

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 16 JUNE 2010

COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING TOOLKIT

Report by Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Cabinet for a Community Capacity Building Toolkit which will provide officers across East Ayrshire Council with a framework for improving practice in building community capacity.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The toolkit was initially developed following a HMle Inspection of the Cumnock Learning Community in September 2008 to allow Community Learning and Development staff to work with community organisations to clearly identify the outcomes for the organisation, areas of development and assess the degree of support groups required from Community Learning and Development.
- 2.2 HMle supported this process by identifying good practice elsewhere. North Lanarkshire Council was contacted as a result of this and officers have used their toolkit as a basis from which to develop an appropriate East Ayrshire approach.

3. COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING TOOLKIT

- 3.1 The Toolkit presents a framework for building community capacity and brings together good practice tools and resources for use by Council officers in their work with community organisations. The short term aim is to help determine the degree of support required for each community organisation. In the longer term, a consistent and systematic approach to building community capacity will be established that will lead to improved practice by Council Officers and community organisations. This will ultimately lead to better outcomes for communities.
- 3.2 The Toolkit incorporates five practice tools, namely;
- a contact sheet;
 - a health check;
 - a health check summary;
 - action plan template;
 - a file system.

4. PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 An initial draft toolkit was produced and discussed at a CLD Staff Seminar in September 2009 where staff had an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Toolkit and make comment and suggestions for improvement.

4.2 It was recognised at an early stage that the Toolkit had the potential to be useful to officers across the Council in assessing their level of support to community organisations. Comments were invited from a range of officers, some of whom attended a meeting held in March 2010 to discuss the Toolkit. The group was invited to comment on the Toolkit generally, anticipate potential usage, ensure that the Toolkit was fit for purpose and make any suggested improvements.

4.3 In addition, Internal Audit reviewed the Toolkit as part of a review of the work of the CLD Service in supporting community groups.

4.4 The Toolkit was piloted with the following four community organisations between January and February 2010, namely:

- Stewarton Woodlands Action Trust
- Galston Youth Forum
- Avonlea Youth Project
- Bellsbank Project

4.5 Following the pilots, evaluations by both the community organisations and community workers working with the groups were used to further develop the Toolkit. The main changes related to the format of the Toolkit.

4.6 It is proposed to offer toolbox talks to relevant officers across Council services and to incorporate an appropriate training module into the Council's training and development calendar. Over the summer sessions will be arranged for staff to start the process.

5. PERSONNEL/LEGAL POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Nil

6. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Toolkit will clearly set out what support an organisation requires, who will provide that support and for how long.

7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The introduction of the toolkit is compatible with East Ayrshire's Community Plan and Equalities Schemes. It can be used by colleagues across community planning partners.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1**
- i) Members of Cabinet are asked to approve the introduction of the Community Capacity Building Toolkit;
 - ii) Otherwise note the contents of the report.

Graham Short
Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

WH/DG/KG
17 May 2010

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. North Lanarkshire Council Framework and Toolkit for Community Capacity Building 2006.

Members wishing further information can contact Kay Gilmour, Head of Service: Community Support, Tel (01563) 576104

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER:
KAY GILMOUR, HEAD OF SERVICE: COMMUNITY SUPPORT**



East Ayrshire
COUNCIL

East Ayrshire Council

Community Capacity Building Toolkit

**A framework for improving practice in building
community capacity**

May 2010

Contents

Page

1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose of Community Capacity Building	4
3. Using the Community Capacity Building Toolkit	6
4. Community Capacity Building Good Practice Tools:	
▪ Contact Sheet	9
▪ Health Check	12
▪ Health Check Summary	22
▪ Action Plan Template	23
▪ File System	24

1. INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of this Toolkit is to provide staff within East Ayrshire Council with a framework to build the capacity of community organisations. It provides practical guidance on community capacity building and establishes a standard approach that will lead to improved practice by staff and better outcomes for community organisations. It will be a useful resource for all staff involved in building the collective ability of a community.

The Scottish Government's Strategic Objectives are to make Scotland safer and stronger, wealthier and fairer, healthier, greener and smarter ([Scotland Performs](#)). The East Ayrshire Community Plan sets out how these priorities will be addressed locally, and community capacity building has an important role in helping communities to participate in this process ([East Ayrshire Community Plan](#)). By engaging and empowering communities, community capacity building activity can help to reduce inequalities and promote regeneration.

