

vcsTogether Steering Group

Steering Group – 26 April 2007

Minutes

1. Welcome & introductions

Present:

Andrew Campbell	NVS
Louise Heley	Expert Patient Programme
Carolyn Heydon	Norfolk Rural Community Council
James Kearns	BUILD
Fiona Hunter	CAB North Walsham
Barry Langley	West Norfolk Community Transport Association
Julia Moss	WINN
Cat Plewman	Poppyland Partnership
Leigh Vallance	BREAK
Melissa Wallis-Riches	Meridian East

Apologies:

Richard Draper, Peter de Oude, Linda Rogers, Darryl Smith, Don Venvell

It was noted that both Steve Smith and Jeanne Norman had moved jobs and were therefore no longer members of the steering group.

2 and 3 Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the meeting on 28 February were agreed. Matters arising:

Co-option of members for the steering group – Agreed:

- to explore opportunities to recruit representatives from organisations in fields of tourism, arts, and culture; community safety; sport and village halls
- Carolyn would follow up a possible village hall representative
- to raise the issue at the Forum meeting in Fakenham and discuss further at the next steering group meeting.

The position concerning substitutes attending the various groups and meetings of other organisations was discussed. Agreed to:

- to adopt a common sense approach
- circulate a list of members attending the various groups in whatever capacity so that should a representative from vcsTogether be unable to attend, they could see if someone else from the group would be attending in any case.

It was noted that vcsTogether had been invited to nominate a representative to attend the Operational Advisory Group of North Norfolk Community Partnership. This too will be discussed at the next meeting.

4 Next Forum meeting – Fakenham Racecourse 11 June

Theme of the day is to be Social Inclusion. Main speaker to give the national perspective from Help the Aged policy team. Jon Clemo, Norfolk Rural Community Council, will explain the OCSI research findings. There is to be a panel discussion session to enable whole groups discussion of the issues raised.

Suggestions for other speakers included Fiona Hunter to talk about making the case for social inclusion in funding applications.

The day will also be the launch of a Forum for children, young people and their families. Concern was expressed that this session should not clash with other activities in the day in order to maximise attendance at the launch event.

AC to discuss with Richard Draper ways to accommodate this and come up with a programme for the day. It was noted that publicity was needed urgently for this event.

The size of the venue means there is space for exhibition stands from other organisations.

5 Co-ordinator's report

A verbal report was given:

Research project – following up on the county-wide Sector Counts research that quantified voluntary sector activity a project to identify organisations and their activity in North Norfolk is being undertaken by the Guild. Fieldwork will start in May.

Library development – discussions continuing to develop the collection of VCS materials in Sheringham library.

Funding Circle in Holt – has met twice and is continuing to be led by Fay Sheldon (NVS CapacityBuilders Team) in conjunction with Holt Area Partnership.

Admin support - Through an arrangement with NNDC, admin support for one day a week is now in place.

6 Reports from other meetings and forums

Don Venvell had asked that the importance of effective information sharing and reporting back to the steering group should be noted. In particular the activities of a number of these groups are relevant for the Learning Partnership (which he chairs).

In addition to the reports that that had been circulated with the agenda:

- Multi Agency Housing Forum - Leigh Vallance

This new consultative group had had its first meeting on 23 April. It is looking at issues arising from the need for affordable housing in the district, and the need to influence the new housing strategy.

Membership of the Forum comprises: Local Area Partnerships, vcsTogether, Norfolk Rural Community Council, Citizens Advice Bureau and North Norfolk District Council.

- Community Partnership Scrutiny Panel – noted that Richard Draper had been elected chair of this group.
- Access4Life Project – noted that Martin Frost represents the LSC.
- Play Partnership – verbal update from Carolyn Heydon
Bid to the Big Lottery had been submitted and the informal feedback had been positive. Decision is expected in June following which the Partnership will meet again.
- More than a ramp – following from the previously circulated report, the event planning group had had a further meeting to discuss ways to take things forward.

It will be exploring ways to support the 'disability voice' in existing forums rather than looking to establish a parallel forum for disability groups. A proposal is being worked up to explore the possibility of establishing 'champions' within all forums to ensure that awareness of the disability voice is maintained.

7 AOB

Useful for the steering group to have a report giving a county-wide perspective of activity to support the voluntary sector in other parts of the county.

Agreed to invite Judy Young. Adult Education in North Norfolk to the next meeting.

A report about the PCT and its contacts will go in the June edition of Linking North Norfolk.

Stage two of the BASIS bid (to the Big Lottery that includes two development worker posts in North Norfolk) is progressing.

8 Date of next meetings:

27 June, 2.00pm – Council Offices, Cromer.

18 September, 2.00pm – Merchants' Place, Cromer

13 November, 2.00pm – Council Offices, Cromer.