



Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood

Business Plan

June 2013



Community
Legal Service



CONTENTS

- 1. About HR&EC2
- 2. Our Mission.....2
- 3. Our Values2
- 4. What we do2
- 5. Partnerships.....5
- 6. Quality assurance and Monitoring5
- 7. Organisational Structure6
- 8. FUNDING7
- 9. Evidence of need9
- 10.The Future9

1. About HR&EC

Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood promotes justice and equality of opportunity among individuals and groups of people from different backgrounds. Our targeted services are developed to achieve community cohesion, integration and a life free from discrimination and prejudice.

We have a Board of Trustees to govern the work of the organisation, with two full time and four part time members of staff at present. We support volunteers, students and placements from local schools and colleges. We are a voluntary organisation with individual and organisation members.

We are a Registered Charity, and a Company Limited by Guarantee. Our website www.humanrightsandequalitiescharnwood.org gives further details.

We were established as Charnwood Community Relations Council in 1969 and in 1996 we became Charnwood Racial Equality Council to reflect our commitment to racial matters. In 2008 we became Human Rights & Equalities Charnwood (HR&EC), to reflect the widening brief to work on all equalities (Race, Age, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability and Religion & Belief)..

2. Our Mission

We will:

- Work towards eliminating discrimination
- Campaign for equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between all persons in the Borough of Charnwood, in the County of Leicestershire

3. Our Values

- Respect for the person
- Confidentiality in services provided to clients, individuals or groups
- Transparency in the operation of our business
- Integrity in our relationships with funders
- Mutual responsibility between trustees
- Sharing of knowledge and experience between members, staff and trustees
- Trust and co-operation with partners

4. What we do

4.1 Heart of the community

We act as a focal point and source of expertise on matters of equality and diversity for individuals, groups, communities and organisations, drawing upon the experience and knowledge of our staff, trustees, volunteers and partners. This includes active contribution to civic life through various policy and partnership groups, project development and delivery, specialist local knowledge, casework, co-ordination of events that aim to improve community cohesion, such as the Mela, Feast of Faiths, One World Week and Europe-wide Youth Conferences, and facilitating Loughborough Council of Faiths and Charnwood Refugees & Asylum Seekers Forum.

4.1.1 Events and raising awareness

The attendance and interest generated by our general meetings and Public Lectures on topics of local and national importance shows that there is demand for us to continue holding these events. There is also a need for events to promote community cohesion and we continue to work in partnership with key agencies to deliver these. We always seek to ensure all the events are promoted to villages and to engage with people and groups in rural areas in Charnwood.

4.1.2 Work in deprived areas of Charnwood

Some places in Charnwood are identified as 'pockets of deprivation' and people living in these areas experience multiple deprivation. We work in partnership with a wide range of agencies and with identified groups to help these communities respond to the challenges they are facing, including through the community houses established in these areas.

4.2 Strategic work

We work strategically with statutory service providers through Charnwood Together (the Local Strategic Partnership) and the Stronger Communities Group. Local agencies and partners including Charnwood Borough Council and the Police consult us for advice and assistance with aspects of their strategy documents. We work to expand our remit to include all equalities and broaden and strengthen the partnerships of the organisation.

4.3 Promoting human rights

We are working towards the promotion of Human Rights in order to empower individuals and communities with Human Rights language and tools. The first phase consists of raising general awareness of Human Rights amongst both the general public, staff of partner organisations and internal staff/trustees by carrying out quantitative research, delivering workshops, and producing fact sheets. The next phase based upon the feedback and findings from phase one, will identify the key Human Rights issues relevant at the local level, to enable us to focus on delivering a more targeted approach.

4.4 Advice work

This service is funded by Leicestershire County Council to provide advice, information and guidance to individual clients. We have one full time and 2 part-time Advice Officers and a part-time Outreach Officer who carries out home visits for elderly, disabled and vulnerable people who are unable to visit our offices.

4.5 Work with south asian women (Chances for All)

We have successfully secured a 5 year project funded by The Big Lottery Fund to work with South Asian Women. This project employs two part time Development Officers to encourage and engage women's groups and individual women to build their confidence and skills to play a fuller role in society. So far the project has organised keep fit sessions, health life style events, weekly project women's group, a community allotment and has started a directory of services for the women to access.

4.6 Conferences/training courses for young people

We have an established track record of organising and delivering a series of successful youth conferences, training programmes and exchanges bringing together young people and youth work leaders from across and beyond the EU. Funded by the British Council, most of the events have involved representatives from up to 15 different countries and have been held in a range of different countries on a wide range of issues. Young people from Charnwood, representatives of local communities, agencies and partners have contributed to these events, especially those held in Charnwood.

