

Notes of VCS Assembly Executive Committee

Wednesday 10th February 2016 12.00 noon – 2.00p.m.

Present: Joe Jackson, Sharon Spurling, Ann Lyall, Sue Ashmore, George Scott, Ralph Firth, Ann Atkinson, Cath George

Apologies: Andy Haddon, Annie Evans, Carol Ashworth,

The meeting opened with a minute's contemplation in memory of Mike Gowland.

1. Notes of last meeting

Notes of last meeting were agreed.

2. Matters arising not covered on the agenda

JJ had received a letter today in response to the follow up letter to Cllr Scott Dickinson, chair of the Health and Well Being Board. The Board is currently looking at its development moving into 2016 and will be looking at membership requests and will inform us of the outcomes of that work. He wants to ensure that the Board is widely represented and that all stakeholders have a voice.

It was also raised in relation to the Devolution agenda that the Assembly needs to be involved in the structures arising from that so they can have a strategic influence. It was suggested that we need to consider how we can have a strategic influence more widely, identify the people we need to influence and develop a campaign strategy. This could involve finding out best practice in other areas and being proactive in our approach

Action:- JJ to draft a response to Cllr Dickinson.

AA to consider and draw together a sub-group to develop a campaign strategy.

(JJ was called away so SS took the chair for the rest of the meeting)

3. Northumberland CVA commission

AL outlined the new commission and stated that of the 45 responses to the survey carried out by NCC about the commission to date and content of the new commission there were only 2 negative responses. There will be a reduction in the funding available and clarity was still needed on corporate social responsibility, parish and town councils and supported volunteering elements of the commission. There is also clearly some confusion about the role of the VCS Assembly which is not a delivery organisation and the duties of Northumberland CVA. AL suggested that Kirsten Francis is invited to the

next meeting so we are clear how she sees CVA's alignment with the VCS Assembly in terms of delivery of the commission. A decision on the commission will be made at Cabinet this month. AL will share the results of the survey when it has been confirmed by NCC that they can be released.

Action:- AA to invite KF to the next meeting of the Executive Committee

4. NCC/VCS Cabinet Advisory Group

The VCS Liaison Group is now the VCS Cabinet Advisory Group which came to our attention at the last meeting. We need to clarify what the reporting arrangements are in relation to this Group and if they differ from the Liaison Group. We would anticipate that it will be a more direct route to strategic decision makers and we need to be in a position to effect change.

Following a presentation on investment in the VCS the meeting focused on council issues/priorities and not on the VCS. Standard items suggested and agreed at the last meeting were not included on the agenda. We need and NCC need to be clear what they want from this Group. The two main issues arising from the meeting were a review of the Community Chest as it currently lacks clarity and KPI's to be developed for the commission.

AA has asked KF if a meeting can be arranged with the chair of the group and herself to discuss and agree an agenda before the next meeting of the Cabinet Advisory Group.

5. Update on Working Groups

AA reported that Northumberland VCS Assembly are part of a multi-agency asylum seeker and refugee working group to develop the Northumberland County Council offer for asylum seekers and refugees. Information had been provided to the group on potential support from the VCS sector. Decisions on the specific areas selected are likely to be made at the next meeting.

Cllr. Dungworth has asked to meet Assembly Executive members in relation to equality issues. She is interested in what issues the sector is picking up with regard to equalities and whether they are being addressed or not. AL suggested that we invite Assembly members along involved in equality issues.

RF, SS and AA met to consider what we want from the CCG relationship. It was felt that we needed to fit our ideas into the priorities of the CCG so it was clear how we could support their activities. AA and RF had produced a paper of what the sector could offer in relation to the CCG's seven elements of

care. SS drew everyone's attention to the NHS Survey on the Vanguard and suggested that it was put on the website and members encouraged to respond. It was felt that the CCG understood the sector when speaking to them on a one to one basis but collectively the sector did not appear to be a key stakeholder in terms of strategic decision making and was seen as a group to respond to consultations in relation to their plans.

It was felt the VCS needed to be clear what the sector can offer closer to home which is a key element of care the CCG want to see provided. It was suggested that there was a need to carry out a mapping exercise of what there is in each locality and ensure that it was quality assured. There is a need to consider questions being asked in the NHS survey and ask about local needs.

Action: - AA to consider scope for mapping provision in each locality in relation to care close to home and local needs.

6. Feedback from Executive members

This item was left due to lack of time. Members had received feedback forms from some Executive members.

7. Recruitment of Executive member for Infrastructure and non-attendance

AA stated that no one had come forward to be considered for the Infrastructure vacancy on the Executive Committee. AL suggested that we make direct contact with individual members of infrastructure organisations to encourage applications. AA reminded members that membership would be reviewed if individual attendance dropped below 50%.

Action: - AA to contact members of infrastructure organisations to ask them to consider being a member of the Executive Committee.

8. Discussion on Engagement with the sector

Limited time was available to discuss this. It was suggested that at any meetings we attend with VCS organisations we promote who we are and what we are doing and encourage groups to talk about any concerns or issues they have. It is evident that Executive members do attend quite a lot of meetings with the sector and should be able to do this.

Action - All Executive members to promote what the Assembly is doing through the meetings they attend and encourage organisations to raise concerns and issues the Assembly could assist/support them with.

9. FACT VCS representation

JD informed members that the Family and Children Trust, the strategic body that cares for children and young people involving a cross agency approach which had been in place for about nine years had been reviewed. Meetings had been held monthly with sub- groups for tasks and had been run more and more by the local authority in recent times. The VCS Assembly rep on the Trust had not been consulted in relation to the review and was informed that they were no longer required to be a member of the Trust. It was felt that the VCS Assembly should be at the table to provide a voice for the sector.

Action: - JD to send AA information about FACT with a view to a request being sent for membership of the VCS Assembly on the Trust board.

10.AOB

JD informed members that the Adult Safeguarding Board, Children Safeguarding Board and Safer Northumberland Partnership were developing a joint Communications and Engagement Strategy but it was early days.

AA informed members that dates of meetings for the forthcoming year had been arranged and are detailed below.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 18th May 12.00 noon – 2.00pm at Northumberland CVA

Dates of future meetings:-

Wednesday 24th August

Wednesday 23rd November

Wednesday 15th February