

Notes of VCS Assembly Executive Committee

Wednesday 24th August 2016 12.00 noon – 2.00 pm

Northumberland CVA

Present: Joe Jackson Sharon Spurling, Lewis Atkinson, Avril Gibson, George Scott, Sue Ashmore, Andy Haddon, Julie Dodson, Ann Atkinson

Apologies Cath George, Ralph Firth, Anne Lyall

1. Election of Chair

Joe Jackson was nominated and unanimously agreed by the Committee to be Chair for the forthcoming year.

2. Notes of last meeting and matter arising

Amend content in action in relation to Item 6 from Healthwatch Board to Health and Well-Being Board.

JD indicated that it was a developing situation in relation to FACT and would send information to AA when appropriate.

AA reported that the second action in relation to Item 3 of the notes was not actioned as appropriately dealt with at VCS Cabinet Advisory Group in June. Similarly action under item 7 not appropriate for raising at VCS Cabinet Advisory Group once further information gathered.

3. Northumberland CVA Commission and KPI's

AA updated Assembly members about the meeting with Hannah Garrad and Tony Kirsop from NCC about the Commission and KPI's. TK would now be our point of contact in relation to the Commission. All support staff have been tasked with identifying KPI's for their areas of work that identify outcomes as well as outputs so that we can evidence the value of the work we are doing. These will be collated and finalised in September and then shared with NCC. JJ asked that he and SS have sight of finalised KPI's in relation to the Assembly for approval prior to being sent to NCC. JJ indicated that it was important that finalised KPI's were signed off by NCC in writing and that it was a regular item on the Executive Committee agenda so progress could be reported. AG stated that the Commission is with the Council and not individuals so need to know that we have their backing.

Action: Executive members invited to provide views/comments on the KPI's

AA to send final draft of Assembly KPI's to JJ and SS for comment

AA to ensure that KPI's are agreed and signed off in writing by NCC

4. VCS Assembly Equality representative

HG indicated at the meeting in relation to the Commission that it was important that the Council had a recognised representative for Equalities from the VCS and that it made sense that this person came from the Assembly. The expectation was that the representative would sit on the Building Better Opportunities Strategic Group and would get a group of voluntary organisations together with strong equalities interest as and when needed, probably once or twice a year to discuss pertinent equality issues. JD felt that it was important to have a sector advocate for the most marginalised although equalities was a theme running through all roles of Executive members. Also that outcomes in relation to the Commission and the impact of issues raised were considered in relation to equalities. It was suggested that we could look at membership of the Assembly and attendance at events in relation to equalities. AA after discussion with AL had approached SA to see if she was interested in this role as it was her particular area of interest. SA had confirmed she was interested and this was supported by the rest of the Executive Committee at the meeting who agreed to ensure that SA was assisted by being provided with information to support her in her role.

Action: AA to inform Hannah Garrad that Sue Ashmore will be the VCS Assembly Equality representative

5. Health and Well-Being Communications Group representative

RF has represented the Assembly on the above group but now that he is the Assembly representative on the Health and Well-Being Board he is unable to continue with this Group. The Comms Group is about sharing ideas on how to get public responses to statutory agencies performance and plans. RF feels that unless we are seeking to work jointly with one of the agencies to get feedback ourselves it is of limited value for the amount of time involved. AA also stated that it did not provide the opportunity to comment on plans for engagement with the public as plans had been finalised by the time they came to the group. It was suggested that we ask to receive minutes of meetings to keep us informed and that we have an opportunity to comment if something of relevance rather than a member attending. This was agreed.

Action: AA to inform the Chair of the Group the decision of the Executive not have a representative on the Group but to receive minutes of meetings and comment where appropriate.

6. Evidencing the Value of the Sector

JJ introduced approaches to evidencing the value of the sector e.g. use of national and local data sources and being able to create a financial and community worth for the sector including developing a methodology for this. All were supportive of the need for this. JD and AG indicated a particular interest and having some information in relation to this that they would share with AA. JD has information on Social Value from the Social Value team. It was felt that targeted activity would be the best approach and that health was a good starting point. JJ suggested that a working group to move this forward was appropriate

Action: JD and AG to share information with AA in relation to evidencing the value of the sector. AA to consider approach and arrange working group meeting with JD and AG to progress this.