A range of reference material was used to develop this Toolkit including North Lanarkshire Council's Framework and Toolkit for Community Capacity Building (2006). It is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to community capacity building but to provide Council Officers with a good practice resource for use in their work with community organisations. It does not seek to duplicate existing materials since there is a wide range of community capacity building resources already available, including the new Scottish guidance on community capacity building ([Capacity for Change](#)). Similarly, it does not replace existing planning and evaluation systems but provides a framework use both by Council Officers and by organisations themselves.

Although the Toolkit has been designed for Council Officers, it will also help community organisations to assess their own capacity and development needs. A feedback section has been built into the Toolkit to ensure that community organisations are aware of their development needs and have the opportunity to progress them through their own structures.

The practice tools that form the Toolkit are:

- Contact Sheet
- Health Check
- Health Check Summary
- Action Plan Template
- File System

2. PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

Community capacity building is part of the wider community learning and development approach in Scotland which involves working with communities to build their skills and experience, increase opportunities for development and enhance their involvement in the decisions that affect them ([Working and Learning Together](#)). Community capacity building is a way of working with people to develop their ability to positively influence what happens in their community. This can involve developing confidence, knowledge and skills and local networks to increase the opportunities for community members to secure positive social change ([Firm Foundations: the Government's Framework for Community Capacity Building](#)).

Community capacity building is based on core activities that involve:

Strengthening skills

- Supporting people to decide how and why they want to build community capacity.
- Training and personal development.
- Supporting people to become involved in their community and wider society.

Strengthening structures

- Building structures and local networks to increase community involvement in decision making.
- Supporting people to participate in structures to allow them to influence decisions and work jointly with others.
- Supporting people to establish structures to manage or influence local services.

Practical support

- Ensuring communities have the practical help and support they need to strengthen their skills and structures.

Community capacity building is informed by community need and demand and activity is developed jointly with, rather than for, the community ([Capacity for Change](#)).

It seeks to enable and empower communities to achieve their goals and helps people to influence what happens in their communities, which should result in:

- Confident, skilled community members.
- Organised, active and influential communities.
- Inclusive community organisations and groups.
- Strong working relationships between community groups and other organisations.

Community capacity building can achieve a range of positive outcomes for communities including:

- Improved local services and more control over service delivery;
- A greater sense of community and more community cohesion;
- A positive approach to reducing inequalities;
- More effective and sustainable regeneration;
- Increased opportunities for people and communities to fulfil their potential.

3. USING THE COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING TOOLKIT

This Toolkit presents a framework for building community capacity and brings together good practice tools and resources for use by Council Officers in their work with community organisations. The short-term aim is to help determine the degree of support appropriate for each community organisation. The longer-term aim is to establish a consistent and systematic approach to building community capacity that will lead to improved practice by Council Officers and better outcomes for communities. The process outlined below describes how the Toolkit should be used with community organisations.

[Contact Sheet](#)

The Contact Sheet should be used when making initial contact and for building links with communities and community organisations. The information gathered through the Contact Sheet will enable staff to decide on the level of support and resources to be allocated to a particular organisation and what services will be provided. The Contact Sheet also forms the basis of a Working Agreement with the organisation by identifying what Council support will be provided. This information should be fed back to the group to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the role of Council Officers in working with groups.

