

Charnwood Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Forum

Minutes of Meeting held at Newtown Linford
on Thursday, 15 September 2011 at 1pm

Peggy welcomed everyone and introductions were made

Present

Peggy Nicholls	The Bridge (Chair)
Helen Wootton	Home-Start Charnwood (Vice-Chair)
Tom Kiernan	Charnwood Borough Council – speaker
Jane Hammond	SOFA
Zoe Whetherly	Fearon Hall
Caroline Howell	The Bridge
Anne Glasper	Shepshed Community Plan
Christine Barrell	Youth Shelter
Jane Hall	Parent Carer Council
Kathleen Summerfield	Syston and District Volunteer Centre
Ben Smith	VAL
Neil Lambert	VAC

Apologies –

Moya Hoult	CAB
David Pearce	?
Pete Warlow	Glebe House Project
Sandy Leong	Chair of VAC Trustees
Vin Gaten	VAL
Clare Nagle	VAL

1 Charnwood Borough Council Community Grants

Tom Kiernan, Head of Neighbourhood Management, was introduced. Tom described part of his role as outward facing, with most time spent addressing needs in 9 Priority Neighbourhoods, as defined by the index of multiple-deprivation (IMD).

Regarding grants, Tom has taken over from Michael Hopkins who had been a contact officer previously.

Community Development Grants are up to £15,000 and mainly given to voluntary organisations in the Voluntary Sector.

Community Engagement Grants are up to £500 and mainly given to community groups in the Community Sector.

Loughborough Grants are also available from CBC up to £2000, and other Parish and Town Councils across the borough have grants from their respective "special rate" from Council Tax charges.

CBC also gives funds to several Key Strategic Partners and the Rural Community Council.

A Panel of 5 officers assesses applications and give scores from 0 to over 35. Funding is not given if less than 25 scored. Other categories are 25-29 = 25% of funding; 30-34 = 50%; and 35 and over gets 100%.

Usually, about 48k is available over 3 funding rounds, but this year, about 18k was awarded in May, and all the remaining 30k is expected to be given this month, especially as applications 97k was requested.

The Scrutiny Panel is considering whether to reduce the funding pot for 2012-13, and decisions should be known, along with budget available, before Christmas 2011, for April 2012 year.

In response to questions, Tom added:-

- Environmental criteria are being enhanced
- Other funding pots are available – LCC and PCT (attached)
- Big Society grants had been promoted at the Roadshow held in Loughborough earlier in the week

Jane Hammond also offered to provide feedback from a "Fundraisers" event (ICFM) that afternoon.

Copies of funding handouts are attached or best accessed by www.fundingtoolkit.org for more information.

Tom was thanked for presenting and stayed a little longer before leaving.

2 Notes of 7 June meeting - were approved, and no matters arising

3 Consultations and Feedback from other forums

Zoe had attended the final session reviewing the Area/Community Forums.

Ben tabled

- a paper about the possible change of location of the NHS Walk-in Centre in Loughborough
- a summary of the Volunteer Strategy devised by VAL

Charnwood Together: new internal structure of the Partnership to be proposed including functions delivered through it, and how Charnwood aligns with Leicestershire Together.

Jane asked whether a chart of all the partnerships and their inter-connections is available? Neil suggested viewing the www.leicestershiretogether.com website for current position, but that this is changing. Neil also advised that Tricia Reynolds at VAL is compiling a list of representatives from the VCS on such partnerships. Peggy wondered how communications were handled to and from the reps?

VCS Assembly: The new VCS assembly held its away day in order to plan how best to support the sector, but Peggy had been off work at the time. There was confusion about relationship with VAL and respective identities, not least due to resource differences. Peggy and Gaynor Guilter, the Chair, had met with Kevan Liles CEO VAL, and Bernard Greaves, Chair or Trustees, and this had led to a proposal from VAL, which Peggy tabled for consideration. As this involved VAL Ben offered to leave, but was permitted to stay.

Zoe felt the VAL proposal sounded like a “talking shop” lacking clout, and Helen disclosed she felt “agitated” that views expressed at the Assembly launch a year ago had not been responded to.

Neil felt that Assembly Board should be more assertive and holding VAL to account as appropriate. There was further discussion about roles and relationships between the VCS as a whole, including volunteer-led small groups, VAL as a major service provider, and the

Assembly. Peggy Nicholls will send further information to VCS Forum members as and when available.

4 Other issues raised

- There was confusion about provision of Safeguarding training
- CBC services may be provided by independent organisations
- Boundary Commission plans for new parliamentary constituencies might affect parts of Leicestershire near Charnwood

5 Neil gave a brief presentation about how VAC and JSHF measure and record outputs and outcomes, in order to attract volunteers and justify funding

He tabled the 2009-10 Annual Review (Outputs and Performance charts), and separate Impact Report (Case studies of people benefiting from giving and receiving services). These are also available on the VAC web site at

www.voluntaryactioncharnwood.org.uk/vacreports.html

6 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be the AGM and will take place on Tuesday, 6 December at 9.30am for a 10 am start and will be held at Gorse Covert Community Centre, Maxwell Drive, Loughborough.

Neil Lambert
CEO VAC
16th September 2011