4.7 Raising awareness of topical issues

The attendance and interest at our general meetings and Public Lectures on topics of local and national importance shows that there is demand for us to continue holding them. There is a need for events to promote awareness, understanding and community cohesion and we continue to work in partnership with key agencies to deliver these.

4.8 The political scene

National trends suggest the growth of influence and electoral success of politically divisive attitudes particular associated with organised political parties, which, while legitimately constituted and recognized, specifically include within their policies discrimination against groups on grounds of race, or faith, or personal lifestyles, or who directly challenge Human Rights legislation. This has caused real concerns and we need to be alert to the continuation of such attitudes. These are closely monitored by ourselves, other political parties and the police.

4.9 Website and Facebook fan page & Twitter

We actively engage people using our Website, Facebook Fan Page and have now joined Twitter.

4.10 Recent completed projects

4.10.1 Hate Incident Action Project

This three-year project, funded by the Equality & Human Rights Commission, raised awareness of hate crime/incidents, supported victims of hate crime and set up reporting centres. Although the project is finished, we continue to work closely with the Police, the Hate Monitoring Project and Victim Support to help victims of hate crime.

4.10.2 Forced marriage and honour based violence

We delivered a project that raised awareness of forced marriages and 'honour'-based violence.

4.11 Beneficiaries

- Individuals in the Borough who are at risk of discrimination through race, gender, sexual orientation, religion & belief, age and disability, or because they are newly arrived immigrants, refugees or asylum seekers or visitors residing in the country;
- Vulnerable people and those who lack understanding of how systems work for benefits, housing, education, social services, health services or employment;
- Local voluntary, community organisations and groups, especially those representing all the equality strands;
- Local statutory agencies e.g. Charnwood Borough Council, Leics. County Council, Leics Constabulary;
- Local employers and businesses through Loughborough's Business Improvement District;
- Local schools, colleges and Loughborough University;
- Local Faith groups;
- Deprived socio-economic groups;
- Young people through our work in UK and across Europe;
- Victims of hate crime/incidents, their families and communities affected by hate incidents; and
- Women from minority backgrounds, particularly South Asian and Muslim.

5. Partnerships

We recognise that organisations must work in association, as each contributes to the whole. We maintain active and strong partnerships with a wide range of organisations and continue to identify new partners in the Borough and beyond.

6. Quality assurance and Monitoring

6.1 Community Legal Services Quality Mark

We have achieved the CLS Quality Mark for its provision of legal information and help under the General Help with Casework level. Our Treasurer is the Quality Mark Representative and has oversight of an annual review of quality processes.

6.2 Quality assurance

All our projects are monitored and evaluated both for the funders and for internal information. Regular reports are produced.

6.3 Change control

Should Quality Assurance indicate that a project is not performing as agreed, funders and partners will be promptly informed with a view to re-negotiating targets and outcomes.

6.4 Support for staff

Trustee mentors and appraisers are appointed for each member of staff. Annual Continuing Personal Development (CPD) and appraisal meetings are held, and training provided as appropriate.

6.5 Support for trustees/directors

A skills audit is conducted annually for Trustees/Directors; training is provided as needs are identified; and an induction pack with procedures and policies has been developed for new Trustees/Directors.

