

## **RAYLEIGH AND ROCHFORD ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY SERVICES (RRAVS) – POSITION UPDATE**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on the current position in relation to the Rayleigh and Rochford Association of Voluntary Services.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 At the meeting of the former Finance and Procedures Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April, the Chief Executive advised that it would be opportune to report into Committee prior to the summer recess outlining the latest position in respect of RRAVS, given that a number of changes were already underway and further pressures on the voluntary and community sector were anticipated (Min. No. 148/2006).

### **3 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 RRAVS has been undergoing a number of changes of late, with the separation of the Wyvern Community Transport element with effect from 1 April 2006. RRAVS itself is now a company limited by Guarantee, although it has maintained charitable status. There has been a change in the Directors/Trustees. The directors are now Ron Rowson and Ralph Phelps, with a third director, Marion Horsley, currently being registered. Cllr. June Lumley has become Company Secretary. Esme Barker is no longer a trustee or secretary of RRAVS.
- 3.2 As well as changes at the top, with the uncoupling of the Community Transport element, RRAVS has also seen some changes to its staffing. All its employees are part time. There is a Development Co-ordinator (15 hours), Assistant Co-ordinator (10 hours) and a fixed term (1 year) Funding Officer post (10 hours). In addition, there are part time staff employed on specific Laptop and Young Carers projects. Core funding equates to approximately £32,000 per annum.
- 3.3 Rochford District Council currently provides an annual grant of £1,800. In addition, RRAVS has formal service level agreements with the County Council (over a 3-year period – 2006-2009), which currently provides funding of £16,585 per annum, and the Primary Care Trust (1 year only) which provides £10,650. Other sources of income mean that RRAVS currently meets its core expenditure commitments.
- 3.4 There is increasing expectation from Government that the voluntary sector has a key role to play in expanding local voluntary and community activity and helping to deliver local services on the ground. To help facilitate this process

specific funding streams are becoming available, such as the Investing in Communities initiative, although to take advantage of such opportunities, it is apparent that the voluntary sector, and groups such as RRAVS, are going to need to adapt to the changing environment which is developing.

- 3.5 The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), of which the District Council is a member, has already started to think about how the voluntary sector, and key groups such as RRAVS, can respond to the challenges presented by the changing environment. An issue that still needs to be properly addressed is whether the voluntary sector and groups such as RRAVS have the capacity and resources to take advantage of the emerging opportunities and whether they should in fact do so. The LSP, in its new format with an Executive Board, will attempt to address this issue, with any specific proposals and implications for Rochford District Council being reported back to this Committee.

#### **4 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 It is important to the District that there is a well developed voluntary sector which is able to take advantage of any funding streams and initiatives on offer, for the benefit of local residents. At the same time, the involvement of the District Council in this process needs to recognise the potential reputational risks to the authority in terms of its relationship with the voluntary sector.

#### **5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No additional resources at this stage, although there will be further input by the Leader and the Chief Executive through the Local Strategic Partnership.

#### **6 RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To note the current position and the role of the Local Strategic Partnership in attempting to look at the Voluntary Sector and the role of RRAVS within the District.

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Chief Executive

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**Background Papers:-**

None

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