rent/room hire and sales income. Other sizeable restricted funding was received from the Big Lottery Fund (£19,633). Total expenditure amounted to £121,914, including £65,332 in respect of core funds. This mainly related to staff costs (£44,855 for an average four employees), rent and services (£35,000), other premises expenses and general operating costs. Total cash/bank balances at 31 March 2019 was £46,738.

The reserve policy is that VAB carries sufficient free reserves to cover its liabilities should it ever fold. The trustees do not believe in amassing large amounts of reserves and feel that donations and other funding entrusted to VAB should be used for the benefit of those in need of its support in the community. It is suggested that

the value of unrestricted fund balances held as at 31 March 2019 was sufficient to meet with this reserves policy.

RCVS has similarly provided its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019 for scrutiny. The charity separates its accounts between restricted and unrestricted funds. Total income generated in the year amounted to £188,732. This included £91,480 of unrestricted core funding from grants and donations, rent/room hire and sales income, including unrestricted funding from the Prison Advice and Care Trust (£35,000) Notts Healthcare Foundation (£15,000), Rushcliffe Borough Council (£15,000), Rushcliffe CCG (£9,879) (and Nottinghamshire County Council (£8,847)). Other sizeable restricted funding was received from Nottinghamshire County Council (£40,325) and the National Lottery Community Fund (£27,679). Total expenditure amounted to £185,077, including £86,438 in respect of core funds. This mainly related to staff costs (£147,229 for an average 11 employees), rent and services, other premises expenses and general operating costs. Total cash/bank balances at 31 March 2019 was £221,150, including £172,010 held as an unrestricted fund.

VAB believes the importance of volunteering in terms of both individual empowerment and social action for the community has intrinsic value. VAB is actively talking to its partners in an attempt to sustain this in the Beeston area. The grant aid funding would ensure that VAB can continue to build on the work it has done and move forward.

**APPENDIX 2**

**VOLUNTARY ACTION BROXTOWE LEGACY PLANNING POST-2020**

Introduction

It has become apparent in recent years that it would be difficult for an organisation like Voluntary Action Broxtowe (VAB) to continue to function in the current climate. The decision to rent Oban House from a private landlord made nearly ten years ago at a high rent and the changes in funding streams and austerity over the period had seriously depleted financial resources. At one point it looked probable that the organisation would fold and shut completely. However, the commitment and passion of the trustees and volunteers have enabled the organisation to re-invent itself and continue to offer some services.

The organisation has functioned on minimal staff since September 2018 and this has only been possible due to substantial support from other local organisations and our own volunteers who offer an average of 30 volunteer hours each week. A Volunteer Coordinator working part-time (24-hours a week) and a Support Worker/Receptionist (zero-hours contract) have been the only staff since January 2019.

It is only because of dedicated trustees and volunteers who give their hours on a weekly basis that VAB has continued to function and provide a valuable service to the Community. Over the past year VAB has rebooted several projects, all of which are now volunteer led projects, none of which are currently funded. Each of these have been developed with best practice and these continue to function weekly.

It is clear that in the long-term it is not viable to continue to rent Oban House. The 10-year lease on the building ends on 31 October 2020 and this provides a sensible timeline for reconsidering the functionality of the organisation.

There is now a clear plan that VAB will cease to exist after June 2020, although the organisation will continue to operate for some time after this. It is hoped that all current VAB projects and volunteers will be successfully transferred to appropriate settings by Easter 2020.

Caring Companions

Caring Companions is a befriending project which matches volunteers with people who are struggling to maintain any social support and are often housebound due to age or disability.

This project requires home visits to assess clients need and capacity. This information is cross-matched with the befriender team so that an appropriate volunteer can join the assessor for a second visit to introduce a befriender to the client.

All working guidelines, policy and procedure, training and monitoring paperwork for the project has been refined over the last year. All currently placed volunteers are trained and DBS checked to an appropriate standard.

Ongoing support to volunteer befrienders is provided by the Volunteer Coordinator via team meetings, regularly scheduled supervision, as well as emergency supervision, as required.

VAB also hosts a weekly café (CommuniTea) on Fridays which targets this client group, and is attended by befriender volunteers to facilitate conversation and offer companionship.

This project was funded by the NHS until March 2019. On review, it was agreed that this project fits well with the work of one of the other two volunteer community bureaux in Eastwood and Stapleford. These organisations focus on service provision and have other service based provision including volunteer transport. The Helpful Bureau in Stapleford covers the south of the Borough. VAB has negotiated that any referrals for the north of Broxtowe would be forwarded to Eastwood Volunteer Bureau.

