

TITLE	Voluntary Sector Quality Assessment
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Health and Wellbeing Board on 30 January 2014
WARD	None Specific

Quality assurance standard for voluntary sector

RECOMMENDATION

1) That the Health and Wellbeing Board recognises the need for such a tool (quality assurance standard) and recommend the input from partners to develop the standard.

2) That the Health and Wellbeing Board endorse the Quality Assurance Model as a tool for the Voluntary Sector of Wokingham and strategic partners to use once developed.

It is noted that there are no costs involved.

Wokingham Borough Voluntary Sector Forum
C/O Volunteer Centre Wokingham
Unit 2 The Ritz Plaza
10 Denton Road
WOKINGHAM
RG40 2DX

January 6th, 2014

Copies to:

Chair of Wokingham Health & Well-Being Board
Chair of Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group
Wokingham Public Health Consultant
Chair of Wokingham Children's Safeguarding Board

Dear Chair,

The Wokingham Voluntary Sector Forum recognises the need for a quality assurance standard for the sector. After exploring several models we find Simple Quality Protects (SQP) to be fit for purpose with the flexibility to be a tailor made tool for Wokingham.

The WBVSF needs the model to be endorsed by statutory partners to ensure buy-in and credibility going forwards.

What is SQP?

Simple Quality Protects provides a progressive programme for local community and voluntary organisations to work through, to help them to demonstrate to users, staff, volunteers, funders, sponsors, statutory organisations and influential bodies the quality of their services.

SQP is aimed at infrastructure organisations looking for the introductory tools necessary to ensure voluntary groups have the right foundations in quality, health & safety and safeguarding. Working through the programme will also develop good practice and promote a high standard of work within the voluntary sector.

SQP is a comprehensive introductory toolkit which can be given to voluntary groups to develop their quality journey, ensuring consistent quality in delivery and an effective foundation to work towards national quality standards where appropriate.

How it works;

SQP was designed by the voluntary sector for the voluntary sector to ensure relevance and achievability whilst being inclusive of statutory partners input to achieve a recognisable standard required for the relevant activity.

The licence will be owned by the Wokingham Borough Voluntary Sector Forum who will provide trained assessors. Simple Quality Protects' licence is now owned by 14 local authorities and infrastructure organisations across the South East.

The Simple Quality Protects accreditation carries a fee for each group which is affordable and relevant to turn-over and renewable each year, thus creating a sustainable model.

There are 3 levels of accreditation, Bronze, Silver and Gold which reflect the level of activity within the organisation to ensure quality standards at the appropriate level.

Each level carries a set of minimum requirements to meet and the assessor carries out regular visits to assess, then recommendations are made to achieve each level and support is given to the organisation to fulfill these requirements within a given time frame and to maintain them. Workshops may also be held for group training.

When designing and developing this tool for Wokingham we would invite statutory partners to share their required level of standards to ensure the accreditation meets local requirements and could therefore be endorsed by them going forwards.

Benefits of SQP?

Funders, users and supporters can be assured that the organisations are delivering a quality service and meeting required standards.

The SQP accreditation meets the WSCB monitoring and assurance requirements for organisations to evidence compliance with Section 11 of the Children's Act to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults and children (including their safe staffing arrangements).

Voluntary sector organisations can themselves be assured that potential partners or sub-contractors within the sector meet the required standards.

The workshops associated with the SQP model develop potential partnership working, peer support and sharing of resources within the sector.

Outside potential funders can be assured of quality projects being delivered which may increase the draw of funding into the local economy and enhance local service provision.

SQP supports trustees of organisations to recognise their responsibilities and meet them with support, thus meeting charity law and requirements of other legislation.

I request that you consider the implications of the WBVSF adopting this model and inform us of whether you are prepared to support the development of and endorse the model going forwards. The investment of the licences' costs by the WBVSF requires this from you to ensure buy-in from the sector, recognition by commissioners and credibility for all.

Yours Faithfully,

David Seward
WBVSF Chair