

The Royal Leicestershire, Rutland and Wycliffe Society for the Blind



'Improving lives for people with sight loss'

Business Plan
2010 – 2015
(Refreshed 2011)

Contents

Section	Page
1. Executive Summary	2
2. Introduction and background	3
3. Vision and Mission	3
4. Culture, Values and Core Principles	3
5. Structure of Vista	3 - 4
6. Service Provision	4
7. Community Influence	5
8. Summary of Strategic Review	5 - 7
9. UK Vision Strategy	7
10. Strategic Priorities	8
11. Strategic Objectives for 2010 – 2015	9
12. Operational Plans	10
13. Resources	10
14. Conclusions	11

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Business Plan sets out the strategic direction for Vista for the 5 years from 2010 - 2015. It outlines the seven priority areas and strategic objectives which will be used as a focus for the charity's work over that period.
- 1.2 The Business Plan has emerged from an extensive Strategic Review throughout 2009. A brief summary of main findings is given here as a background to the Business Plan.
- 1.3 Departmental Objectives will be developed from these Strategic Objectives and will be monitored and reviewed regularly, reporting to the relevant sub-committees of Trustees and to the Executive Committee. Progress will be measured against clear targets to ensure that the Business Plan is achieved.
- 1.4 The critical risks to the Charity have been analysed, in accordance with Charity Commission guidance. The major risks have been identified and a strategy outlined for managing them and mitigating risks where possible. This Risk Strategy is given in a separate document.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Vista (The Royal Leicestershire, Rutland and Wycliffe Society for the Blind) is one of the oldest and largest local charities in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and has a history of being innovative and forward looking. It was founded in 1858, and is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. The organisation has grown and developed over those 150 years and in 2009 it undertook a major Strategic Review which laid the foundations for further development to meet the needs of people with sight loss in the twenty first century.

2.2 This Business Plan will explain the context for Vista's work and will set out the strategic objectives for the next five years.

3. Vision and Mission

Vision

Vista's vision is a world in which people with sight loss of all ages have choice and control over their lives and no-one experiences avoidable sight loss.

Mission

Vista will support local people with sight loss of all ages, challenge barriers to inclusion and work to prevent avoidable sight loss.

4. Statement of Culture, Values and Core Principles

Vista is a progressive, enabling charity committed to improving lives for people with sight loss.

Vista aims to support people with sight loss to have:

- **Dignity and Respect** as a unique individual
- **Privacy** in their own home
- **Protection** from harm
- **Independence** to the greatest degree possible
- **Choice** so that people are empowered
- **Rights**, as for all people in society
- **Cultural and Spiritual Value**, according to individual beliefs and background
- **A Voice** that is heard.

5. Structure of Vista

5.1 Vista employs approximately 250 staff and also has the support of over 600 volunteers to enable it to deliver a wide range of provision to address sight loss issues – both in the form of individual services and as an agent for change in society. Vista works primarily in Leicester, Leicestershire and

Rutland. A team of Managers gives day to day direction to staff with strategic direction from a Senior Management Team.

- 5.2 An Executive Committee of up to 15 voluntary Trustees is responsible for the governance of the charity. Over 50% of the Executive Committee has a sight loss and there is a Forum of people with sight loss which reflects on issues considered by the Board and offers them advice, as part of the governance structure. This means that Vista is very much a user-led organisation.

6. Service Provision

- 6.1 Vista holds and manages the Register for blind and partially sighted people on behalf of the three local authorities of Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council and Rutland County Council. Additionally, it provides the following wide range of services:

Early Intervention & Prevention

- Assessment and Visual Impairment Rehabilitation
- Deafblind Reablement
- Information in Hospitals
- Low Vision Services
- Vlstore - the Vista Shop

Vista's Community Based Services

- Activity Classes
- Befriending Services
- Children, young people and families support
- Community Day Services
- Correspondences and Administrative Support
- Day Trips and Outings
- Learning Disability Support
- Residential Care, including:
 - Homes for adults with sight loss and dementia
 - Homes for adults with learning disabilities
- Social Groups
- Specialist Communication and Guide Support,

Business Solutions

- Transcription Services, including audio and Braille.
- Visual Impairment Awareness Training

Get Involved with Vista

- Fundraise for Vista
- History of Vista talks
- Volunteering Opportunities

7. Community Influence

- 7.1 As a result of the Strategic Review of Vista a clear strand of work has emerged which is distinct from direct service provision. This is an influencing role within the wider community, to promote good eye health, highlight the need for action to combat avoidable sight loss and to raise awareness of the needs of people who experience sight loss. The different elements at present are:
- Marketing activity to raise profile and stimulate community awareness
 - Training to raise awareness about sight loss
 - Environmental access audits, information and advice

