

MINUTES

Thursday 15th October 2015

10.00 am – 12.00 noon

Stanmer Room, Brighthelm Centre, North Road, Brighton

Attendance:

Graham Bourne	Revenue & Benefits, BHCC
Cllr Emma Daniel	Joint Chair & BHCC
Geraldine Des Moulins	Joint Chair & Third Sector Equalities Representative (Disability)
Chris Lau	Community Works
Cllr Leo Littman	BHCC
Emma McDermott	Communities, Equality & Third Sector, BHCC
Councillor Dee Simson	BHCC
Kirsty Walker	Third Sector Communities Representative
Brian Warren	Business Representation (Chamber of Commerce)
Laura Williams	Third Sector Infrastructure Representative (Community Works)

In attendance:

Peter Castleton	Community Safety, BHCC
Sam Warren	Communities, Equality & Third Sector, BHCC

Apologies:

Annie Alexander	Public Health, BHCC
Carolyn Bristow	Children's Services, BHCC
Karin Divall	Adult Social Care, BHCC
Melinda King	East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service
Jane Lodge	Brighton & Hove CCG
Simon Newell	Brighton & Hove Connected
David Palmer	Sussex Police
Joanna Rowland-Stuart	LGBT Community Safety Forum/Community Works
Kamini Sanghani	SEETEC

Action

1. Welcome & Introductions

- 1.1 Emma Daniel welcomed everyone to the meeting, round the table introductions were made by those in attendance and apologies were noted, as above.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

2.1 Corrections

Kamini Sanghani had not been present at the meeting. Otherwise, the minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read and correct.

		Action
2.2	<u>Matters Arising</u>	
2.2.1	<u>EquiP and the NCE Committee</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ED agreed that JRS's point about Council influence over third parties had been fair comment and suggested that this issue could be picked up by the Fairness Commission. • Members of the group had not yet come forward with contact details of housing associations experienced in the field of accessible housing. KW suggested Southern Housing Group. • The group agreed that its suggestions regarding accessible housing should be put to the Fairness Commission via Housing and Planning. • SW reiterated her recommendation from the last meeting to look at the council's own housing developments in terms of accessibility. 	
2.2.2	<u>EquiP and the Fairness Commission</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GDM reported that she had been approached by Julia Reddaway about the possibility of the Fed hosting a visit of the commissioners of the Fairness Commission. Arrangements were in hand to agree a date. • It was noted that most people had now contacted Julia Reddaway with regard to holding their own Fairness Commission events and JR had set up a number of meetings accordingly. • EM had sent the questions supporting the discussion with equality groups about their experience and perspective of fairness to EquiP, as requested. • It was agreed to have a discussion about the group avoiding duplication of the work of the Fairness Commission. • It was agreed that the existence of the Fairness Commission did not remove the need for EquiP to continue monitoring and drawing up action plans. A list of clear priorities was needed from the FC process, to ensure that action plans were delivered. The role of EquiP going forward would be in taking a medium-term view to ensure that the broader action points continued to be delivered. • EM had referred Julia Reddaway to BW with regard to Radio Reverb. EM to follow up with JR. • Jane Lodge had been unable to attend the meeting and her presentation on the Engagement Gateway would therefore roll forward to the next meeting. 	<p>EM</p> <p>EM/JL</p>

	Action
<p>2.2.3 <u>Draft Disability Equality Report</u></p> <p>EM would follow up with JG the request for data on the number of people accessing food banks. It was noted that JG's capacity since the last meeting had been taken up with finalising the Disability Snapshot Report (DSR). Action point to roll forward to the next meeting.</p> <p>The group agreed that the DSR was an excellent piece of work.</p> <p>It was agreed that the action point for JG to provide data around hearing loss would be rolled forward to the next meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that membership of the new Disability Equality Sub-Group so far comprised GDM, EM, CB, JRS, JL and Jenny Moore (Community Works). EM to circulate members of Equip with more information on this shortly.</p>	<p>EM/JG</p> <p>EM/JG</p> <p>EM</p>
<p>2.2.4 <u>Launch of Equalities Profile</u></p> <p>EM clarified that the action point for the Equalities Profile launch event would be taken by herself and Kate Gilchrist. They had been working together on this profile and a presentation would be given at the next meeting.</p>	<p>EM/KG</p>
<p>3. Community Engagement Framework – Discussion</p> <p>SW took the group through an updated version of the presentation given at the CEF event on 7th October, including de-briefing information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that it was the intention to continue to use the document as a 'tool-kit'. However, the event had made it clear that instead of a refresh, more of an overhaul was required, moving the focus from engagement to a more collaborative and partnership approach with cooperative working. • A number of case studies had come out of the process, which were already being used in BHCC staff roadshows and in learning and training packages. • A number of changes to the document had been proposed at the event, eg inclusion of co-production and social value, changes in the language used and in other practical aspects. <p>Discussion followed and key points were made;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current document was service-provider led, whereas the refreshed document would need to be easily owned by anyone who picked it up, giving a shorter message in the nature of a set of city values, which could be used at any level. 	

