

Community First New Forest

**Business Plan
2013-2016**



... building relationships, enabling action!

**Registered Charity No. 1068964
Registered Company No. 3483827**

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Executive Summary

As a Council for Voluntary Service we serve the needs of people and communities in the New Forest and its environs with the aim of enabling them to achieve an excellent quality of life. This business plan sets out our overarching SMART strategy (new acronym: Sustainable, Manageable, Accountable, Realistic, Targeted) and the operational objectives which are derived from this strategy. It is designed to align the charity's services realistically with the environmental climate and available resources.

It sets out our approaches supporting the delivery of the operational objectives through partnerships, entrepreneurial activities including social enterprise and trading arms, and through funding sources and our plans for operational restructure. These plans for operational restructure are aimed at providing the best internal environment for success as a business.

The plans and targets for each of the five services (Voluntary and Community, Home Support, Transport, Children and Young People, Home Improvement) sit under this parent document and are designed to meet specific objectives and to be achieved within given time frames.

Overall this plan sets out a 'roadmap' for Community First New Forest's success for the next three years. The map is not static and can be modified as local and wider network influences demand, so that the charity is both proactive and reactive in achieving its SMART strategic direction.



Community First New Forest (CFNF) Vision and Mission Statement

Our Vision

An excellent quality of life for everyone living in the area served by CFNF

Our Mission

To identify the needs of local people and meet those needs through sustainable solutions;
and

To support and promote the effective development of the local voluntary and community sector.

Overarching Organisational Strategy:

To make our charity SMART (new acronym) i.e. Sustainable, Manageable, Accountable, Realistic, Targeted. By this strategy we aim to achieve optimum efficiency and to demonstrate through customer engagement and satisfaction that our work adds tangible value to their lives.

2. Introduction and Overview

CFNF is one of eleven Hampshire Councils for Voluntary Service (CVS) lying on the south-western edge of the county. It has borders with Dorset and Wiltshire and is close to the towns of Southampton, Salisbury, Bournemouth and Poole. Its headquarters are in Ringwood, a town lying at the edge of the New Forest and dubbed The Gateway to the Forest. The map below shows the main area of its activities in dark green.