8. Summary of Strategic Review

- 8.1 **Outcomes from Consultation** – A very broad and far reaching consultation programme with stakeholders about Vista’s future direction resulted in considerable consistency in responses. Eleven key themes emerged:
- Having contact with a wider range of people with sight loss
 - Improving access
 - Raising awareness of sight loss, particularly through training
 - Marketing and raising Vista’s profile
 - More flexible services, through a wider range of different funding streams
 - Fundraising
 - Working in partnership with other agencies
 - Services developed around individuals
 - Social activities
 - Services for children
 - Involving families and carers
- 8.2 **Strategic Drivers** - The main external drivers for Vista were agreed as:
- The UK Vision Strategy.
 - The recession.
 - Demographic and social changes.
 - Competition and collaboration.
 - Personalisation.
 - Shifting balance from treatment to prevention.
- 8.3 **SWOT Analysis** – The SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis by Managers and Trustees identified a number of main issues. These demonstrated that the same themes were recurrent through

the consultation outcomes, the strategic drivers and the SWOT analysis, particularly in terms of the threats and opportunities for Vista:

- **Personalisation** – individuals buying their own services, instead of all services being provided under contract
- **Procurement and tendering** – risks to current services through contracts going out to tender, but opportunities to win contracts for new services too
- **Residential services** – Vista’s services are excellent, but need to respond to the trend towards care in the community rather than residential provision
- **The UK Vision Strategy** and the shift from treatment to prevention
- **Supporting people from ‘hard to reach’ groups**, for instance: people from black and minority ethnic communities, children & young people, families, carers; reaching more people on the register and also people with sight loss who are not registered
- **Vista’s profile** is not strong but can be enhanced through a targeted marketing strategy
- **Competition** from other specialist providers or local charities, but also the chance for **partnerships** with other specialist organisations and local societies
- **The changing needs of people with sight loss**, in particular the growing importance of computer technology.

8.4 **Consultation at Annual General Meeting (AGM)** – the AGM of 2009 was used as an opportunity to engage many of Vista’s members as well as some external stakeholders in the final stage of the Strategic Review. There was very strong agreement with the direction indicated by the review, with the majority of participants voting for the following:

- Vista should widen its scope to serve people who are losing their sight but are not yet registered, in addition to those already on the register (92% in favour).
- Vista should help to prevent avoidable sight loss, as well working with people who have already lost their sight (95% in favour).
- Vista should work in collaboration or partnership with other organisations, when appropriate (91% in favour).
- Vista’s resources should be managed so that support is given to those with the greatest needs, but also work in different ways to address the needs of the wider sight loss community (a split vote between those supporting a minor impact on a larger number - 49% - and those supporting a major impact on fewer people – 51%).
- A major focus is needed on training and information about sight loss (72% in favour). To a lesser extent, a focus is also needed on making

the environment more accessible for people with sight loss (28% in favour).

- Vista should continue to serve Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (78% in favour).
- Marketing should be funded appropriately so that Vista's profile can be improved (80% in favour).
- Vista should grow in order to realise all these aims, but only when funding is available – evolution, not revolution (37% voted for staying the same size; 63% felt Vista should grow).

9. UK Vision Strategy

9.1 The UK Vision Strategy is a ground breaking UK-wide initiative, launched in 2008, which brings all key parties together for the first time to produce a unified, comprehensive framework for action. It has direct links to the government's agenda for reform of the NHS (now encapsulated in the 2010 White Paper 'Equity and Excellence: liberating the NHS') and the Concordat 'Putting People First - a shared vision and commitment to the transformation of Adult Social Care' 2008. The three main priorities are:

- Improving eye health
- Eliminating avoidable sight loss
- Supporting independence and inclusion

9.2 These priorities are very much in tune with Vista's raison d'être and they were the basis for Vista's Business Plan from 2008 to 2010. Vista leads the local implementation in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland and the direction emerging for Vista's Business for 2010 – 2015 suggests that this is appropriate and should be retained because of the positive impact that it has (and can continue to have) on Vista's profile. However, instead of being the basis for Vista's strategy, the UK Vision Strategy should become a vehicle for asserting influence on our partners, enabling us to bring about change, highlighting disconnected pathways and gaps in service provision, stimulating new partnerships for service development and also enhancing Vista's profile.