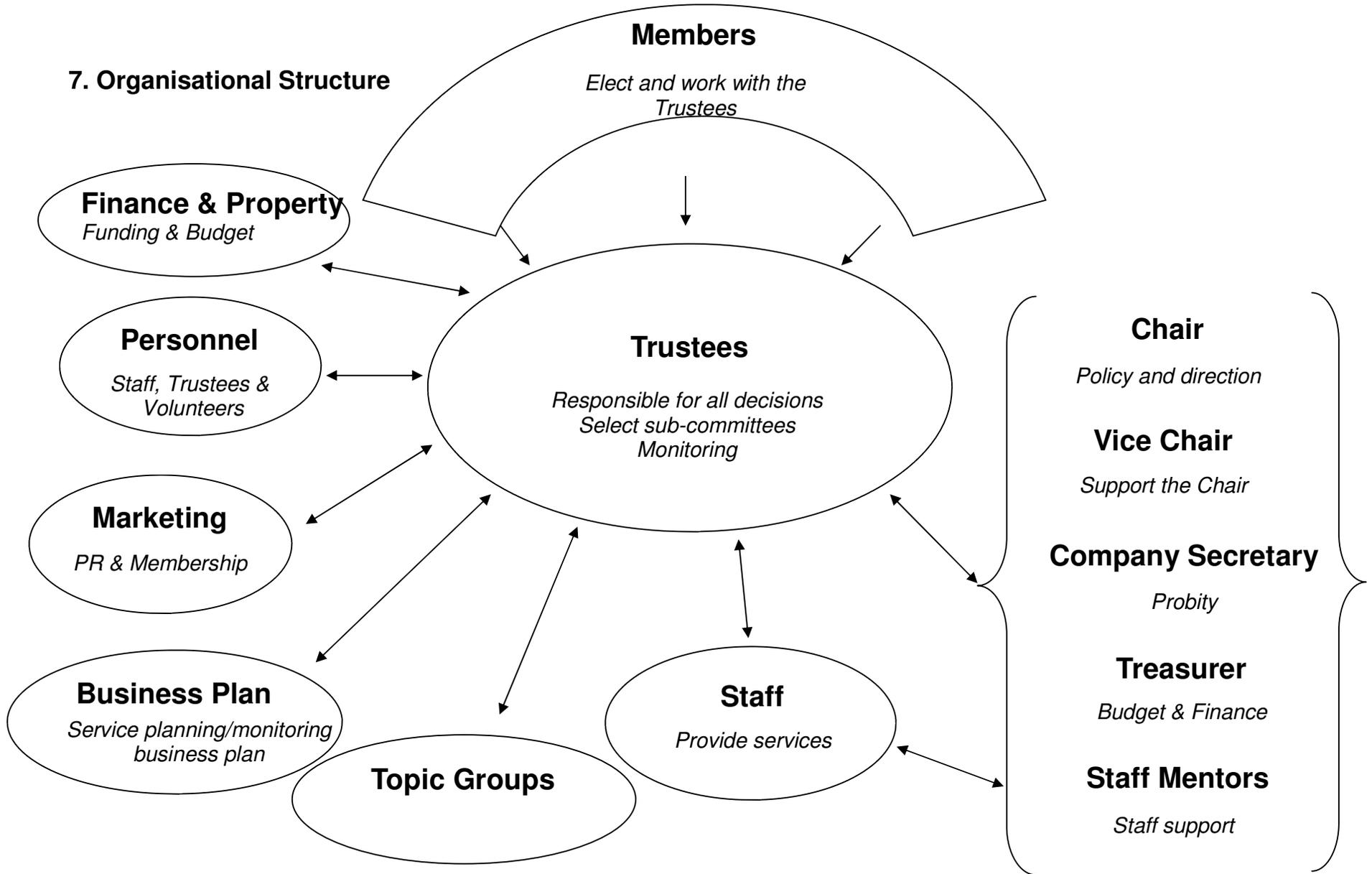
6.6 Quality measures

We

- are accredited to level 2 (working towards Level 3) of OISC, Ref. N200100221
- are accredited by CLS Quality Mark, Ref. NOTT0149
- use Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO)

The Company Secretary ensures that all our legal requirements are met with the Charity Commission and Companies House.

7. Organisational Structure



8. FUNDING

8.1 Background

Our core funding is from Leicestershire County Council and Charnwood Borough Council for casework and administration. In the past we have secured funding for various projects. We seek to be innovative in our approach to funding for needs in the community as they are identified.

8.2 Fundraising plan

The Finance & Property Committee is charged with securing funding for our current and planned services.

8.3 Funding

We maintain a rolling three-year fundraising plan for our core work and a two-year plan for future projects.

CORE WORK

Service	Funder	Past year 2012/13	Current year 1 2013/14	Year 2 2014/15	Year 3 2015/16	Comment
Information & advice	Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) - main grant	10,493	9,968			CBC are reviewing the 2014/5 funding of strategic partners (including us)
General help to clients - Bangladeshi Community Project	CBC - Bangladeshi Community grant	8,809	8,369			Same as above.
Information and advice service - main grant	Leicestershire County Council (LCC)	47,866	48,344			LCC intend to subject this funding to a commissioning arrangement from April 2014 in which we will take part.
Information and advice service - Bangladeshi Community Development Project	LCC	3,643	3,680			Same as above.
Core work	The Henry Smith Charity	9,500				

CURRENT PROJECTS

Project	Funder	Past year 2012/13	Current year 1 2013/14	Year 2 2014/15	Year 3 2015/16	Comment
Representation & Engagement - faith aspect	Leicestershire County Council	10,000	10,000			In partnership with Leicester Race Equality Centre & Leicester LGBT Group
Chances for All	Big Lottery	65,500	40,000	41,000	42,000	5 year project commenced January 2013
Human rights awareness	Vodafone		2,750			4 month project April to July 2013

