



AGEING BETTER IN BIRMINGHAM (BIG LOTTERY FUND)

BRIEF TO UNDERTAKE:

An Independent Evaluation of the Carers' Voice Project

Part of the Ageing Better in Birmingham Older Carers Local Action Plan

August 2018

1.0 INTRODUCTION

BVSC is a key voluntary sector organisation in Birmingham, a leading independent resource able to draw in support to make a difference to some of the most disadvantaged local communities. BVSC is the lead organisation for 'Ageing Better in Birmingham', part of the Big Lottery Fund's Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better programme.

We are currently seeking quotations to deliver an independent evaluation of a project called **CARERS' VOICE**, an integrated two-year campaign to raise awareness and understanding of carers' experience (see 2.3).

The project is part of the **Older Carers Local Action Plan**. Local Action Plans (LAPs) have been developed for the four priority communities of Ageing Better, where initial research identified the greatest risks of social isolation (see 2.0).

1.1 Ageing Better in Birmingham Programme Background

The Big Lottery Fund's Ageing Better Programme seeks to reduce social isolation and the causes of social isolation amongst older people (50+), enabling them to live more fulfilling lives in their local communities.

The Big Lottery Fund (BIG) awarded BVSC £6m funding as the Lead Organisation for the Birmingham Ageing Better Partnership. The project is known locally as Ageing Better in Birmingham. BVSC brought together a Core Partnership of organisations to oversee the project at a strategic level. The project is informed by a group of experts by experience (the 'Age of Experience' group) with key stakeholders involved in operational elements and the programme being independently evaluated to ensure it delivers its aims and vision, capturing learning as it develops.





The overall aims of Ageing Better in Birmingham are to facilitate change in the way older people are considered by and within communities, and to empower citizens to take part in and influence activities to reduce isolation in later life. The development of a 'test and learn' approach is a vital aspect of the project.

Ageing Better in Birmingham is working at a neighbourhood level to create a movement for community action on ageing and isolation, using an active citizenship and asset-based community development model to reduce isolation now and prevent it in future.

Ageing Better Networks are supported by Ageing Better Hubs enabling the involvement of around 10,000 people during the project's lifetime. The Ageing Better programme emphasises largely autonomous, community-led voluntary activities, dependent on active involvement and community development approaches. The Ageing Better Networks stay in touch with and look out for older people in their area and offer simple, practical, local support and involvement opportunities for older people. The Networks work closely with the 5 Hubs – one city-wide and the other 4 priority areas (where research identified greater risk of isolation):

- Tyburn
- Sparkbrook
- Older LGBT Community
- Older Carers

Older people are at the heart of Ageing Better in Birmingham and the project includes involvement opportunities for older people at every level – from participation in Ageing Better Networks to programme level project management, governance and decision-making.

There are two distinct phases to Ageing Better in Birmingham:

- The first (established 2015-16) aims to establish and develop involvement opportunities for older people to reduce isolation.
- The second aims to identify and understand current and potential future causes of isolation and develop and implement Local Action Plans – one for each of the four priority areas (Tyburn; Sparkbrook; older LGBT Community; and Older Carers) for which Ageing Better Hubs were established during the earlier phase of the project.

For more details of the project, to access the business plan and the research underpinning our approach please visit: <https://www.ageingbetterinbirmingham.co.uk>.



2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE OLDER CARERS LOCAL ACTION PLAN AND THE CARERS VOICE PROJECT

2.1 Older Carers Local Action Plan

Local Action Plans (LAPs) were developed following consultation and engagement with each priority community to ensure a better understanding of the issues they face and to identify solutions that will reduce social isolation now and help address its underlying causes for the long-term.

Project planning workshops were held with stakeholders from each priority community including representatives from Ageing Better's Core Strategic Partnership, the Age of Experience group, subject experts and representatives from relevant public sector authorities. Insights from these were used as the basis for each Local Action Plan.

Stakeholders consulted during the development of the Older Carers Local Action Plan identified the following issues as the most important issues:

- Increasing older carers' social connections within and across communities.
- Promote, increase and support social connections between older carers.
- Improve and support older carers' own health and wellbeing, especially during key transition periods when the triggers of isolation can be most serious – e.g. when first becoming a carer; during periods of deterioration or additional illness in the person cared for; and at the point that caring responsibilities end.
- Helping older carers maintain and extend social and family contacts and networks within and beyond the home.
- Raising awareness of the issues older carers face and ensuring that services, organisations, institutions and employers are 'carer-friendly'.
- Raising awareness of the services and support available to older carers and enabling them to access these effectively.
- Establishing more effective communication, signposting and information between older carers (and other active citizens) and statutory and emergency services.

2.2 Evidence Base for Local Action Plans and Carers' Voice

Research undertaken on behalf of BVSC by Aston University revealed that by 2020 almost 57,000 people aged over 65 will live alone, rising to 81,000 when including those with a limiting long-term illness. These proportions are higher than England's average regional figures and lie at the heart of the programme's scope. The aim is to use a variety of approaches – mutual aid, community action, early interventions and preventative support,

and inter-generational activities – to reach older people aged 50+ who are already isolated or at risk of isolation and to make communities more ‘age-friendly’ in future.

Older carers in Birmingham were identified as a priority community because research revealed that the risks of social isolation associated with providing a caring role are especially pronounced (see Older Carers Local Action Plan, especially p.5 and pp.7-15). 1-in-8 residents in Birmingham (approximately 105,000 people) are carers and many experience isolation, anxiety and stress arising from their care responsibilities. They are deemed at risk regarding their own health and wellbeing needs and many often fail to secure the support to which they are entitled because they do not necessarily identify themselves as ‘carers’.