7. Feedback from the VCS Assembly Event

AA reported that the event on Employer Supported Volunteering received positive feedback in spite of the keynote speaker not being able to attend. Workshop information had been fed back to attendees and we were now taking forward information gathered in relation to support needs from employers. Marketing and PR was high on the list and AA had gone back to these organisations to gather more information on requirements in terms of content and whether training or one to one support were required. Only one response from fifteen sent out received so need to chase up. AA stated the importance of working with BiC to make links with employers interested in supporting the sector.

8. NCC/VCS Cabinet Advisory Group

AA reported that at the last meeting it was agreed that volunteering opportunities would be detailed on the NCC staff news and website and that it would be raised at Chairman's Group how NCC could support VCS through staff volunteering. Procurement officer was not at the meeting to report on the transfer of procurement opportunities to Due North but will be at the meeting in September. Comments on the Community Chest had been prepared and shared with NCC for consideration and will be covered as an agenda item at the September meeting. AA asked members to consider any items for the future work programme of the group.

Action: Executive members to give consideration to topics for the future work programme of the Cabinet Advisory Group and inform AA.

9. Progress Report

AA reported on activities undertaken since the last meeting which included Network meetings in West and Central Northumberland, event at Kirkley Hall, attending Refugee and Asylum Seeker Operational Group as VCS rep to support delivery of assistance to Syrian Refugees coming to the county from November 2016, supporting Funding Fair, meetings with Business in the Community Connector and NCC Equalities contact and attending VONNE event on 'Marketing your services to CCG's and GP's'. Also letter sent to PM, local MP's and VCS Chair of Cabinet Advisory Group regarding concerns about EU funding to the voluntary sector following Brexit.

10. Feedback from Executive members

SA raised an issue that had been voiced at Central Network meeting in relation to representation of the sector at Community Safety Partnership meetings and whether this had been replaced by area meetings and whether it was helpful/ appropriate to attend these meetings. It was felt that it was not clear where the voice of the sector could now be heard in relation to community safety. It was suggested that the Coordinator of these meetings be contacted to see if they could come along to an Executive meeting and

explain how it now operated and how the sector could have a voice. **JD to provide AA with the name of the contact.**

SS had previously circulated information in relation to her attendance at Health and Well-Being Board and stressed that the push was for early intervention and prevention in relation to health care.

JD stated that in relation to the Childrens' Safeguarding Board there was no longer a clear expectation that the voluntary sector would be included. She suggested that there was a need to look at in six months time to see what it means to the sector. In relation to Children and Young People there would be a single point of access for referrals through Northumberland SPA who would make an initial assessment. Northumberland are seen to be taking on far too many referrals and other organisations will have to support. The expectation is that this will happen towards the end of the year. Will need to raise with the sector and its implications as the sector will be expected to take a lead and clarity will be needed over roles and what is statutory. In relation to the Adult Safeguarding Board there was no representative from the VCS and it will in future likely be a joint board with North Tyneside.

AH informed attendees about the Produced in Northumberland, celebration of Food event at Morpeth Town Hall in early Oct and Social Enterprise Festival led by Acumen. He reported on support to organisations in provide a route to market e.g. Daybreak selling their cakes to Virgin Money, linking supply of food to demand and other social enterprises encouraged to do the same.

GS reported on funding scheme to provide low cost housing led by the Glendale Trust.

AG reported that Ingeus work programme looking at a lead for the contract and partners and that organisations are likely to be bombarded in relation to that. AG also questioned how we encourage funders to the NE and develop a relationship with grant and fundraisers and that feedback is provided so can learn and assist organisations being successful in future applications. Also there was a need for the Institute of Fundraising to keep up to date and be clear about what is not statutory.

JJ reported that the Trustee Network website is now up and running and only accessible to members <http://www.northumberlandtrustees.org.uk/>. There is a large resource library on the website , 200+ factsheets, workbooks, reports on a range of topics including campaigning, data protection, HR, recruitment, risk management, safeguarding strategic planning to name a few and useful links.

11. Brexit and implications for the VCS

JJ stated that information had been provided on this which mirrored the regional picture.

12. Developing a regional type VCS Assembly

To be discussed at a future meeting

13. AOB

It was stated that Sally King had been appointed as Deputy Chief Executive at the Community Foundation

JD reported that the Building Better Opportunities Programme had been approved and that there would be opportunities moving forward.

Date of next meeting Wednesday 23rd November 2016 at 12.00 noon at NCVA