FUTURE PROJECTS

Project	Potential funder	Current year 1 2013/14	Year 2 2014/15	Year 3 2015/16	Comment
Human rights awareness	AB Charitable Trust	7,500			We wish to expand our work on raising human rights awareness locally
Core funding	Not yet known		70,000	70,000	In the light of the uncertainty of our present core funding, we will seek to obtain alternatives

Trustees are very mindful of the uncertainty over funding after 2013/14 when there is no on-going commitment from traditional core funders. We will continue to work closely with those funders during 2013/14 with a view to reaching agreements that will secure continuity. We will continue to actively identify, investigate and pursue other funding opportunities that enable the organisation's strategic aims and objectives to be furthered. This includes being open to new ways of working, new service developments and continuing to strengthening our partnerships and relationships with key stakeholder organisations.

9. Evidence of need

At the last census Charnwood had 166k population of which 80% are people of 18 year plus who form our client base which generated 1.6k cases in 2011/12. Charnwood is particularly affected by socio-economic deprivation with two wards in Loughborough being classified as among the most deprived nationally. One of these wards is a government Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) ranking in the top 4% in England for multiple deprivations and 40% of its population is BME.

9.1.1 Work on equalities and human rights issues

Our current work on raising awareness of human rights is indicating a general lack of awareness of these issues.

9.1.2 Asylum seekers and refugees

Currently we have a small but significant number of asylum seekers and refugees, mostly concentrated in the town of Loughborough, who have particular needs. We are working closely with the Charnwood Refugees and Asylum Seekers Forum and we need to monitor the situation in the area regularly and take joint action when necessary.

9.1.3 Faith groups

International and national events show the importance of engaging people of all faiths and of no faith in working with each other in the community. We need to continue to work with and support the Loughborough Council of Faiths and other partners in this necessary work.

10. The Future

10.1 The challenges we face

Services such as HR&EC are affected by a web of events, some of which we have alluded to already. Here we bring together the main challenges we see:

10.1.1 Inequalities

Inequality across the diversity strands is experienced day to day within our communities; our evidence shows that the need remains and is increasing in the current economic climate.

10.1.2 Reduced spending

The pressure on the public and third sectors to reduce spending is reducing the capacity in society to support those most at risk of experiencing unequal treatment, including support to access services and entitlements.

10.1.3 Support in times of change

Legislative changes, for instance affecting benefits, social care, health provision and immigration, continue and people in our communities need help in understanding how those changes affect them and what action they may need to take – support that is not available, not accessible or not trusted from other sources.

10.1.4 Commissioning

The adoption of “commissioning” by service funders offers challenges and opportunities for smaller third sector organisations like us – the opportunities are around being able to

bid either alone or in partnership for new work while the challenges arise from a tendency to aggregate activity into large contracts where smaller organisations lack the breadth of experience (because they are specialists) and the capacity to respond.

10.1.5 Funding

As an organisation with a strong track record of service delivery and achievements we are facing significant financial challenges over the coming year or so. Funding from local authorities in the form of grant support may be reduced further or may be withdrawn while the continuing adoption of large scale commissioning creates significant barriers for us in retaining existing work or winning new work.

10.2 How we will address the challenges

Given these and other challenges, over the period of this Business Plan our priority will be ensuring survival of the organisation, so that it continues to represent and provide services to some of the most vulnerable in our communities.

Our “survival plan” will be based upon:

1. Continuing to focus on the particular needs of the communities we support and representing those needs to the wider community.
2. Developing our role as the primary source of information, advice and expertise about the communities that we serve.
3. Openness to new ways of working, including innovative approaches to existing activity and to meeting the needs of commissioning bodies.
4. Robust financial management so that we live within our means.
5. Seeking new sources of income either in our own right or in partnership with others.
6. Investing in relationships and partnerships that add value to our work.

In the short term we will:

1. Continue to work with our principal funders to endeavour to secure agreements that sustain our core activities
2. We will review our current activities; some activities may stop, for others we will seek to generate income from them.
3. We will consider the development of new services that will generate income.
4. We will actively engage bidding for relevant contracts either in our own right or in partnership.
5. We will continue to consider other funding opportunities, for instance in relation to advice and information, social integration, new communities etc.

In the medium to long term we aspire to be:

1. A well respected, trusted and professional third sector organisation at the heart of which are services to and representation of our local communities
2. To have further developed our profile at regional and national levels as an organisation that delivers.
3. To be offering a range of activities and services that underpin and enable our charitable aims.
4. To be financially independent and sustainable long term.

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