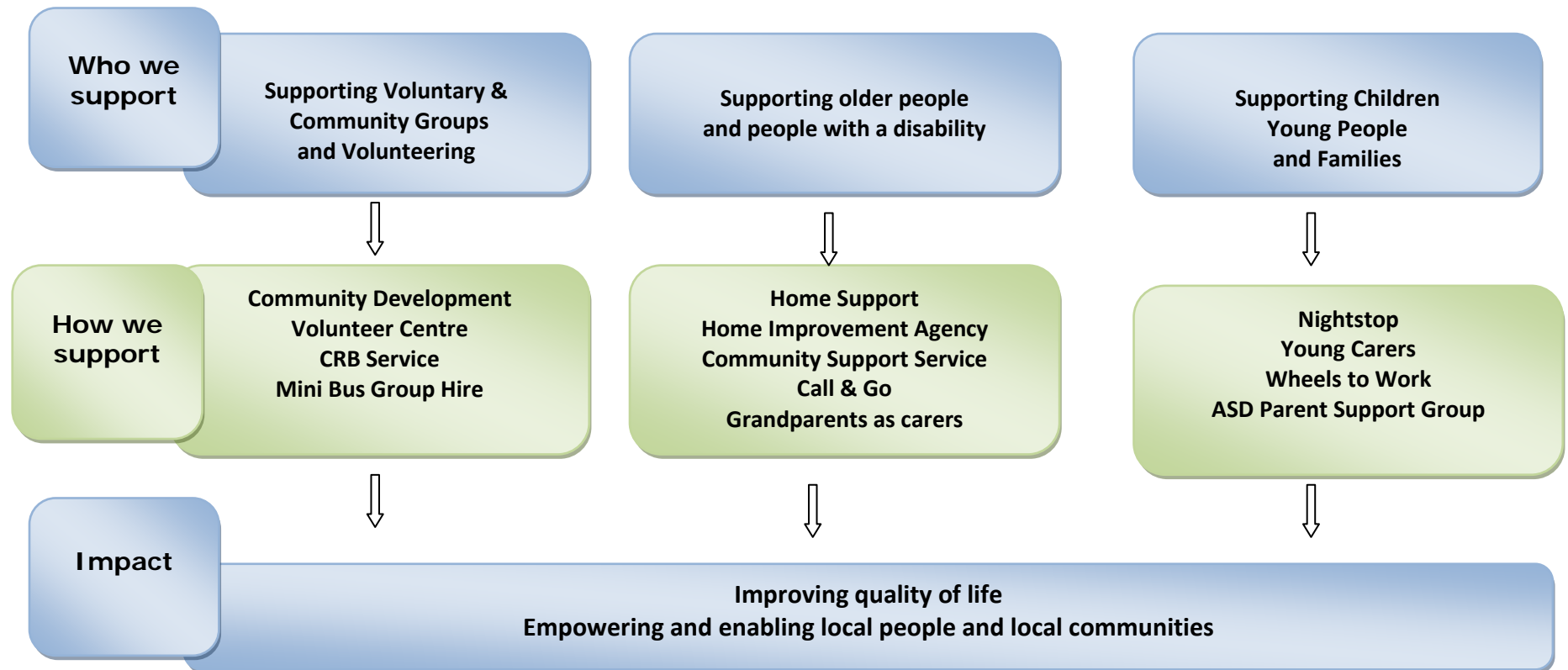


The key purpose of this Business Plan is to enable CFNF to follow a strategy that meets current and future challenges flexibly and is SMART (Sustainable, Manageable, Accountable, Realistic, Targeted).

CFNF is a registered charity and is a company limited by guarantee. It was originally formed in the 1980s but has been in its current form for the last ten years. It is now a highly customer focused CVS. Such organisations generally aim to improve the quality of life for residents in the local area by supporting local voluntary activity and providing a range of services and facilities, particularly for older people, carers and people with disabilities. As an umbrella organisation we support over 200 other charities in their work, and significantly we also run a number of services of our own that seek to meet local needs, as shown in section 3.

Our annual turnover is in the region of £1.5 million (Annex 1 provides summary details) and we retain enough reserves to cover three to six months running costs. We husband our resources (both human and financial) carefully, to ensure these are used wisely and that their use adds value to the communities and other organisations we serve. The outcomes we achieve, as demonstrated by customer satisfaction and usage, are both tangible and effective.

3. CFNF Impact



4. Environmental and Economic Climate -Scenario Analysis

The funding environment for the voluntary and community sector has become more complex and challenging in recent years. A recent Charities Aid Foundation on-line survey of 252 senior level charity workers reported that one in six charities believe they may face closure in the coming year amid public spending cutbacks and falling donations from the public. Nearly half of charities say they are being forced to dip into reserves to maintain their work, while nearly one in three say they fear being forced to cut services or jobs. Hitherto we have been accustomed to grants and contracts coming directly to us. We now find we must compete in the open market with shareholder or centrally funded businesses. These are all distinct challenges for the way in which we now operate and force us to adopt a more entrepreneurial approach and concomitantly a business plan which includes a focus on reserves and surplus. Any surplus generated will be held in reserves or ploughed back into service improvement. It is essential that we have sufficient free reserves to sustain us through this difficult funding climate!

In addition we face challenges in terms of:

- Volunteer recruitment and retention
- Short term planning filtering down from central government
- Keeping legally up to date – examples here include our policies, criminal records checks and new legislation
- Ensuring we maintain high quality services
- Addressing the increased competition for declining resources

5. Governance

The Board of Directors/Trustees of CFNF currently consists of eight members, three (including Chair and Vice Chair) female and five male. The Officers are Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer. The current trustees have a wide range of relevant skills. Additional trustees are also currently sought who will improve diversity and contribute additional skills.