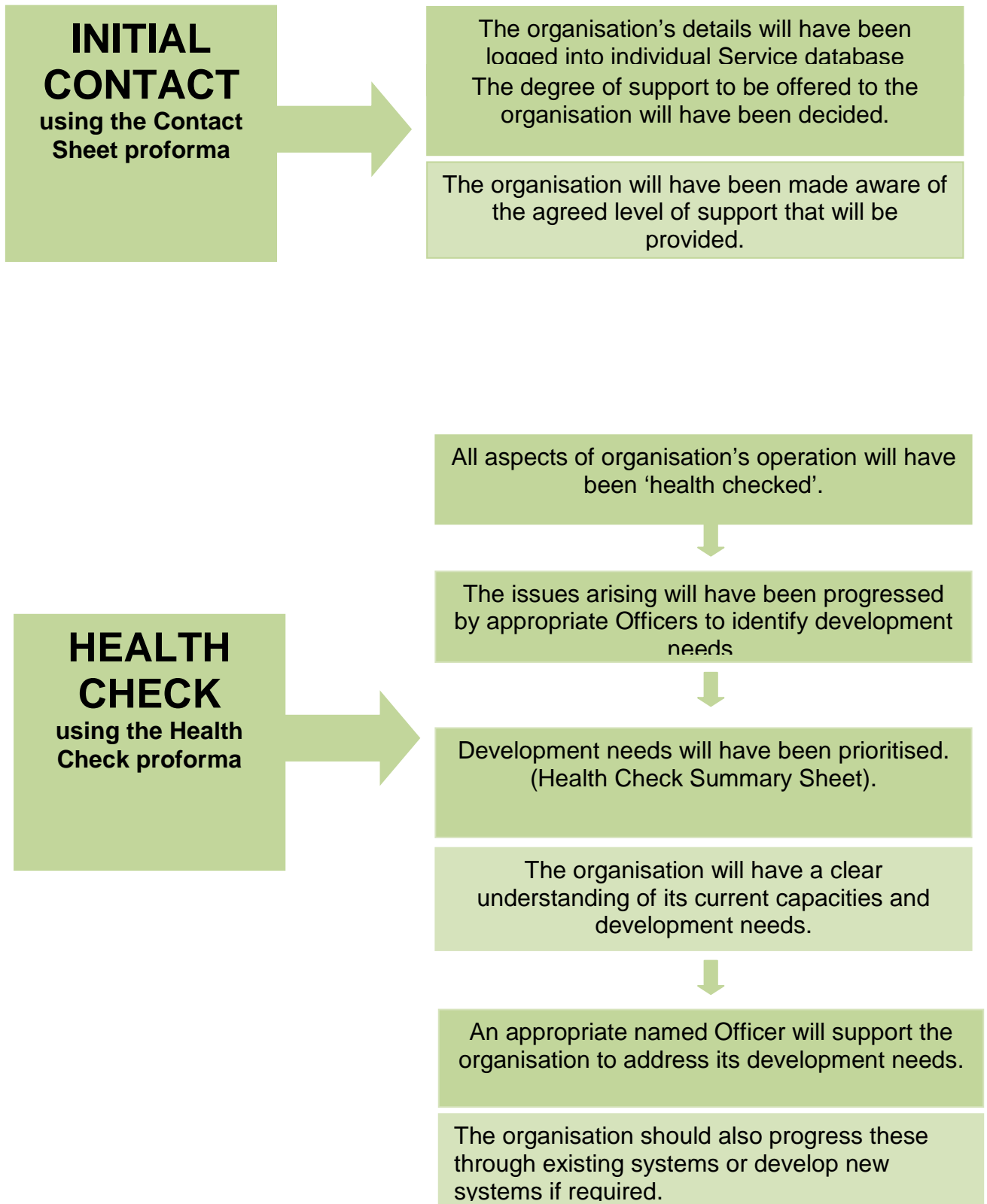
Health Check

After the Contact Sheet has been completed and a decision taken by a Council Officer to support the organisation, a Health Check should be carried out. This will ensure that all aspects of the organisation's activities are considered. A Summary Sheet and Action Plan Template are provided to highlight the areas for further development and the priorities for action arising from the Health Check. The information gathered from the Health Check should be fed back to the organisation to ensure that it has a clear understating of its capacity and how this can be strengthened. This will enable the group to address its development needs either through its own systems and structures, or by adopting new ways of working where appropriate.

Once the organisation's development needs have been identified, if appropriate, they can be progressed through other planning and evaluation systems currently available such as LEAP ([LEAP](#)) or the Big Picture ([The Big Picture](#)).

The process involved in using the Toolkit is described in this diagram.

Community Capacity Building Toolkit



Recording the Process

The Toolkit presents a systematic approach to recording the work of Council Officers in building community capacity. The consistent use of the Contact Sheet and Health Check will provide a formal record to evidence the work with community organisations. In addition, it is good practice for Officers to adopt a portfolio system of record keeping where all the information on a particular community organisation is held in the one location.

Since some contact with community groups will be of a very brief nature, it is not expected that full records will be kept. Although all contact with community groups should be recorded, some organisations will not require a file system to be created. Group Files and should only be maintained where Council Officers have an agreed development role with the community organisation.

