

ChangeUp/Defra
in the
South East

Regional Consortium Newsletter

Newsletter 3
June 2005

Documents mentioned in this
newsletter are available at

www.raise-networks.org.uk/quicklinks/

under "ChangeUp/Defra"

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Programme Updates

The Regional Consortium has a number of programmes as part of the wider ChangeUp/Defra programme for the South East. More details are below:

Capital Investment Programme

The Regional Consortium has £1.3m of capital investment to allocate on a competitive basis in 2 application rounds closing on 15 August and 24 October for decisions on 16 September and 16 November respectively. Guidelines have been sent to all local consortia leads. Funded capital projects must help implement ChangeUp "Infrastructure Development Plans". Queries, guidelines and forms from Crispin Davies on 07812 581850 or email cdavies.gose@go-regions.gov.uk.

Additional Support Programme

This programme is to ensure that more marginalised groups such as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), the smaller faith groups, asylum seekers, refugees and travellers are fully engaged with the ChangeUp initiative. The programme supplements and dovetails in with the main work and will lead to a more inclusive and robust Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) in each locality. George Mathew has been appointed on a part time basis to assist consortia in the Thames Valley area. Contact George on 07769 856337 or by email at geomat10@btinternet.com.

Your Thoughts

This is the third edition of the newsletter but is it hitting the spot? The Regional Consortium would like to know what you have found most useful, what you have found least useful, and what you would like to see in future editions. Over the next few weeks the Regional Consortium will be developing a new web site as a central information resource. Temporary links to ChangeUp/Defra South East and Regional Consortium documents can be found at www.raise-networks.org.uk/quicklinks under "ChangeUp/Defra".

Local Consortia Networking Event - A networking event for local consortia has been organised for 9 June in Leatherhead. Feedback will be provided to the Regional Consortium and in the next edition of the newsletter. Would a similar event be helpful in the Autumn when draft Infrastructure Plans are emerging?

Please send comments on any of the above to Crispin Davies on 07812 581850 or email cdavies.gose@go-regions.gov.uk.

More Feedback on Network Briefings

The series of network briefing events is showing the importance of delivering the messages and progress of the ChangeUp programme face-to-face with the voluntary/community sector (VCS). Feedback from both the events in Winchester (February) and Surrey (April) indicates that attendees find the briefings very informative and they would recommend attending a briefing to a VCS colleague. RAISE are organising the briefings but representatives from Government Office South East (GOSE), including the ChangeUp Co-ordinators, are involved in the presentation.

In addition to providing an update on ChangeUp and the work of the Regional Consortium, the briefings aim to give the VCS an opportunity to ask questions. Audience questions illustrate that the VCS is particularly concerned about funding sustainability and the feasibility of full cost recovery. There is an eagerness to involve the public sector in these events, as they will be critical in developing these funding partnerships.

The audiences at the briefings have been diverse in their knowledge on ChangeUp. Some people are immersed in their local consortia developing Infrastructure Development Plans while others are only just starting to understand what ChangeUp will mean to their organisation. To cope with this range of knowledge, RAISE has developed an attendee pack which contains information on the history of ChangeUp. Some comments are suggesting that some form of "Beginner's Guide" may be needed, therefore, a briefing sheet is being planned.

Local Consortia Contacts

A list of the 20 local consortia contacts has been added to the current Regional Consortium web pages. If you want to know how ChangeUp is being implemented in your area, you will now know who to contact! Go to www.raise-networks.org.uk/quicklinks and go to "ChangeUp/Defra".

Statutory Viewpoint

ChangeUp brings with it the opportunity for the voluntary/community sector (VCS) and public/statutory partners to work together. With this in mind, the Regional Consortium decided to ask local authorities for their views on ChangeUp. We hope to be able to bring you responses from the various authorities in the region in future newsletters. This month, Kent County Council have kindly provided us with their view on ChangeUp in Kent.

Kent County Council's Response to ChangeUp

"Since the national Compact in 1998 and the Government's 2002 *Cross Cutting Review of the Role of the Voluntary and Community Sector in Service Delivery*, the most significant Government initiative is ChangeUp - the cross-Government framework on capacity building and infrastructure in the voluntary/community sector (VCS). In effect, this is the equivalent of the Gershon challenge to the public sector - a reconfiguration of services to increase efficiency and effectiveness. In total, there are over 40 separate relevant Government initiatives which impact on the VCS, including the new policy guidelines for ChangeUp - Developing Capacity: Next Steps for ChangeUp.

How might Kent County Council (KCC) respond to the forces that are driving change at national level and within Kent itself -particularly ChangeUp?

Government strategy is focussed on the contribution of the VCS in delivering public services. In Kent's case, this means supporting the partner priorities within the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the PSA 2. Community engagement and effective partnerships are a key part of the next Corporate Performance Assessment and Joint Area Review in 2007-08. The VCS is a key stakeholder group within the Kent Partnership, but would a stronger relationship be more beneficial in terms of leadership, governance and shared investment in Kent communities?

The Kent Compact was developed in partnership with the Kent Community Alliance of Networks (Kent CAN) - the main umbrella body for Kent's VCS and published in March 2004. The Implementation Group is prioritising the development of policy codes for the BME sector, Funding and Procurement, and Volunteering to provide a clear framework for action.

For ChangeUp, the new County Consortium - Voluntary Infrastructure Consortium Kent (VICK) - is now in place. KCC Directorate representatives are the same as the Compact Implementation Group enabling synergies between Compact activities and the ChangeUp agenda. The first Consortium meeting in May set out the timetable for the production of the Infrastructure Development Plan by February 2006. The immediate implication for KCC and the public sector is to bring representation to the Executive Group and to help steer a collaborative approach.

With a new Chief Executive, there is immense energy and enthusiasm to exploit change in every sense. KCC has committed to strengthen its relationship with the VCS in the following ways:

- **Community Leadership:** consider establishing a lead Member role for Communities .
- **Relationship Coherence:** greater rigour and consistency in VCS and Compact policy and partnership.
- **Best Practice:** continuous improvements in joint working to deliver service priorities within the LAA.

The opportunity is clear and the timing could not be better."

This article was provided by Robert Hardy, Assistant Director of Strategic Planning at KCC. Telephone: 01622 221343, email: robert.hardy@kent.gov.uk.

Defra Early Spend Evaluation

National News - Defra ran an early spend programme in shire counties. The evaluation report will be available shortly and Government Office South East (GOSE) will ensure that all local consortia and Regional Consortium members will receive copies. Electronic copies will be available shortly from Alison Milsom-Smith at amilsom-smith.gose@go-regions.gov.uk The lessons of the rural early spend apply across the region - not just in rural areas. So, as a minimum, careful reading and application of the executive summary will be beneficial to local consortia. GOSE is considering how to best to encourage the implementation of good practice identified.

When	Event	Location	Contact	Telephone	Email
29/06/05	VCS Network Briefing Meeting	Dartford, Kent	Nickie	01483 501342	nickie@raise-networks.org.uk
09/09/05	VCS Network Briefing Meeting	Thames Valley	Nickie	01483 501342	nickie@raise-networks.org.uk
02/11/05	VCS Network Briefing Meeting	tbc	Nickie	01483 501342	nickie@raise-networks.org.uk