Trustees are elected at the AGM and serve for three years. They must then retire but are eligible for re-election. Before appointment trustees must provide two references, undergo a CRB check, declare their eligibility to act and agree to adhere to the Nolan principles. A register of interests is held and updated annually.

The Board meets bi-monthly. Decisions can be taken by a majority, with the Chair having a casting vote, but in practice unanimity is generally achieved. The Board has established two committees, Finance and Analysis & Strategy, both of which have clear terms of reference and bring recommendations to the Board for approval and ratification.

The Board undergoes an annual skills audit when each member's performance is reviewed informally with the Chair and objectives agreed for the next year. The Chair's performance is also reviewed by another trustee.

Trustees are encouraged to make links with staff members, especially when they have skills or interests of value. This encourages reciprocal relationships that foster the charity's 'family' ethos. At the same time however the Board ensures that governance is clearly separated from day-to-day operations of the organisation to avoid trustee involvement in management and to allow staff to carry out their designated roles without hindrance.

6. Organisation Analyses

The Board of Trustees carried out an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities (SWOT) for CFNF. Examples from the analysis include:

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Successful proven track record in delivering quality services</p> <p>Strong governance and leadership</p> <p>Experience of business and the competitive tendering environment</p> <p>Extensive engagement with a range of areas and strategies</p>	<p>Awareness and understanding of CFNF is low in some parts of the New Forest</p> <p>CFNF structure may limit the potential for development and sustainability of services</p> <p>Diverse range of services can be seen as a weakness and as a strength</p>	<p>Alternative funding measures (donations, legacies etc.) and business links</p> <p>Innovation of current services, extend the range and reach of our work</p> <p>Collaboration in delivery and the sharing of resources</p> <p>Developing more privately funded services</p> <p>Competitive tendering opportunities</p>	<p>Sustainability of funding to services</p> <p>Demographic, social and policy change leading to increased demand</p> <p>No clear strategic direction by external partners on some thematic areas, with issues of duplication</p> <p>Potential for incremental loss of services and the impact on CFNF as a whole</p>

7. Operational Strategy

The overarching (SMART) strategy is implemented via Annual Action Plans. It is our practice to build flexibility into each Action Plan so that we can be both proactive and reactive to the challenges arising in the economic and social environments. These Action Plans are linked to clear performance management objectives and associated monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure tangible and measurable outcomes.

8. Operational Objectives

These objectives help deliver our vision and mission. In each we shall carry out specific actions:

a) Operational Structure

- a. Implement a flexible and responsive organisational structure in which to deliver our services efficiently and with positive outcomes
- b. Build the employee consultative process to improve employee input
- c. Invest in development and training of staff to support key objectives

b) Funding

- a. Establish funding forecasts for the period 2013 – 2016
- b. Robustly pursue tender opportunities
- c. Explore and implement alternative sources of funding to include social media, traditional fundraising, entrepreneurial activity.

c) Service Provision

- a. Confirm needs of CFNF Members
- b. Identify/confirm needs of local communities
- c. Review current CFNF performance/activities in the light of the perceived needs
- d. Develop a flexible and rolling business plan for 2013 with a 2014 – 2016

d) External Relationships

- a. Review and develop our strategic engagement with key partners
- b. Identify key stakeholders and agree contact arrangements

- c. Research partnership potentials
- d. Research social enterprise project(s)

9. Approaches supporting the delivery of operational objectives

9.1.1 Partnerships

The Government's Localism Agenda aims to put responsibility into the hands of local people. In view of the financial cuts that have been made necessary nationwide CFNF is working towards greater engagement in partnership working. We have a number of current partnerships which range from simple resource sharing such as transport between an adjoining Council for Voluntary Services, to a matched funding programme with an Insurance company.