The work of this project is demanding and needs to be completed to a high professional standard. It was clear that funding would need to be sought for a dedicated part-time worker. VAB and The Helpful Bureau worked in partnership to make a successful application for a Boots charitable fund. Eastwood Volunteer Bureau recruited a worker who commenced employment in October 2019.

VAB has worked closely with The Helpful Bureau during late 2019 and this project has now been successfully transferred.

### Oban House Based Activities

A number of activities are run from Oban House. These include Crafternoon; CommuniTea; Talk Together; ESOL classes for Syrian families/individuals on the VPRS (Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme); room hire; training offered to local volunteers; and brokerage service.

Since November 2018, VAB has been meeting with the Beeston Resource Centre, a CIC run by a board of trustees. Beeston Resource Centre is the nearest organisation with a building and there is commonality in objectives. Both groups have met regularly to ensure a smooth transition of activities in Spring 2020. Unfortunately, due to demand on room space, not all projects have been accommodated.

The Crafternoon sessions at Oban House will cease on 2 April 2020 but all attendees will be offered the opportunity to attend the session at Beeston Resource Centre.

The CommuniTea café at Oban House will cease on 3 April 2020 and will be located in the Beeston Resource Centre café area on Friday mornings.

The Talk Together language and conversation class is the busiest activity project currently at Oban House. It caters for anyone for whom English is not their first language. It regularly gets up to 20 participants (peaking at 26 participants at one session). The class is held during term time on Thursday mornings and is run by



dedicated volunteers with backgrounds in hosting language cafes, delivering language therapy and teaching.

The client group demographic and motivations for accessing this activity is varied. Some attend short term to build up confidence in English speaking or to bolster their knowledge related to English exams or the Home Office English Citizenship Test. Others come to boost their resilience being in group/mixed settings having been removed from traumatic situations. Five attendees have obtained employment since attending.

Referrals from BEGIN, Job Centre, library, Refugee Forum and local councillors, as well as word of mouth referrals from past and present attendees. This venture is a natural signposting route for students at beginner to intermediate level. It is the only free opportunity for individuals to gain help with their spoken and written English in the area. The volunteers also provide the group with information about other activities in the local area and help with a wide range of queries. VAB regularly provides referrers with evidence of attendance as a qualifying factor in their citizenship application and evidence of their attempts to integrate within the community.

It is hoped to transition this project to the Beeston Resource Centre; the management and the volunteer team have identified Monday afternoons (term time) would be a mutual fit to support delegates with children at school.

The Final Talk Together session at Oban House will be on 2 April 2020 and sessions will restart at Beeston Resource Centre on 20 April 2020.

There are issues with long-term viability of this group, with the project having had no funding since 2018. Since then, VAB has offered free room hire, covered costs, such as refreshments, printing and stationery, and the Volunteer Coordinator has managed the project. The Beeston Resource Centre may wish to charge room hire for this activity and the project needs a part-time worker to coordinate the volunteers, design and lead on delivery of content. Ideally this individual would have an ESOL background. Supervision and support of the volunteers is extremely important as many of the beneficiaries of the project have experienced significant trauma and may talk about this in sessions. Many bring queries about daily living, benefits or just want advice from the volunteers who they trust and have strong bonds with; beneficiaries often express gratitude towards our volunteer team for being among the first members of the community who have been extremely welcoming and patient.

Currently the Volunteer Coordinator offers a debrief to volunteers after each session and coordinates quarterly team meets as well as bi-annual supervision sessions. They also lead on a lot of content and resource development for the sessions. While recruitment and support of volunteers for this project is part of the brokerage role, offering this level of support ongoing would be problematic.

The current legacy plan is to seek a small grant for the project, on that would cover ongoing costs, volunteer training and expenses, as well as pay for the wage of a part time worker to lead on coordinating the sessions and supporting the volunteers. It is not clear at this point who would host the funding bid or the worker.

It is anticipated that this project and the volunteers involved will continue to be managed by VAB until a legacy plan comes to fruition.

### ESOL

Currently, the Beeston Resource Centre lacks the capacity to offer a venue for these classes at a suitable time for the tutor and students. Classes currently run at Oban House on Monday to Thursday for three-hours 10.30am.

VAB has since identified a suitable venue in Beeston Youth and Community Centre at West End. It is planned to end sessions at Oban House on 28 May 2020 and restart sessions in the new location from June 2020.

