

BRIGHTON & HOVE LGBT SWITCHBOARD

Business Plan



2012- 2015

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Executive Summary

The Trustees and Management of Brighton and Hove lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) Switchboard have developed a 3 year Business Plan to cover the period April 2012 to March 2015.

The plan sets out the Mission Statement, Vision and Values for Switchboard, reflecting on the current challenges facing not just Switchboard, but other third sector organisations as well as the wider public sector.

Switchboard is managed by a Volunteer Management Committee and employs three paid staff. Services, including face to face counselling, helpline and training are provided by 40 volunteer staff.

Funding is provided by Brighton and Hove City Council, Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group and a number of other funders., as well as through a varied range of fundraising events and donations. Annual turnover is generally in the region of £80,000.

Switchboard is a community volunteering generic LGBT organisation providing services to anyone over the age of 16 who identifies as LGBT or is affected by issues related to gender or sexual identity. We are here to listen, support and inform, which we do in two main ways.

If people are facing any issue that is impacting on their emotional wellbeing or mental health, we aim to listen to them and support them, as well as providing any information that they may need, including signposting them on to other places.

Secondly, we offer a face-to-face counselling service, which provides an opportunity to speak with a professionally trained counsellor, who identifies as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and/or trans.

Examples of the sorts of issues we support people with, via the help-line and in our counselling sessions include: sexual and gender identity struggles, gender transition support, relationship difficulties, parenting issues, social isolation, domestic violence, LGBT hate crimes, discrimination issues, mental health difficulties, drug and alcohol misuse, and sexual health enquiries.

Following a Strategic Analysis commissioned in 2011, Switchboard is implementing a strategy that is designed to provide a more sustainable funding model for the future.

This strategy is designed to deliver 3 key objectives:

- develop capacity in services delivered,
- increase sustainability by winning contracts with a range of commissioners, and
- develop best fit partnerships that improve Switchboard's role as a social care provider.

A number of actions have been identified in line these objectives and more detail can be found in section 6 of the business plan.

1. Mission, Vision and Values

1.1 Our Mission

To improve the physical and mental health and general wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Brighton and Hove, and anyone affected by issues related to sexual or gender identity.

1.2 Our Vision

To contribute to a society in which LGBT people are valued and have the opportunity to achieve quality of life and well-being.

1.3 Our Values

- Empowerment of people
- Social equality and justice
- Quality of life and well-being
- Caring for each other
- The ethos of volunteering
- Honesty and integrity
- Enterprising and innovative

2. Background

2.1 History of Brighton & Hove LGBT Switchboard

Switchboard is a locally based registered charity that has been providing a range of services for the LGBT community since 1975. The organisation has grown from a small volunteer led community organisation, to a medium sized registered charity employing a Services and Development Manager and an Administrator.

The charity's services are delivered by 35 volunteers, the trustee board is made up of 8 volunteer trustees and Switchboard has 6 volunteers providing support in other areas of management and admin support.

As Switchboard has grown we have been able to increase the range of services that we can offer. In addition to an increased capacity to respond to a wide range of callers, we now provide the following:

- A counselling service providing time limited, low cost, face to face counselling delivered by LGBT identified professionals.
- A website and e-mail enquiry service providing more access for callers
- Partnerships with a number of other key statutory, community and voluntary sector organisations within Brighton and Hove and

- Training on LGBT awareness and affirmative practise for external organisations and agencies.

3. Description of B&H LGBT Switchboard

3.1 Staffing

Switchboard has an annual turnover of approximately £135,000, three paid employees, a Director and an administrator, and 40 volunteers, demonstrating a high ratio of voluntary to paid hours.

The current Director is qualified in Nursing and Counselling with 13 years post qualification counselling experience, and has been employed by LGBT Switchboard for 10 years.

3.2 Governance

The organisation is governed by a voluntary Management Committee consisting of eight trustees and including honorary officers of a Chair, Vice Chair Treasurer and Secretary. The Management Committee includes professionals in the field of Human Resources, Accountancy, Fundraising, Communications and PR, and Policy development, and the Management Committee reviews the mix of skills on a regular basis to identify and fill gaps in experience or training.,

3.3 Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in delivering Switchboard's services and support the delivery of the Helpline and Counselling service as well as more general financial and administrative support. There are usually between 30 and 50 volunteers working for Switchboard.

3.4 Stakeholders/Partners and Funding

3.3.1 Funders

LGBT Switchboard relies on funding from a combination of statutory grants, charitable trusts and foundations, corporate support and community fundraising.

3.3.2 Partners

Switchboard currently works closely with a number of other statutory and voluntary organisations including:

Mind Out
Allsorts
The Clare Project
Rise
Broken Rainbow
Terence Higgins Trust
Brighton & Hove Police
Brighton & Hove City Council
Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group

4. Strategic Analysis and Direction

4.1 Overview

In September 2011 the Board employed Impetus, a Brighton and Hove based charity which provides infrastructure support to organisations within the voluntary sector, to help with planning the strategic direction for 2012 – 2015. As a result of this work, the following broad objectives have been identified for the next three years.

We will strive to:

- Improve Management, HR systems and personnel development.
- Ensure that Staff are well-motivated and aspire to high professional standards.
- Recognise added value through volunteers.
- Develop a Board that has a good mix of management skills.
- Ensure equality in both service provision and organisational processes.
- Develop Monitoring and Evaluation procedures based on a system to measure and monitor outcomes.
- Provide excellent governance and management support to services.
- Develop services that are highly valued by current funders.
- Create a solid financial position with positive cash flows.
- Ensure we build sufficient financial reserves to provide sustainability.

4.2 Context in which we operate

The current economic climate creates real challenges for the community and voluntary sector with less individual giving, increased competition for trust and foundation grants and public sector cuts impacting on a reduction in contracts for the third sector for service delivery.

Whilst Brighton and Hove City Council and Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group holds the local third sector in high regard and supports the work of LGBT Switchboard we need to ensure we diversify this funding to create sustainability.

In response to the changing economy and the challenges faced by the community and voluntary sector LGBT Switchboard aims to achieve the following

- Improve efficiency and cost saving
- Develop and implement fundraising strategies that are continuously reviewed to reflect local and national developments
- Deliver high quality services with strong evidence of outcomes to attract funding from a range of sources
- Secure contracts for local service delivery to meet unmet need where there is a good strategic fit
- Identify, develop and maintain good working relationships and partnerships with other local providers to ensure collaborative working and avoidance of duplication

5. Strategic Objectives (High Level)

In 2011 the Board agreed to set the following high level strategic objectives.

5.1 Developing Capacity to:

- provide greater stability to the services we offer
- increase our service provision as an expression of our mission
- to improve efficiency through economies of scale.

5.2 Improve Sustainability through

- increasing contracts and funding
- increasing level of turnover, and
- building financial reserves.

5.3 Develop our role as a social care service provider by:

- adding value to existing services

- developing new services that are a good strategic fit
- by building partnerships.

The Board will also provide support to strengthen contract delivery and to develop Switchboard as a social business through partnership working and strategic alliances with other agencies where there is a strong strategic fit, shared values and a business rationale.