As a first step, the Board is examining what alignments there may be between us and other Council for Voluntary Services and other potential partners. Importance is placed upon alignment of ethos and strategy in such cross sector partnerships to ensure the most mutually beneficial arrangements are found and developed. CFNF is also looking at partnerships within the world of business, where such partnerships can allow profit or share-holding businesses to align themselves with a charity to fulfill their corporate responsibilities

CFNF is committed to working in partnership, where our activities have a strong symbiotic relationship with the strategic priorities of key funders (see Annex 2). Our objectives strongly align and support the strategic priorities of key funders and we will continue to build and strengthen our partnership activities.

9.1.2 Being Entrepreneurial

Our aim in 'being entrepreneurial' is to develop and evolve an approach that sustains and adds value to our community services by seeking new ways of delivering those services to our customary high quality standards and that builds resilience through generating independent funding.

CFNF plans to build on its current achievements in becoming more entrepreneurial in how:

- We deliver services
- Services are funded
- We develop greater independence and resilience

This will be underpinned by 2 approaches:

1. Making current CFNF services more entrepreneurial and 'replicating and growing' services
2. Developing independent funding streams through social enterprise

The first approach is to explore the potential to increase the private income streams of our existing services

Currently CFNF generates Private Client and Fee income from:

- Home Improvement
- Handyman Services
- Care and Support
- Moped Loan
- Call and Go Passenger Transport
- Vetting and Barring Service, processing of checks
- Mini Bus hire to voluntary and community groups

During 2013 all CFNF services will be assessed on the extent to which they are or have the potential to become entrepreneurial. This will identify options, resources and investment needs to support any proposed development plans.

There will also be an assessment of CFNF's capacity and resources to 'replicate and grow' services within the current area of activity which will inform a targeted approach to service development. An example is the Home Support Service which has developed and grown significantly over the past 10 years mainly in the Totton and Waterside areas. The service is well established with systems and process that can be replicated into other areas of the New Forest.

The second approach is Social Enterprise.

Trading activity, when undertaken by VCOs, is often referred to as 'Social Enterprise'. This term has come into increased use over the past few years. It simply means trading for both a social purpose and for financial benefit.

Given the current and projected significant reduction in CFNF's historical sources of funding it is necessary to explore alternative funding sources, including Social Enterprise.

Potential Types of Social Enterprise

There are a number of options including:

1. Income generation in areas where CFNF is already providing a service within the current organisation.
2. Developing an identifiable area of service as a separate business entity or defined trading arm.

At this stage CFNF intends to research options and learn from the activities of other providers who have successfully developed social enterprise. This will help CFNF to take a planned approach in pursuing a social enterprise model that provides independent funding, where surplus funds can be re-invested to the parent company.

An assessment of CFNF's overall capability – Leadership, Staff and Board – to operate a defined "Trading Arm" will also be necessary

9.1.3 Funding Sources

Historically CFNF has provided a core infrastructure support service and an increasing number of other client specific services often originating as pilot projects. The "promote and float " ethos i.e. supporting an organisation to become independent continues but EU contract rules, "best value" requirements and reducing statutory funding have resulted in more services being retained "in house" and contributing to the core costs of CFNF. There are also some, generally single worker, services/projects such as Nightstop, that are not really viable as independent stand-alone services and need to be hosted by a larger organisation.

The core and other services are short or medium term funded mainly by way of grants, contracts and earned income. Some services are currently not funded beyond 2014 which means that, if they are to continue, we must find new sources of income. CFNF therefore needs to:

- identify and tender for contracted services where it can provide the best service for the clients and which fit strategically with other services
- ensure that charges for services are realistic and allow for long term sustainability e.g. cover the cost of replacing equipment or cash flow of retrospective contract/grant payments

- consider other ways of generating income/fundraising for non-contracted services or to provide extras to, but not subsidise, contracted services
- develop a rolling income generation/fundraising programme and timetable
- identify the resources (in house or bought in) to undertake the work
- invest in staff training so that fundraising/income generation is a shared skill and responsibility
- identify emerging needs and work with statutory and voluntary sector partners to develop ways of meeting them
- hold sufficient reserves to wind down a service or maintain it whilst fundraising or to pilot a new service
- 'promote and float' services where appropriate

9.1.4 Restructuring

The current management structure of CFNF has a manager for each service and each service also has its own specific administrative support. This traditional structure results in a compartmentalised approach for each service without the benefits of cross coordination. CFNF wishes to build on its successful development and to develop a more efficient service delivery function by delivering services under one manager with coordinated support. This should enable CFNF to be more cost effective and efficient with increased productivity.

