

Wellingborough Community Consortium Meeting Notes

Wednesday 14th March 2012

Hindu Community Centre, Highfield Road, Wellingborough

The meeting was opened by Rosemary Hadaway, CEO of Nene Valley Community Action.

Introductions around the room were held.

Debbie Moore gave a brief report on the feedback received from the last consortium meeting held in November 2011.

What organisations need now and in the next five years

Issues raised included building partnerships relationships with local business/partnerships

As we heard from NEP they are looking into this and we will ask them to keep us informed and send out any training/information for the ebulletin. We are also hoping to include in our future consortium meetings some more useful information on how to look at partnership working.

Information sharing/Feedback/ Communications

We will continue to share any information we receive from all sources relevant to the development of organisations. At present, this information can be found on our website and through our ebulletin. Anyone who is unable to receive these are welcome to contact the office for a paper copy. These can be collected from the Rushden office or from Wellingborough Council offices on a Mondays between 9 – 4pm.

Networking

We will inform you through our ebulletin and website of any opportunities for groups to network with other organisations. If you are aware of any showcasing events then please let us know so we can send this information onto other groups in the area.

Current issues and times of meetings:

At the consortium meetings, you are able to bring up any other issues that you would like more information about; we are also updating our website with current issues and funding opportunities. We have a links page and if you feel anything is missing from this page please let us have the links and we will add them for you.

We take on board that the timings of meetings are not always suitable and will continue to look into this further for you.

Involvement from other organisations e.g. Police not just voluntary and community sector as they have a strong input in community activities.

We have on our mailing list a number of different organisations which include the police, education and NHS organisations. They are invited to each of our meetings.

RH also advised that a large retail store are looking to NVCA to support them with their Corporate Social Responsibility Volunteering Programme. This will mean that VCS organisations could potentially have access to a wide range of highly skilled people. The Retail group are also keen to get their customers interested in volunteering and there may be options for us to carry out volunteering appointments there or at least have a stand for advertising in the foyer.

Sarah Steel – NVC Northants – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

See attached presentation.

For more information on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment go to www.northamptonshireobservatory.org.uk view the locality summary pages this will give you access to downloads

Or www.northantsinfohub.co.uk

Questions were asked of ethnic profiling, what defines child poverty and what baselines were used for this piece of work. SS suggested that these were questions that should be put to the authors of the piece of work and that their email addresses were on the presentation.

Countywide Forum Steering Group Representatives

The two Countywide Forum Steering Group representatives who cover the Wellingborough area Anne Toms and Shashi Dolakia gave a brief overview of the work that has been carried out by the Steering Group so far. AT took the report as Shashi has only just been elected onto the Steering Group last month. The Countywide Forum Steering Group are to meet 5 times a year. They have now in post a Countywide Forum Development Worker, Dawn Cummins. Work completed by the group so far included a joint letter of complaint to NCC regarding the idea of a Dragons Den small funding one off grant. There are two task and finish working groups that have been set up one which is concentrating on Communication which is looking at joined up working, collaborative working and better use of services across the County The other is the Conference Planning which has organised the Annual Conference on Wednesday 16th May at The Kettering Conference Centre.

For information on how to contact any of the Countywide Forum Steering Group representatives you can obtain this information on the NVCA website.

Hugh Fenton – Wellingborough Partnership Update

HF confirmed to the attendees that the Wellingborough Partnership was started in 2002 and has the themes:

Your Money

Your Skills

Your Health

Your Safety

Your Neighbourhood

The Partnership has 6 voluntary advocates covering:-

BME

Environment (up for re election)

Rural (vacant)

Older

Youth (up for re election)

General (vacant)

It is now time to renew both the Environment and Youth representatives. The Rural place is also available due to resignation and the General vacancy requires filling for the rest of the year. NVCA will be facilitating this process and Expression of Interest Forms along with Role Descriptions are available for people if they are wanting to put their names forward. The voluntary sector is still active within the partnership with Dinesh Kotecha as the BME representative and John Wevill as the Older Person representative. Wellingborough Borough Council are exceptionally good at engaging with the voluntary sector.

The timetable for appointment of these representatives is as follows:

Launched at this meeting today 14.3.2012

Announcements on Nene Valley Community Action ebulletin for Friday 16th March, 23rd March and 30th March and will also be available as downloads from the NVCA website.

