

Notes of VCS Assembly Executive Committee

Tuesday 15th May 2018 12.00 noon – 2.00 pm

Northumberland CVA

Present: Joe Jackson (Chair), Ralph Firth, Anne Lyall, Sharon Spurling, Gill Smith, Ann Atkinson

Apologies Julie Dodson, John McGough. Sue Ashmore, Jim Wyness, Andy Haddon

1. Notes of last meeting and matter arising

Notes of last meeting agreed.

AA reported that she was informed that the minutes of VCS Liaison Group did not go anywhere and were not picked up by Cabinet.

In terms of understanding issues facing organisations which were not easily picked up at Network meetings when asked, AA would talk to individual organisations and try and get a written response from organisations at network meetings to a few key questions. This would assist in getting a sense of the State of the Sector and emerging trends.

AL reported that she had got together with colleagues in Newcastle and North Tyneside to discuss representation in relation to Devolution. They had concluded that until the government had approved the dissolution of the current partnership to the North of Tyne partnership and the appointment of interim Mayor, there would be little influence or information we could gain that could benefit the sector at this stage

JJ reported that he had attended the State of the Area Debate and had asked how the Council planned to engage with the VCS. Arising from this Cath Homer, Portfolio Holder agreed to meet with representatives from the Assembly. AL informed that Tony Kirsop was meeting with Cath Homer to arrange a suitable date for the meeting.

The difficulties arranging meetings with key people in the public sector was discussed and it was agreed that a different approach was required in some instances.

Action - JJ to produce a draft response to Siobhan Brown, CCG in relation to a future meeting and share with Executive Committee.

2. Feedback from Executive members and AA on activities

JJ asked if anyone had anything to say about the feedback reports that had been circulated previously.

In relation to Devolution, AL reported that not much was happening at the moment. JJ stated that it was important to ensure that representation from the VCS sector covered the whole area and not just part of the North of Tyne area.

AL reported that meetings were being held with key people in the Council to ensure that the sector was consulted and offering support in relation to strategies and plans, e.g. culture, universal credit roll out. There was some discussion about the roll out of Universal Credit and the considerable difficulties facing individuals and support that will be required for those with poor literacy and limited IT skills. It was recognised the need for volunteers to be able to provide one to one support for people applying for Universal Credit and the requirement for computer and internet facilities to be available across the county in village halls etc. Mapping of facilities and support was required.

AA reported that she had been involved in project planning – strategy and action plan, executive membership review, planning support services activities, funeral poverty report. Two network meetings had been held since the last meeting, 26 attendees at the SE Northumberland network and 15 at the West Northumberland Network and had also been supporting other activities e.g. Funding Fair and attending events

3. VCS Liaison Group feedback and role of group

AA reported that whilst the VCS Liaison Group was an informative meeting there was no focus on issues that could be worked on collectively, taken forward and ultimately potentially make a difference. The intention was that the planned meeting with the Portfolio holder and chair of the Liaison Group would review the purpose, Statement of Intent and how the Liaison Group could be more working more effectively.

4. VCS Support Services – Survey Results

It was felt that the results from the survey were positive although it was unclear how these results would be used in relation to whether there was a commission in future or not. AL stated that Support Services would be looking at the results in more detail and where we could make improvements. AA stated that it was evident that there was a need for better communication around Assembly activities and a need for more information to be provided on the website including a blog to get the sector to engage on issues.

Actions: AA to consider additional information that could be added to the website to keep members better informed of Assembly activities and to write a regular blog

5. KPI's and Work Plan for 2018/2019

AA indicated the changes that had been made to the work plan compared to the previous year and stated that the number of KPI's had reduced. There were no changes or additions suggested and it was agreed that the Strategy and Action Plan should go on the website.

Actions; AA to ensure Strategy and Action was added to the Assembly website

6. Executive membership review

AA stated that she had consulted with three other members of the Executive Committee about the review of membership. AA explained the proposed changes which were agreed by members. All members would stand down, the majority of whom had been on the Executive for three year but would be eligible to stand again if they wanted to.

Actions: - AA to incorporate changes to the terms of reference for the Executive Committee and progress the recruitment for the Executive Committee with a view to the membership being in place for the next meeting in August 2018.

7. Funeral Poverty Review

AA drew attention to key elements in relation to the report on Funeral Poverty which was requested at the last meeting and which arose as an issue from a network meeting. It was suggested that the report be circulated more widely. AA indicated that she would like to send the report and get approval from organisations that contributed first and would then circulate more widely.

Actions: AA to circulate the report on Funeral Poverty more widely once contributors to the report had seen it and agreed to its wider distribution.

8. AOB

None

Dates of future meetings :-	Tuesday 21st August 2018
	Tuesday 20th November 2018
	Tuesday 12th February 2019