The Board has agreed to implement this approach in 2013. A new appointment of Head of Services is being progressed and a revised organisation structure chart is shown at Annex 3. This proposal also changes the emphasis of the role of the Chief Executive from managing the day to day operation of the organisation to a more strategic role concentrating on the development of CFNF, relationship building and networking. The day to day services will be delivered through the Head of Services.

This process will support a planned evolution for CFNF both in its structure and in its ability to pursue the aim of the Business Plan. It is expected that this positive approach will enable CFNF to expand and build on its existing achievements.

10. Operational Programme 2013

All services will have objectives for the 2013/2104 period. These objectives will be delivered through an agreed set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

KPIs will be:

- Specific and Measurable
- Time-bound
- Allocated to a lead person with responsibility for oversight and reporting

The objectives will apply to the following areas:

- All service operations
- Marketing and promotion of CFNF
- Staff training and support
- CFNF Development (Structure, Funding, Relationships and Enterprise)

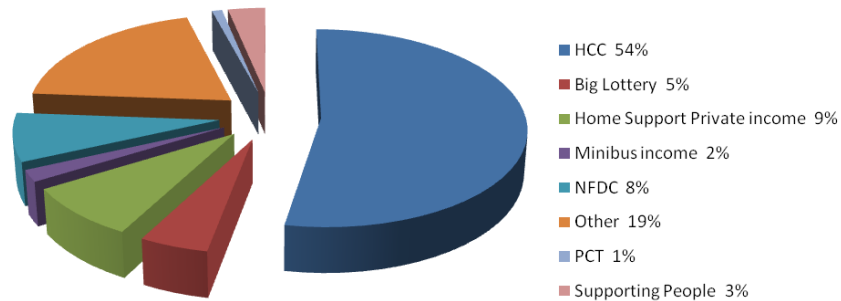
The detailed objectives and KPIs at service level are in a separate document that will be monitored and reviewed by the Board. The Board receives bi-monthly updates on the progress of all services and CFNF developments

Annex 1 – Financial Summary

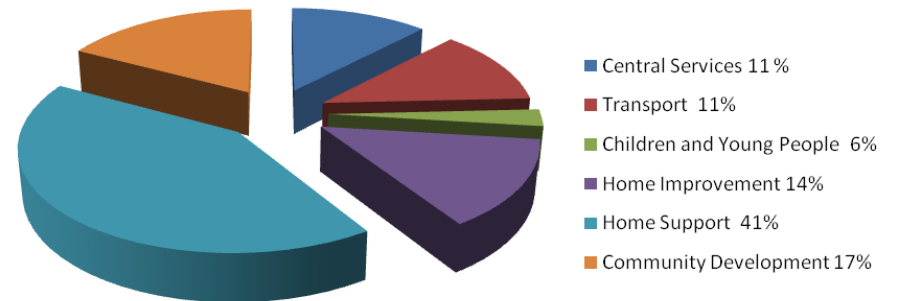
These financial highlights show the breakdown of income by funding source and the expenditure by project. Community First New Forest income for the year ended 2012 totalled £1,520,611 and Net Assets stood at £1,029,341

Copies of the full audited financial statements can be obtained from: The Finance Office, Community First New Forest, Archstone House, Pullman Business Park, Pullman Way, Ringwood, Hants BH24 1HD.