CONTACT SHEET

Section 1: Contact Details

1.1 Main contact name	
1.2 Position in organisation	
1.3 Main contact address	
1.4 Main contact postcode	
1.5 Main contact telephone	
1.6 Main contact e-mail address	

Section 2 Alternative Contact Details

2.1 Alternative contact name	
2.2 Position in organisation	
2.3 Alternative contact address	
2.4 Alternative contact postcode	
2.5 Alternative contact telephone	
2.6 Alternative contact e-mail address	

Section 3 Organisation Details

Is this an established group? If No, continue to Section 4.	Yes		No	
---	-----	--	----	--

3.1 Name of Organisation	
3.2 Meeting place address	
3.3 Meeting place postcode	
3.4 Meeting place telephone	
3.5 When does the organisation meet?	
3.6 When was the organisation formed?	

3.7 What is the legal status of the organisation?	
Incorporated Organisation (Company Limited by Guarantee)	
Unincorporated Organisation	

3.8 If unincorporated, does the organisation have a governing document?	
Set of Rules	
Constitution	
Governing Body Document	
Other (Specify)	

3.9 Is the organisation a registered charity?	
If yes, what is the OSCR number?	

3.10 Please describe the membership of the organisation.
--

3.11 Has the organisation had previous contact with the Council?	
If yes, please summarise:	

Section 4 Focus of Organisation

4.1 What is the organisation/group trying to achieve?

4.2 What local need is the organisation addressing?

4.3 Who is the target group?

4.4 What support is the organisation seeking?

4.5 Are there any other agencies that could provide this support?

4.6 Are there any other agencies involved in supporting the organisation?

4.7 What activity does the organisation focus on?

Youth Work Adult Learning Capacity Building Regeneration

Child Care Family Support Arts and Culture Leisure

Other (Specify)

4.8 Is the organisation affiliated to or a member of a local/national support organisation?
If so, please specify:

Before taking further action, the Contact Sheet should now be discussed with the appropriate manager for approval.

Section 5 Support

5.1 Would you recommend support for this organisation?

Yes

No

5.2 Reasons for this decision.

5.3 If support is to be provided, when will the health check be undertaken?

Contact Sheet Completed by:

Name

Position

Signature

Date

Line Manager Comments

Signature

Date

Method of Feedback to Community Organisation (i.e. verbal/written).....

Date Provided

.....

Signature

.....

HEALTH CHECK

This Health Check will enable staff to identify and prioritise community capacity building needs in conjunction with community organisations.

A comments box is provided for each section to identify if further action is required.

The Health Check can be used by Council Officers in conjunction with other planning and evaluation systems, as appropriate

Organisation:

Contact Details

Name	
Position	
Address	
Telephone	
Email address	

Council Service

Service	
Contact Details	
Name of Officer	
Date of Health Check	

Section 1: Clarity of Purpose and Sustainability

Checklist	Yes	No	Further Action Required
1. Did the organisation identify community needs and aspirations when it was set up?			
2. Does the organisation consult with stakeholders?			
If yes, how?			
3. Does the community organisation stay in regular contact the community?			
If yes, how?			
4. Does the organisation have clarity of purpose?			
5. How many people are involved in the organisation?	Employees: Volunteers: Members:		
6. Does the organisation attract and retain new members?			

Section 2: Governance

Checklist	Yes	No	Further Action Required
7. Does the organisation have a constitution or governing document?			
8. Is the constitution or governing document regularly reviewed?			
9. Does the organisation have a management committee or a board of directors?			
10. Are all members of the management committee aware of, and fulfilling their responsibilities?			
11. Is the organisation a registered charity?			
12. Does the organisation hold regular meetings?			
13. Do meetings of the management committee lead to clear decision making and action?			
14. Are meetings of the management committee business like and inclusive?			
15. Are minutes prepared and circulated after each meeting of the management committee?			
16. Does the organisation hold an Annual General Meeting?			
17. Are Management Accounts presented to all meetings of the committee/board?			
18. Have management committee members had access to appropriate training and support to help them carry out their responsibilities?			

Section 3: Finance

Checklist	Yes	No	Further Action Required
------------------	------------	-----------	--------------------------------

19. Does the organisation have appropriate bookkeeping and financial management systems?			
20. Are the organisation's financial management systems applied consistently?			
21. Have bank accounts been opened in line with the organisation's constitutional requirements?			
22. Is an annual audited Income and Expenditure Statement covering all aspects of the organisation's finances presented for approval at the Annual General Meeting?			
23. Is the Annual Income and Expenditure Statement signed by the Chairperson or a Committee Representative?			
24. Is the signed Annual Income and Expenditure Statement submitted to East Ayrshire Council?			
25. Are bank statements presented at each meeting of the management committee?			
26. Are bank statements reconciled by the Treasurer to explain any variance with income and expenditure?			
27. Are bank statements verified at meetings and details recorded in meeting minutes?			
28. Does the organisation operate a petty cash system through which all cash transactions are routed?			

