

Risks to Bassetlaw VCSE Services & local communities - 22nd May 2025

BCVS Summary Statement:

We understand the NHS in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (NNICB) is again considering whether **to remove funding from 10 local charities and VCSE services in Bassetlaw** from October 2025:

- Bassetlaw Action Centre
- Bassetlaw Community Voluntary Service
- Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice
- Barnsley Premier Leisure
- Citizens Advice North Nottinghamshire
- Royal Voluntary Service
- Children's Bereavement Service
- In Sam's Name
- Muddy Fork
- The Sleep Charity

The key risks remain:

1. 4000 of the most vulnerable citizens in Bassetlaw receive direct support from the 10 NNICB VCSE funded services in Bassetlaw per year, with a further 10,000 people receiving indirect support as a result of this investment.
2. Removal of this funding from Bassetlaw would result in increased pressure and impact on primary and secondary care (GPs and hospitals) in Bassetlaw.
3. Significant value for money and the added value currently provided through volunteer time, the very experienced and trusted local workforce, and charity match funding will also be lost if the core funding for these services is removed.

The 10 charities and VCSE organisations under review received a six-month extension of funding from April until October 2025 in response to the high levels of risk to patients that were identified in the review conducted by the NHS earlier this year. At this time, BCVS published a paper outlining risks which can be seen [here](#).

BCVS and wider local partners have asked the ICB on numerous occasions 'What will the ICB do to address the serious risks created to Bassetlaw patients identified through the review already undertaken (a robust EQIA - Equality and Quality Impact Assessment and review) in February 2025?'

We have not received a response to date other than confirmation that another review is now being conducted.

Have your say:

The review closes on 28th May so please add your views to the [survey](#) as soon as you can to inform their decision on whether to remove the funding from October.

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It should be noted that an article was issued to media by the ICB and published by the [Workshop Guardian](#) on 7th May. It was shared by the ICB with the local charities on 14th May along with details of the review. This delay meant that the charities above were not given the opportunity to add comments until after publication.

NNICB colleagues have verbally confirmed that they will draft proposals and recommendations following the review and will not share these with charities affected until after a decision on funding has been taken by the ICB.

NNICB Principles:

NNICB actions to date under this review therefore do not appear to reflect NNICB published engagement principles which state that:

- 'engagement must be a time when proposals are still at a formative stage.
- the proposer [NNICB] must give enough reasons for any proposal to permit intelligent consideration and response.
- adequate time is given for consideration and response.
- the product of engagement is conscientiously taken into account when finalising the decision.'

As none of the charities affected have received written details of any proposal or the reasons for the proposal from the ICB, the ICB is unfortunately not complying with their stated principles quoted above.

Leaders of the charities and services under threat have confirmed that the risk to patients remains the same or higher than identified by the ICB in February 2025. We have therefore collectively asked how removal of remaining funding and the closure of specific services run by these charities will address this risk. We have received a holding reply to date which does not answer this question.

In the first two of three public consultation meetings held on line by the ICB in May, participants have not been allowed to speak in the meeting and have only been allowed to type questions through a Q and A function. The third meeting will take place online on 27th May.

Unfortunately, not all questions asked within the first two sessions have been published or answered by the ICB and therefore BCVS will collate and publish all questions asked and the answers provided to enable all key stakeholders in Bassetlaw to access this information.

We are grateful that Bassetlaw leaders, including the CEO of Bassetlaw District Council and the Member of Parliament for Bassetlaw, have expressed concern about the risks to our local communities and have listened to the concerns of local charity services the patients and residents they support. Key stakeholders have asked many questions of NNICB colleagues during this process and have received no written response to date. We would therefore be grateful for a written response from NNICB to the questions below asap and by 27th May at the latest.

As previously stated, given the significant reliance on the VCSE sector for essential services, and the high risks to local residents of disinvestment in Bassetlaw, it is crucial for NNICB to make a positive decision for 25/26 to ensure the continued support and wellbeing of Bassetlaw residents and communities. BCVS will therefore publish an extended version of this paper, including local partner feedback by the review deadline, and hope this will again provide additional and useful insight to support a fully informed decision.

Annex A – Questions

Risk and Impact

1. How does the ICB plan to mitigate the risks to over 4,000 directly supported and 10,000 indirectly supported Bassetlaw residents if funding is withdrawn from these 10 VCSE organisations?
2. What specific evidence or data has emerged since the February 2025 EQIA that would justify a different decision or approach now?
3. Has the ICB conducted any modelling or forecasting on the potential increased burden on primary and secondary care services in Bassetlaw if these services are defunded?

Process and Transparency

4. Why were the affected charities not given the opportunity to comment on the media article before its publication by NNICB on 7th May?
5. Can the ICB explain how its current approach aligns with its own published engagement principles, particularly regarding transparency, timing, and the opportunity for meaningful input?
6. Why will proposals and recommendations not be shared with the affected charities before a final decision is made, and how does this align with principles of fair and informed engagement?

Consultation and Communication

7. Why were participants in the public consultation meetings not allowed to speak, and why have some submitted questions not been published or answered?
8. Will the ICB commit to publishing a full log of all questions asked during the consultation sessions, along with responses, before the review closes on 28th May?
9. What mechanisms are in place to ensure that the voices of service users—**particularly vulnerable individuals who are not able to attend meetings**—are being heard and considered in this review?

Decision-Making and Accountability

10. What criteria will be used to determine whether funding continues or is withdrawn, and how will these be weighted?
11. Who will be involved in making the final decision, and what role will local stakeholders—including Bassetlaw District Council and the MP—have in that process?
12. If the decision is made to withdraw funding, what transition or contingency plans will be put in place to protect the safety of service users?