Income for 2011/12




Expenditure for 2011/12



Annex 2 - Strategic priorities of funders as publicised by them

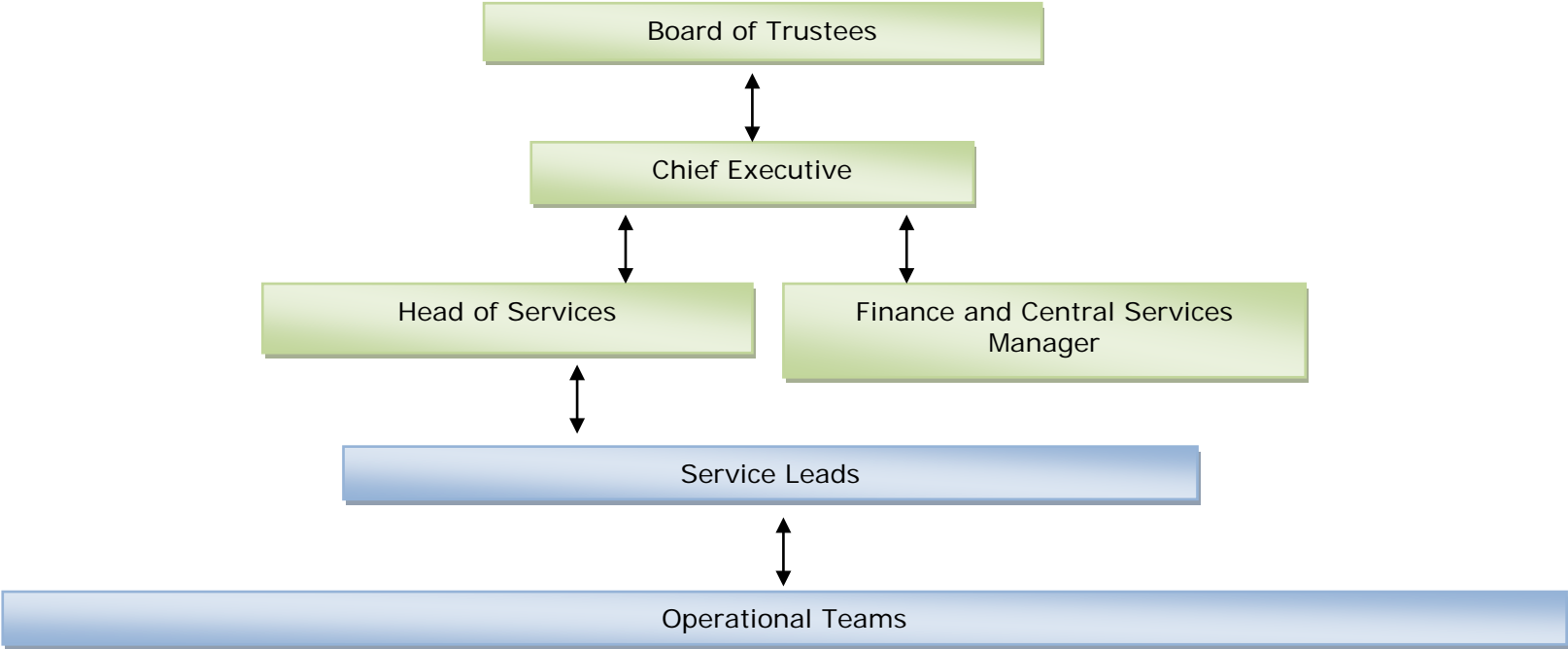
Funder	Priorities
<p>Hampshire County Council</p> 	<p>Hampshire safer and more secure for all</p> <p>This is our overarching priority and is about developing and supporting stronger, safer communities for all by protecting vulnerable people, maximizing safety in the places we live, helping young people to live positive lives and helping diverse communities to feel secure.</p> <p>Maximising wellbeing</p> <p>This priority is about maintaining and improving quality of life and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to support themselves, be active in their community and have access to the services they need, whilst knowing that should things go wrong, we are there to support them.</p> <p>Enhancing our quality of place</p> <p>This priority is all about making the county a good place to be by protecting local distinctiveness and diversity, ensuring excellent facilities, respecting Hampshire's heritage and planning proactively for the future.</p>
<p>New Forest District Council</p> 	<p>Managing all our resources efficiently</p> <p>Maintaining excellent performance in the delivery of our services</p> <p>Improving services to the customer</p> <p>Developing effective partnerships with other local organisations</p>