### Tenants and Room Hire

VAB is currently sub-letting a number of rooms, which has provided a valuable income stream. The current tenants are a mixture of private businesses and charities, who would ideally like to stay in the area. All tenants are aware of the plans and VAB will give six months' notice. The major tenants are Beeston Shopmobility (two rooms plus storage and parking spaces) and Barnardos (three offices and three parking spaces).

Casual room hire on an hourly basis is also a source of income. VAB has a number of regular bookings from businesses and charities. VAB has informed these clients. Whilst some may choose to source alternative venues themselves, VAB will pass on its knowledge of the local area.

### Volunteer Brokerage and Infrastructure Functions

This is the traditional Community Voluntary Service (CVS) role, which is concerned with improving quality of life and addressing local needs and issues through developing and enabling a vigorous and diverse voluntary sector.

Since September 2018 VAB has concentrated on developing this aspect of its work. It appointed an experienced and dedicated Volunteer Coordinator who reviewed all existing VAB working guidelines, policy and procedure. VAB then developed a new training, induction and supervision process for volunteers, which is open source and shared with all relevant organisations connected with via the brokerage service.

VAB has worked closely with other partners, including the Council, to avoid duplication and to ensure organisations' special interests and views were respected.

In March 2019, VAB re-launched the brokerage service which has two main functions. Firstly, VAB offers a match making service for individuals wanting to volunteer in the community; pairing them with appropriate vacancies being offered by volunteer involving organisations. These are primarily within the Broxtowe area. Secondly, it promotes best practice for organisations seeking to involve volunteers by providing document templates, support with governance and appropriate advice. VAB runs a weekly brokerage clinic as well as individual support sessions.

VAB offers support to community groups and charities by hosting regular free training sessions. In the past year, VAB offered 38 training and support sessions open to all partner organisations; and 11 specialist training events (four of which were delivered by VAB staff or trustees).

The Volunteer Coordinator is also working in partnership with the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire VCS network, collaborating on solving sector wide problems and developing best practice documents that will hopefully remove barriers to accessing volunteering. The VAB training bulletin includes a range of free training opportunities and clinics available to organisations, volunteers as well as members of the public.

This brokerage and infrastructure role is now the key element of functioning that defines VAB. As a member of the Nottingham Together partnership, VAB can keep up to date with good practice and are made aware of new opportunities and shifts in the sector landscape.

VAB believes that it is essential that this role continues for the Beeston Area.

The key elements for this role to continue are accommodation; further funding beyond 2020; and a host organisation with appropriate infrastructure to provide management support for the Volunteer Coordinator. Other issues to consider are the transfer of post (TUPE), parity of salary with other employees in a similar roles and adhering to GDPR legislation with regards to any data transfer relevant to the transition.

### Accommodation

A number of meetings have been held with the Council about accommodation. The requirements are a shared space with a desk for Volunteer Coordinator. This needs to be in central Beeston and would ideally provide with the Coordinator with like-minded colleagues.

The Coordinator would need access to private interview room space on a regular basis and to larger group rooms on a more occasional basis.

The Council has been very supportive of the work of VAB. They have issues with space themselves and have recently given more space to Citizens Advice Broxtowe in Beeston. It was therefore suggested that VAB explores options with CAB and since January 2019 there have been meetings with the local office.

The plan is to move the brokerage to Citizens Advice Broxtowe at the end of March 2020. There is a great deal of commonality between the two organisations and CAB have agreed to supply accommodation at no cost provided that it fits around their primary service and room usage.

This idea has been passed in principle by CAB Board of Trustees. Work on drawing up a SLA is set to begin. The move would be to a shared office space with access to the interview rooms when they were not being used by CAB. The Volunteer Coordinator would bring any office furniture and equipment from Oban House. If additional equipment was required, this would be purchased by VAB.

### Ongoing Management of the Brokerage CVS Function

Initially approaches were made to Eastwood Volunteer Bureau and The Helpful Bureau in Stapleford to discuss their current situation and their potential to expand. Both of these organisations concentrate on service delivery offering community transport schemes and help targeted primarily at older people. Neither organisation felt they would be the appropriate body to host this function.

VAB then explored the option of this transferring to another local organisation in Broxtowe. Initially there was some interest in doing this role from Beeston Community Resource, but after further discussion they felt it would not be something they could undertake as it had the potential to dilute their focus from their main charitable aims.

After discussion with the Community and Voluntary Sector Officer at Nottinghamshire County Council, Trustees met with the Chair of the Notts Together Partnership and CEO Bassetlaw CVS. She explained in some detail why there might be difficulty in a service based organisation taking on the role and directed us to guidance from the National Association for Voluntary and Community Action.