NVCA will also promote via press coverage.

Closing date will be 6th April 2012.

If there is more than 1 applicant for a position, a selection panel will be formed by 30th April 2012.

Positions to be filled and applicants notified and confirmed by 31st May 2012.

There was a proposal from the floor that the vacant General Post should be filled by NVCA.

AT commented that previously the representatives were known as advocates and that people should be aware that there are 4 meetings per year plus one annual meeting.

Vicky Redding – Compact Voice

Vicky Redding introduced herself to the meeting and confirmed that The Compact had been around for 14 years and that Northamptonshire had signed up to work to The Compact a few years ago. This has now been renewed by the coalition Government in 2010 and is linked to the Big Society.

See attached presentation

More information on The Compact can be obtained from www.compactvoice.org.uk

Round Table Discussion – How could The Compact benefit your organisation.

See attached notes

It was noted that the attendees of this meeting should have a collective responsibility to make a demand on Councillors and Wellingborough Borough Council to take forward The Compact. RH confirmed that now that NVCA have a mandate to take that forward she will work with Vicky Redding to find out what stage Wellingborough Borough Council are at with The Compact.

Support Wellingborough – Simon Favell

Simon Favell brought attendees up to date with where Wellingborough Homes is with the Support Wellingborough Hub. He confirmed that the Core Group of Wellingborough Homes, Mayday Trust, Delos and Catch 22 has all put in £10,000 and that they were now looking to the voluntary sector to become partners. Partners will not be expected to put any money into the Support Wellingborough Hub as it is realised that only Housing Associations and large organisations would have the funds to do this. Although Wellingborough Homes have a moral duty and obligation to work with their tenants in Wellingborough they are very keen to work with the community too.

Simon confirmed that the Wellingborough Financial Team would be able to administer the scheme by providing the one computer scheme that all organisations would have access to – this would stop the necessity of people having to repeat their story over and over again. There would be one phone number which would take them straight to the Hub.

RH applauds Wellingborough Homes for taking this project forward and agreed with the statement that it would be difficult for voluntary sector organisations to take on such a large project. The challenge was around how VCS groups would be able to access funding/grants via this route. RH then offered a recent case in Rushden and how would Support Wellingborough deal with this.

There are questions to be raised around how Support Wellingborough will commission/procure the services of the voluntary sector as it is likely that they would then, if successful, would be Support Wellingborough who would be the commissioners of the Hub. SF advised that as NCC have yet to provide the scope for this tender that decisions will need to be made after they have all the relevant information. As far as Support Wellingborough are concerned they will start at the point of who wants to work with us and go forward from there – what is needed first is to know who is willing to work with Support Wellingborough.

AT stated that working together is difficult as Northamptonshire has not done much in the way of working together and there needs to be trust to do this but it is good that Support Wellingborough have brought this chance to Northamptonshire.

Pratima Dattani stated that trust and relationships are really key and that this really links back to The Compact. Support Wellingborough is a collective way of starting this.

Any other business

NVCA announced that the Countywide Conference Task and Finish group have now confirmed the date of the Northamptonshire Annual Voluntary and Community Sector Conference – this will be on Wednesday 16th May 2012 being held at The Kettering Conference Centre. Invitations will be sent out electronically within the next week and details of how to book will be included. It is hoped that many of the voluntary sector will attend this event as this is the perfect opportunity for groups to come together and discuss important issues affecting the voluntary sector and is the best way of passing information on via the Countywide Forum Steering Group reps.

RH advised that the Charities Act 2011 came into force today 14.3.2012 which is a 200 page document. To summarise this the major change is that this act must be mentioned in end of year accounts.

Wellingborough Borough Council Discretionary Business Rate for Charities

Currently most VCS groups are eligible for:
80% reduction
+ 20% discretionary rate relief

If a Council wishes to change this a year's notice has to be given in March.

WBC confirm that there are no changes this financial year. Any change would result in a years' notice being given in March 2013.

Alexis Rich advised that they have some ESF Funding to be used in Hemmingwell, Croyland and Brickhill area of Wellingborough.

DM confirmed a date for peoples diaries will be the 20th September 2012
NVCA will be hosting a Funding Fair, to date we have 7 national funders so far. More information will be sent via NVCA in the near future.