

# Notes of VCS Assembly Executive Committee

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017 12.00 noon – 2.00 pm

## Northumberland CVA

**Present:** Joe Jackson, Ralph Firth, Avril Gibson, Anne Lyall, Julie Dodson, Sharon Spurling, Sue Ashmore, Ann Atkinson

**Apologies** George Scott, Andy Haddon, Cath Stocks

### 1. Notes of last meeting and matter arising

Notes of last meeting agreed.

AA stated that one person had expressed an interest in representing the West on the Executive Committee. The opportunity is still being advertised and would close towards the end of the month.

JD has yet to follow up on action point

AA had been in contact with Louise Stobbart and had been informed that the four community safety hubs – north, west, south east and central focus on strategic issues including crime, vulnerability, road safety and communication. Membership includes elected members(county, town and parish) Northumbria police inspectors, fire and rescue service, housing, licensing. The Community Safety Hub process would be going through a review so might change in future. Information was not provided on voluntary and community sector representation. AA to follow up.

**Action: JD to follow up VCS representation on Adult Safeguarding Board, share work plan of Joint Communications Group once available and explore whether strategy in place in relation to mental health.**

**AA to contact Louise Stobbart, Partnerships Officer re outcome of review and representation**

### 2. Partnership working and feedback from members

SA reported on meeting with two members of the internal Equalities Group at NCC organised and including Keith Thompson. The role of the Assembly was explained and the difference from NCVA. It was decided that we should keep each other informed of issues we would want to raise and that we would meet up three times a year too. It was suggested by an Executive member that if we were going to raise good practice issues then we should lead by example. What is it that we want to say and do we have the information to back this up?

SS reported on the first meeting of the new Healthwatch Board which involved setting priorities but not losing what had gone before and agreeing terms of reference. The funding was only for the current year and NCC would be going out to tender later on in

the year for the service. SS is continuing to send out Vanguard information to the Executive as and when she receives it. All in a state of flux at the moment and will need to consider in future how we can influence.

JD reported that a draft Suicide Prevention Strategy for children and young people had been produced. The statistics were useful but focused on early intervention and it would be useful if the Assembly could give a response. Concern raised that in relation to consultations that the Council asked for single organisations to respond rather than getting an Assembly response which did not assist learning. JD will find out if can share report.

JD reported that there was a move to join adults, children, community safety within Northumberland and N Tyneside to develop a joint Safeguarding Campaign and approach on a regional basis. A member of Voices sits on the group.

JD informed that she had been asked to comment on NCC's Children and Young Peoples Plan and had to respond within a day which she refused. JD will ask how NCC are engaging the sector as need a formalised approach so the sector can respond rather than approaching individuals. A member suggested that a letter is sent out to NCC about the role of the Assembly in relation to engagement and what we want to respond to.

**Actions: JD to ask NCC whether draft Suicide Prevention Strategy can be shared with the sector for comment.**

**AA to produce letter for NCC in relation to engaging the Assembly in consultations to obtain VCS voice.**

### **3. Assembly Strategy and Action Plan**

AA asked for comments and views on the Assembly Strategy and Action Plan. It was considered that the Plan had covered the issues that had been raised at the informal meeting held in April and that it was appropriate at this time to focus on promoting the Assembly to the wider VCS and develop a strapline with a simple clear message about what we are doing to re-engage with the community. Suggestions included a stall with leaflets promoting the Assembly at events. It was stated that we already do this. Another suggestion was producing business cards with key activities of the Assembly and logo. Possible straplines were suggested.

**Action: AA to consider strapline and content for business card**

### **4. Business Support to the VCS**

AA introduced report on progress to date engaging businesses. It was recognised the difficulties engaging businesses unless there was a connection amongst the staff. Given resources it was probably appropriate to direct groups to North East Skills Sharing for example and build relationships with support that is already there, acting as a conduit rather than an organiser.

### **5. Assembly Event Feedback**

AA reported that on the whole there was a positive response to the event in Alnwick although some negativity had been expressed about holding the workshops in the same room and not being able to hear properly as a result. It was disappointing that there had not been attendance from the north of the county when the event was arranged in Alnwick to attract groups from this part of the county. It was suggested that the north network should be informed of this.

**Action: AA to inform North Northumberland Network of poor response to event from the north of the county.**

## **6. NCC/VCS Cabinet Advisory Group feedback and next meeting**

The last meeting had been poorly attended and reports presented on Safe Places, outcomes of the commission and list of organisations we had supported. Members were very complimentary about activities and what had been achieved.

The next meeting is planned for 22<sup>nd</sup> June but need to have confirmation of this. We are not sure what form or status the meeting will have given the changes as a result of the elections but at present it is planned to be held at NCVA . The Splinter Group are available to talk about the Safe Place Scheme funding they have received and progress to date and we would inform the Group about the Assembly Action Plan. The Group would also be informed by NCC about progress of the Social Value Engine which a number of organisations including ourselves are piloting with a view to NCC potentially purchasing to assist in demonstrating our value in monetary terms.

## **7. Progress Report**

AA reported on work since the last meeting which included the Social Value Engine, Asylum Seeker and Refugee Working Group which was now a strategic group involving wider stakeholders e.g. G4S, attending network meeting, meetings with Comms and Engagement Officer at NHCT, Equalities, Ageing Well lead, exploring business support and organising and delivering Assembly event.

## **8. AOB**

Letter to be sent to Eileen Burt, ex- Chair of VCS Cabinet Advisory Group to thank her for support provided to the VCS in her role.

**Action: JJ to write a letter to Eileen Burt**

**Dates of future meetings: Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2017**

**Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017**

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017**