It became apparent that it might be appropriate to look at the option of another CVS remotely managing the South Broxtowe based brokerage CVS in the longer term. There is precedent for this happening elsewhere and indeed locally.

When Gedling CVS closed in October 2015 specific services were transferred to Rushcliffe. RCVS is an infrastructure organisation with expertise in the sector, is an accredited volunteer centre and a member of Nottinghamshire Together. The organisation delivered and managed First Contact across the South of the Nottinghamshire from 2007 until the project ceased in 2016.

VAB met with the RCVS Chief Executive and Trustees early in March 2019 to discuss the possibility of RCVS being involved in the future. Since then there have been a number of meetings involving their staff getting to know the issues and the area. The two Volunteers Coordinators have been meeting regularly and doing joint work since July, developing resource and training materials for the sector that focuses on best practice and inclusivity, building and developing an effective working relationship between the two organizations and staff.

This would mean that while the brokerage service to the local community of Broxtowe remains situated in Beeston based at the CAB and the training is delivered locally in partnership with the Council. The management and supervision of the Volunteer Coordinator and the brokerage service would be with RCVS.

This would be supported by the other local partnerships in the same way as they do now. The Lone Worker policy has another local organisation as support in any urgent situation when advice or additional manpower is needed.

VAB hope that Broxtowe will not lose but actually gain from this arrangement. It will be possible to write into any SLA conditions that work towards ensuring there

remains a strong Broxtowe influence e.g. attendance at Broxtowe partnership meetings, recruitment of Broxtowe borough based Trustees.

In November 2019 there was a further meeting with RCVS Trustees and in principle they have agreed to manage the service. Although initially there was discussion about this happening from April 2020, however it has now been agreed to aim for this to happen on 1 July 2020 which fits with the LIS funding. VAB Trustees have been invited onto the RCVS Board.

The next stage is working on the detail of this transition, which will include identifying funding, advice on HR concerns e.g. TUPE

### Further Funding

The final year of the three-year Nottingham Together LIS partnership money could be transferred. This has been agreed in principle.

A grant aid application will be submitted to this Council for £7,000. If a similar amount was awarded for 2020/21, albeit partly to another organisation in RCVS, this would ensure the future of volunteering in Broxtowe.

Without additional funding to support the volunteer brokerage function there is a risk that this would cease and therefore impact on the residents of Broxtowe

### Partnership Working

Since 2018, VAB has closely with the Council's Communities officers and regularly used the Council's networks to share information about activities and training opportunities.

VAB has regularly met with the Council's Housing managers and the Independent Living Scheme team as a key referrer for befriending services. VAB has also worked closely with the Oxjam Team, developing their volunteer involvement strategy and gifting Oban House as an operational hub for the weekend in October 2019.

Project partnership or strategic development work has been completed with numerous partners via the brokerage, including The Helpful Bureau, Broxtowe Women's Project, Broxtowe Community Celebration, Chilwell School, Beeston Resource Centre and Nottingham Bike Works.

VAB make volunteer referrals to partners on a weekly basis. It has not run regular forum meetings recently, but did host an event in June 2019 to celebrate National Volunteer week which attracted 21 organisations. VAB regularly sends out information using the Council's weekly bulletin and host a number of free training events for partner organisations and their staff and volunteers

Future plans for partnership working, agreed with the Communities Officer, are to capture data from partners connected with the CVS sector via a SWOT consultation in the coming months. This will serve as a foundation for the March partnership board meeting which is dedicated to examining and pulling together the CVS, with

task and finish groups being created to problem solve or research any areas identified as needing attention. At this meeting there will be discussions about the best way to develop a regular partnership forum.

VAB believes that a cohesive and robust CVS network needs to be developed in the area, to encourage joined up working, the sharing of resource, including information, as well as discussing the strategy for ideas like the universal volunteer passport scheme. It is hoped that this structure will also generate resources (e.g. an open source funding register) and a digital network for sharing information between CVS partners. Also, that some form of panel could be generated, who would speak on behalf of the sector, both to represent the CVS at meetings and in a lobbying capacity.

Preliminary discussions with CVS lead organisations and the Council's Communities Officer have identified the following themes for the forum meets: social prescribing and its relationship to grant aid, best practice in the CVS sectors, funding, inclusivity, training and health.

Voluntary Action Broxtowe is committed to leaving a positive legacy for all who have been involved with it and to ensure positive volunteering opportunities and support for the local community in the future.