2.3 Carers’ Voice – the Project

Carers’ Voice is an integrated two-year campaign to raise awareness and understanding of carers’ experience. It has been commissioned and is being delivered by a partnership of two organisations – a specialist carer advocacy organisation and a marketing and communications consultancy.

Headline outcomes

The intended headline outcomes of the project are:

- (a) To raise awareness of the issues that carers face and ensure that services, activities, employers, organisations and institutions are ‘carer-friendly’.
- (b) To raise awareness of the services and support available to carers and enable them to access these effectively.
- (c) To reduce the key risks and triggers of isolation amongst carers.

2.3.1 Carers’ Voice – How the Project is Being Delivered

In designing your evaluation methods and approaches you should ensure that you are able to **explore, analyse and report effectiveness of the following delivery elements, especially where specific measurables are involved:**

- 1) The contract-holder for the Carers’ Voice project will work with a specialist marketing and communications consultancy to enable carers to tell their real-life stories. By improving awareness and understanding of the carers’ role, the campaign will reach people who have not previously identified as carers (‘hidden carers’) in addition to known, ‘registered’ carers.

- 2) The campaign will: (i) raise awareness of the issues that carers face; (ii) ensure that all services, activities, employers, organisations and institutions are ‘carer-friendly’; and (iii) raise awareness of the services and support available to carers and enable them to access these effectively.
- 3) The first stage of the campaign will:
 - Work with carers using shared learning and co-design methods.
 - Take a ‘test and learn’ approach to find out what works in terms of key messages, methods and guidance materials.
- 4) The second stage of the project will involve the roll-out of the campaign and will focus on:
 - Emphasising and amplifying the voice of carers and ensuring that carers are as valued as those they care for.
 - Raising awareness and understanding of older carers’ experiences through clear and direct messages focused on reducing isolation.
 - Using messages from the first stage ‘test and learn’ approach to improve service offers for carers.
 - Ensuring that signposting to services is responsive and that service offers are relevant to the individual and diverse needs of carers.
 - Encouraging hidden older carers at risk of isolation to come forward for support and help them better understand any entitlements they may be eligible to.
 - Work to assist at least 15 commercial, 5 community and 5 statutory organisations to become ‘carer friendly’ in service delivery, access and other considerations.
 - Ensure that the campaign has legacy and long-term impact through the production of toolkits, self-help guides, guidance and other practical resources for use by carers, professionals and others.
- 5) Specific marketing messages and tools will be developed for carers’ networks, intermediary organisations, voluntary and community sector organisations, Ageing Better partners and private sector businesses.
- 6) Strong analytics will be used to gauge success of individual elements of the campaign (e.g. Facebook Insights).

Please note: When available, the contractor’s final, detailed Campaign plan for Carers’ Voice will be made available to you. In designing your evaluation approach please leave flexibility to examine this Campaign plan so any other **specific measurables** can be factored into your evaluation aims and methods.

3.0 KEY REQUIREMENTS OF THE EVALUATION

We expect bidders to set out their detailed plans for evaluation (see 4.2), including identifying any project aspects that they think will require especial scrutiny (and why, and how this will be done).

By way of guidance, as a **minimum** we require the evaluation of Carers’ Voice to cover the following critical areas:

- 1) **Headline outcomes:** To explore, analyse and report on the project’s effectiveness in achieving the three headline outcomes detailed above at **2.3**. In order to establish project performance with regard to these three outcomes the evaluator will be required to undertake **baseline** and **follow-up** surveys capable of identifying whether or not the project has resulted in a 5% improvement for each outcome within the target communities.
- 2) **Key delivery elements:** To explore, analyse and report on the project’s effectiveness in the main delivery elements **outlined above at 2.3.1 (1 to 6 inclusive)**, along with any additional measurables contained in the contractor’s final, detailed delivery plan for Carers’ Voice. Rather than counting outputs evaluation should focus on those aspects of the project that offer the greatest learning.

4.0 CONTRACTUAL DETAILS

4.1 Contract Life

The overall Contract life is expected to run for 2 years from 26/09/18 until 26/09/20 subject to funding from BIG, who reserve the right to withdraw funding at any point in line with their grant terms and conditions.

The Service Provider is therefore quoting to provide services for the whole Contract Period specified with the knowledge that funding could be withdrawn in the event of BIG withdrawing funding from Ageing Better in Birmingham.

The maximum value of this contract is £7,500 inclusive of VAT (if applicable) and all costs.

4.2 The Structure of Quotations

Your quotation should include the following information:

- A budget detailing the proposed costs of delivering the evaluation.
- An overall description to your approach to design and delivery of the evaluation based on its key requirements.
- A delivery plan that includes timescales, key milestones, outputs and figures (where applicable).
- Details of your organisation's previous success and delivery experience in delivering a similar service.
- CVs of all consultants who would be involved in undertaking the evaluation.

4.3 Interviews

Organisations providing a quotation to deliver this project will be required to attend an interview at BVSC on 14th September, exact timings to be confirmed.

4.4 Deadline

Please send responses to louiseb@bvsc.org by 5pm on Wednesday 5th September.

4.5 Further information

For any queries in relation to this brief, please contact Ageing Better in Birmingham at ageingbetter@bvsc.org or 0121 678 8876.