29. Are all petty cash transactions included in income and expenditure statements?			
30. Does the organisation apply an appropriate document retention policy?			
31. If the organisation has management responsibility for a Council building, does it consult the Council's Finance and Asset Management Service on any proposed investment to the internal or external fabric of the building?			

Section 4: Administration

Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	Further Action Required
32. Does the organisation have any of the following insurances in place?				
Buildings				
Contents				
Public Liability				
Employers Liability				
Professional Indemnity				
Vehicle Insurance				
Other (specify):				
33. Are regular reviews carried out to ensure that the organisation has suitable cover for all associated risks?				
34. Does the organisation regularly review the potential risks associated with its activities?				
35. Are arrangements in place to control and reduce the risks arising from the following activities:				
Trips and Visits				
Outdoor Activities				
Community Events				
Youth Activities				
Sports and Physical Activities				
Other (specify):				
Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	Further Action Required
36. Does the organisations have written procedures on: _____				

Equal Opportunities				
Volunteering				
Protection				
Health and Safety				
Customer Care				
Complaints				
Personnel				
Confidentiality				
Other (specify):				
37. Are the organisation's policies and procedures being consistently applied?				
38. Have all individuals who come into contact with children or vulnerable adults through the organisation completed an Enhanced Disclosure check?				
39. Has the organisation offered child/adult protection training to its members, staff and volunteers?				
40. Is the organisation registered with the following national agencies?				
Care Commission				
CRBS (Central Registering Body for Scotland)				
(OSCR) Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator				
41. Are Annual Returns submitted to national agencies?				

Section 5: Funding and Resources

Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	Further Action Required
42. What is the organisation's main source of income?				
Fundraising				
Subscriptions				
Grants				
Commissions				
Letting				
Other (specify):				
43. If the organisation receives grant funding, does it comply with the terms and conditions of each grant received?				
44. Is the organisation in receipt of funding from East Ayrshire Council?				
45. If yes, has APB27 been implemented?				
46. If the organisation is a registered charity, does it comply with financial reporting requirements of the Charity Regulator?				
47. If a Service Level or Funding Agreement is in place, is performance monitored against agreed targets?				
48. Does the organisation have access to the following resources?				
Administrative support				
Photocopying/printing				
IT Equipment				
Internet/Email				
Training				
Meeting Space				
Continuous Professional Development				
Checklist	Yes	No	N/A	Further Action Required

49. Does the organisation employ staff?				
50. If yes, are appropriate personnel procedures in place and applied consistently?				
Conditions of Service				
Recruitment and Retention				
Supervision and Appraisal				
Continuous Professional Development				
Health and Safety				
Training				
Other (Specify)				
51. Does the organisation let/lease premises?				
If yes, from whom?				
52. Does the organisation have a reserves policy or contingency fund?				

Section 6: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

Checklist	Yes	No	Further Action Required
53. Does the organisation have a written Mission Statement?			
54. Has the organisation produced a business or strategic plan setting out what it wants to achieve?			
55. Have the organisation's members and stakeholders been involved in monitoring, evaluating and reviewing progress?			
56. Does the organisation have a recognised planning and evaluation system in use? If so, which one?			
57. Is the system effective in measuring progress against objectives leading to clear outcomes?			
58. Is performance information collected to help monitor and evaluate progress?			
59. Is the organisation aware of the impact it is making on the wider community?			
60. Are evaluation reports produced?			

HEALTH CHECK SUMMARY

1. **Clarity of Purpose and Sustainability**

Priority for action:

.....
.....

2. **Governance**

Priority for action:

.....
.....

3. **Finance**

Priority for action:

.....
.....

4. **Administration**

Priority for action:

.....
.....
.....

5. **Funding and Resources**

Priority for action:

.....
.....
.....

6. **Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation**

Priority for action:

.....
.....

ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Priority for Action (from the Health Check Summary)	Service & Lead Officer	Proposed Service Action	Review Date

FILE SYSTEM

Section	Contents
1.	Contact Sheet
2.	Health Check
3.	Formal Agreements e.g. SLA, Funding Agreements
4.	Annual Reports
5.	Audited Annual Income and Expenditure Statements
6.	Constitution
7.	Officer Reports