

Notes of VCS Assembly Executive Committee

Wednesday 22nd November 2017 12.00 noon – 2.00 pm

Northumberland CVA

Present: Joe Jackson (Chair) , Ralph Firth, Jim Wyness, Anne Lyall, Julie Dodson, Sharon Spurling, Sue Ashmore, Avril Gibson, John McGough, Ann Atkinson

Apologies Andy Haddon, George Scott

JJ stated that at the last meeting of the Executive Committee a new chair should have been elected. JJ stated that he was willing to stand again and as no one else put themselves forward JJ was elected chair for the forthcoming year.

John McGough attending his first meeting was welcomed as the representative for West Northumberland.

1. Notes of last meeting and matter arising

Notes of last meeting agreed.

JD stated that there was a need to hold back in relation to representation on the Adult Safeguarding Board as changes were taking place, but to keep the action in the notes of the meeting. A national review and legislation is changing the board/partners in each local authority. Police, Health and the local authority have a statutory responsibility and they decide how to deliver. The issue of how we maintain a Northumberland presence with regional organisations was raised and implications in relation to devolution. It was felt that we need examples of ways of working where we do contribute, where the sector has influenced change in the community including successes around safeguarding. JD suggested that Assembly and Voices work together on this and build into work plan.

AA reported that no comments were received in relation to the Suicide Prevention Strategy and the report did indicate that the VCS would be represented on the group monitoring the action plan. AA indicated that the other actions in the notes had been addressed.

RF asked about the action in relation to CAB. AL reported that information had been included in the e-bulletin and that a presentation would be given at the next VCS Liaison Group. AA stated that the new head of Northumberland CAB would be speaking at the Central Network meeting on 6th Dec at Morpeth.

Actions: JD to continue 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.

JD to consider with AA how can work together on successes of the sector in influencing change

2. Partnership working and feedback from members

SS reported that priorities for the Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy included an asset based approach which we should encourage. JJ stressed the importance of selling the benefits of this approach. SS indicated that the health approach was about self management which impacts on carers and families. JM stated that mental illness and suicide had increased in rural areas and it is important that the strategy meets the needs of rural areas too.

RF reported dissatisfaction with the Health and Well-Being Board as very process driven and asked if there were any issues that the Assembly would want to raise with the Board. It was felt that the most appropriate way forward was for the agenda of the Board to be sent out to the Executive members and for them to contact RF if there were any issues that they wanted raising as we need to be pro-active.

AG commented on the ESF calls e.g. social housing and difficulties of finding matched funding. She was unaware what was happening in relation to ex-offenders and would find out.

SA reported on meeting with Keith Thompson, Equality and Diversity Officer at NCC. She informed that the first Gay Pride event in Northumberland would take place on June 2nd 2018 at Alnwick Rugby Club. SA reported that she had attended an event in Hexham in relation to National Hate Crime Prevention Week and heard that there was an increase in hate crime reported although it was felt that LGBT probably felt more confident to report this.

Actions: RF/AA to send out HWB agenda to Executive members and members to inform RF if there are issues they want raising.

3. Health – Accountable Care Organisation and Sustainable Transformation Plan

RF reported that the STP footprint for Northumberland was North of Tyne. The ACO was supposed to be in place by April 2018 but was in abeyance as there was a legal challenge to ACO's in an attempt to move back to one NHS as currently sub-sets of the NHS. The STP is looking to include 3 STP's so the same size in population to Manchester which was not shared at the HWB and RF and SS had to get it put on the agenda for the last meeting. RF was concerned that we did not want a bigger STP if looking at an asset based approach at a local level as this would advantage the big players in relation to commissioning. People with multiple conditions need to be treated as a whole and not related to individual conditions which requires better integration between health and social care.

In response to issues raised by AA in relation to health issues i.e. GP provision and Berwick health plans it was suggested using Healthwatch to ask more sticky questions.

Health – Asset based approaches to health and wellbeing

AL reported that some funding had been received from Guy Redman to tackle poverty at a local level, providing additional support in relation to undertaking an assessment of community groups. They will then use an asset based approach to develop services carrying out asset mapping involving local people in decision making. The aim would be to spread this out to other areas if successful.

AA reported on positive feedback to the event held the previous week on community based approaches in practice. AA reported that she and AL had held meetings with Support Planner, Health Trainer and Recovery College leads and Public Health, all committed to an asset based approach in the way they conducted their work but it would appear that there was not a clear awareness about what each other were doing and awareness amongst the voluntary and community sector of these roles was limited. AA felt there were clearly opportunities for better partnership working between the VCS and health working in the community in relation to asset based approaches.

4. Strategy and Action Plan and Progress Report

AA reported that whilst progress had been made on most areas of the action plan there had been limited progress in relation to progressing the Sector Connector Model. A meeting had been held with an employee of SAGE who was particularly interested in the potential of her staff as part of their 5 days of volunteering, undertaking an audit of the IT security of voluntary and community groups and following up with training if required. AA had not managed to attend any business breakfasts to make contact with businesses

AA reported that network meeting continue to be well supported and valued but there was some difficulty getting ideas for speakers from organisations attending.

5. VCS Liaison Group feedback and next meeting

AA stated that the main issues arising from the Liaison Group meeting were concerns about the changes at Northumberland CAB and emergency accommodation provision in Northumberland for those at risk. JD reported that NCC would be focusing on domestic abuse and neglect in preparation for an inspection as no one had a clear handle or oversight of this. The local authority were also combining services that were out for commission e.g. housing and support services in a single contract. The bundling of contracts together and commissioning as one, meant that smaller organisations would not stand much chance of being able to bid for contracts. How do we take part in a dialogue with commissioners about the impact of this approach? Soft market testing no longer seems to take place.

6. Update of VCS Support Services

AL reported earlier on in the meeting that she was no further forward establishing whether there would be a commission for Support Services from April 2018.

7. AOB

SS stated that a report would be provided on the Nowhere to go – accessible toilet project in January 2018 and a toolkit provided on best practice.

It was reported that Trinity Youth had developed an app by young people about their experiences which would be helpful for youth services.

Date of next meeting:- Wednesday 14th February 2017