10. Strategic Priorities

The main strategic Priorities that were established as a result of the Strategic Review are as follows:

- 10.1 **Early Intervention and Prevention** – to enable people to gain information at an early stage and regain skills after changes affecting their sight, to prevent the need for intensive service interventions. A key component to this is reablement - the active process of helping an individual to regain skills, confidence and independence, following a change in circumstances or specific period of illness or injury (such as sight loss). Reablement services are usually provided as intensive programmes of intervention that are time-limited, but not time prescribed and may involve use of specialist equipment or technology.
- 10.2 **Emotional Support:** - providing support which enable individuals to cope with sight loss and improves confidence and self-esteem.
- 10.3 **Community Inclusion:** - supporting people to participate in community life, enabling them to widen relationships and thus strengthen interdependence and their sense of community belonging.
- 10.4 **Care for people with complex needs:** giving specific, person centred support to people with sight loss who have additional complex or very high needs.
- 10.5 **Education and influencing the wider community** - providing information, raising awareness and promoting learning and development as widely as possible so that people in society understand what it means to have a sight loss, know how to protect their own eye health and how to enable people with sight loss to be fully included in society, by removing barriers to inclusion.
- 10.6 **Prevention of avoidable sight loss and preventing the impact of sight loss** - ensuring that services are coordinated and that different agencies work well together. As a result, people will have their eye problems recognised promptly and they will experience clear treatment pathways and prompt responses so that accidents, falls, isolation and mental ill-health resulting from sight loss are minimised.
- 10.7 **Children and Families** - providing appropriate services to children and families so that children with sight loss are able to benefit from opportunities equal to those of other children in society in terms of education, leisure and social integration.

Vista Business Plan 2010 -2015

11. Strategic Objectives for 2010 – 2015

Based on these priorities for action, Vista's seven strategic objectives for the next five years are as follows:

11.1 Early Intervention and Prevention

Vista will provide information and intensive support programmes to enable individuals with sight loss to regain skills, confidence and independence, either following first diagnosis or when an individual's needs have significantly changed.

11.2 Emotional Support

Vista will provide emotional support so that people can cope with the experience of sight loss, build self-confidence and influence decisions about their lives.

11.3 Community Inclusion

Vista will support people with sight loss to build positive relationships within their community or neighbourhood so that they can access opportunities and choices equal to those of others in society.

11.4 Care for People with Complex Needs

Vista will provide a range of services that give specific, person centred support to people with sight loss who have additional complex or very high needs, so that their wellbeing is safeguarded and each individual can enjoy a fulfilled life as a member of society.

11.5 Education and Influencing the Wider Community

Vista will use a range of different methods to promote eye health. Vista will ensure that people with sight loss are fully integrated and barriers to inclusion are identified, challenged and removed.

11.6 Prevention of Avoidable Sight Loss and Preventing the Impact of Sight Loss

Vista will encourage integrated and coordinated service responses across all agencies, so that people experience early and proactive interventions to prevent avoidable sight loss. Vista will support clear treatment pathways and prompt responses so that the consequences of sight loss are minimised.

11.7 Children and Families

Vista Business Plan 2010 -2015

Vista will support children with sight loss and their families, so that these children enjoy opportunities for education, leisure and social integration that are equal to those of other children in society.

12. Operational Plans

- 12.1 Operational plans will be developed, flowing from the Business Plan, to enable the Strategic Objectives to be achieved.
- 12.2 These will consist of departmental objectives for Community Services, Residential and External Relations departments, set by the department heads and then further defined by operational objectives developed by Managers for each individual service.
- 12.3 All objectives will have clear and measurable targets to enable performance to be tracked and measured. Where possible these will be outcome focussed.
- 12.4 The operational plans will be directly linked to the budget.

13. Resources

- 13.1 Success of this plan is heavily reliant upon the resources available. This will require a strong focus on securing funds through trusts, grants and foundations for existing posts where possible and for the introduction of new initiatives and capital projects. Partnership working where appropriate will also form part of our future plans.
- 13.2 Clear departmental planning around Human Resources, Finance, Facilities and Fundraising will be essential to ensure that Vista's Strategic Objectives can be achieved.
- 13.3 We need to have the right staff with the right skills in the right place at the right time. This involves investment in staff recruitment, induction, training, development and communication.
- 13.4 We also need to have secure income streams for service delivery and to retain viability of the charity. To achieve this we will ensure that we have robust systems and structures in place for financial control and administration, budgetary management, negotiation, contract management and tendering.
- 13.5 Finally, we also need to develop and strengthen fundraising activity to ensure that the charity can continue to develop and to respond in innovative ways to meet the needs of people with sight loss and to realise the objectives of this Business Plan.

14. Conclusions

- 14.1 The five years from 2010 – 2015 are likely to be very challenging, as public money comes under unprecedented strain in the aftermath of the recession, and with the uncertainties that may accompany a likely change in government in 2010. However, the Strategic Review happened at an opportune time and has given us a clear direction of travel that should enable us to weather the storm.
- 14.2 This plan gives Vista a firm basis on which to develop proactive responses to the outcomes of the Strategic Review, so that the Strategic Objectives can be achieved and the charity's position as a market leader in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, retained and strengthened.

Jenny Pearce
Chief Executive
08.12.09
Refreshed 20.06.11