Funder	Priorities
	<p>Leaders Portfolio</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging the public Delivering through people Supporting local businesses Dealing with local emergencies <p>Finance & Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing our finances Managing our physical assets Delivering customer benefits through technology Maintaining strong governance <p>Housing & Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing our housing Helping provide affordable housing for local people Valuing and supporting older people Working with partners to keep crime and anti social behaviour low <p>Health & Leisure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging active communities through leisure and culture Helping improve people's health Managing our leisure facilities well Promoting opportunities for children and young people

Funder	Priorities
	<p>Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring streets and public spaces are clean Protecting the environment and promoting the wise use of natural resources Delivering the waste collection service people want Managing our coastline Protecting communities from health hazards <p>Planning & Transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling development which meets local aspirations Using planning to protect the environment and maintain local distinctiveness Securing appropriate sites for employment and housing in line with the core strategy Improving transport and traffic management
<p>NHS Hampshire</p> 	<p>Strategic Goals (Healthy Horizons)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reducing health inequalities. Putting patients at the centre of what we do. Modernising healthcare. <p>In support of these goals we have defined five programmes which cover the full spectrum of service we commission:</p>

Funder	Priorities
	<p>Enabling communities to stay healthy.</p> <p>Driving productivity, efficiency and quality in primary care services.</p> <p>Driving productivity and transformational change in community and mental health services</p> <p>Driving productivity, efficiency and quality in acute care.</p> <p>Leading the design of health systems so models of care support transformation of services</p>

Annex 3 – Organisational structure



Annex 4

Achievements and Impact –2012

£355,510 the level of funds secured by groups that we supported with funding advice and support.

£281,500 the annual economic value of volunteering that we supported to happen in the New Forest.

292 volunteers were signposted to opportunities and 177 volunteers were interviewed with 164 placed with local voluntary and community groups across the New Forest.

468 Criminal Records Bureau checks were processed as one of our services to members

399 mini bus hires to local groups

56,000 the number hours of care/support given

We have carried out 295 home safety checks in people's homes

Nightstop provided 197 bednights to 30 young people

More than 180 parents/grandparents attended our parenting support meetings

Community transport provided 8,905 passenger trips

84 is the average age of our Call & Go bus passengers

Young Carers service delivered assemblies in two schools reaching approximately 800 pupils

Examples of client feedback...

'Without your guidance and help setting up our group I doubt if we would be in existence, your support and patience is very much appreciated!.' (CVS member)

'I thought we would have to close down when our normal driver had to give up, but the chap you provided has been brilliant.' (CVS member)

'Not only are our volunteers invaluable to us in maintaining a high standard of care of our students within our workshop environment, but they also bring an added dimension to the project through an injection of different life skills and individual personalities'. (voluntary group)

'I've been on my own for three years but have met some wonderful new friends since travelling on the little bus.' (Call & Go client)

'The training was really professional and I feel so much more confident with my new skills.' (CVS member)

'Getting to see my girl perform on stage was lovely. We don't get chance to have much fun time together but Young Carers has really helped our family. Having someone there when I need to talk has been a great support' (parent of young carer)

We'd like to express our gratitude for all the help you have given which enabled us to keep my wife at home as she wished. The compassion and dignity with which you treated her helped us to keep her at the heart of the family and we will remember it always.... (Home Support client)

'There are lots of reasons Nightstop helped me. Nightstop made me feel safe, gave me time to reflect on the last few months to pinpoint the wrongs and gave me the confidence to make them right. My hosts gave me all the time in the world if I needed to talk. They supported me in everything I did.' (Nightstop client)

'Thank you for a much needed service, meetings are very helpful, it's wonderful to meet and chat with other parents in same situation.' (ASD support group parent)

'Having the moped meant I could work all the shifts they wanted me to, as I was at risk of losing my job when I could only work the daytime ones.' (Wheels to Work young person)