Action

- A cultural change was needed in terms of how the service worked with people, towards greater collaboration and sharing of power and control, but not expecting communities to do things without support or without building appropriate relationships.
- It would be important to ensure that public services enabled communities, rather than being overly risk-averse and preventing people from stepping up to take action themselves.
- The culture shift towards a collaborative council needed to inform performance and practice within the council itself, as well as in external partnerships and relationships with communities.

It was agreed to take this conversation back to the LSP before going forward. The group commended the shift from corporate values to city values.

The City Wide Volunteering Strategy was discussed and the following key points were made;

- There was a need for a set infrastructure to help people develop their own groups and keep volunteers on target.
- The suggestion was made to identify 'champions' from within the council. Christina Liassides (Head of Asset & Network Management) was mentioned as a good example of a possible champion, in terms of the way she managed services and engaged with communities. City Clean and the Transport teams were also mentioned as good examples.
- It was agreed to look at how 'Friends of Parks' groups might be assisted to network with one another. The point was made these groups did not always see themselves as volunteers, but as 'active citizens' and in this case language would be important.
- Comment was made that the CEF and the Volunteer Strategy were not strongly connected at the moment, and it was agreed that further discussion was needed on this. It was noted that LW was leading on the Volunteer Strategy and that it was not the intention for it to include an action plan.
- It was agreed that the way forward for volunteer work would be; 1) for the Volunteer Strategy to increase the number of volunteers and 2) to enhance the role of 'volunteer champions' and bring them together as a working group in partnership with some of the members of Equip.
- It was noted that work was currently in progress within the city council to bring all the different volunteer documents together, taking account of the difference in experience between volunteers.

SW

Action

- It was noted that the Citywide Volunteer Strategy launch had been put back because of the work currently in progress with EquiP. The focus was on a city wide approach in getting all the various agencies to sign up. There would then be a 'launch of the volunteering pledge and the development of an action plan by the volunteering champions group. It was noted that the some departments could feel threatened by volunteering, which should not be ignored and would be addressed, but it was important that the work should run in parallel and EM confirmed that work had already started.
- An important point had been made at the CEF event that organisations engaging volunteers often assumed they would be unskilled. It was felt that this was part of a more general 'parent/child' approach, which was unnecessarily patronising and should be avoided. It was agreed that barriers needed breaking down and a cultural change to an asset-based approach based on mutual respect and expertise must be encouraged.
- Comment was made that it was not always helpful to compartmentalise people according to various characteristics.
- The issue of 'social isolation through digital exclusion' was discussed and how to engage or re-engage people. It was agreed that the issue of 'succession' was important in this respect, ie to include the next generation.
- Comment was made that it was not helpful if community/voluntary groups were run by one person, family or group of people.
- The issue of the cost of working collaboratively in the current climate of budget cuts was discussed. The point was made that in these circumstances an honest approach to what could and could not be provided by the council would be very important. The emphasis should be on putting resources into working collaboratively and avoiding using language that unnecessarily categorised people, eg 'service users', 'victims', etc.

The current aims and actions that came out of the CEF event were discussed in break-out groups as to how achievable they were and whether they needed reframing. Key points were reported back (see Appendix).

Cllr Littman joined the meeting.

- It was noted that LW had been working with SN on a phased approach with people who could facilitate connections to business, with the idea of breaking down access to business. A workshop would be held in early November. SN was also discussing this with Warren Morgan.

The group then agreed the timescale to bring the steering group back together with the aim of taking the CEF to the NCE Committee in January or March for sign-off.

4. BME Needs Assessment Update - Discussion

- It was noted that the BME Needs Assessment had been established in 2012, separate from Equip, but discussion had been held about bringing it under Equip..
- The BME Needs Assessment gave both positive and negative messages, showing little change in the area of employment, but improvements in housing.
- It was noted that work was continuing and two projects were being undertaken in the current year; 1) accessibility of GPs in the Mile Oak, Lewes Road and Moulsecoomb areas and 2) homelessness. Community researchers were being used and detailed analyses would be produced.
- In terms of housing and employment, the BME NAG Steering Group had agreed to commit funding to BME research and engagement to inform the City Employment Skills Plan.

The Chair commended the above work and commented that it sounded very promising.

5. One Voice Partnership - Information

- PC introduced this item and explained that the faith communities had expressed a wish, two years before, to speak as a community with 'one voice' regardless of what was happening internationally. The OVP membership included the local authority, the police, the fire service and other groups, and was chaired by the Chief Executive.
- It was noted that the council now had a 'Prevent' agenda. The faith communities wanted to speak for themselves on this issue, rather than through the statutory authority, and the council was working to encourage this.
- It was noted that the council was providing support in terms of eg resources and training, to help the community to engage and to inform statutory services about community tensions and incidents that might give rise to tension. Communities were also being encouraged to talk about new central government policies, if they were giving rise to concern.
- PC confirmed that the council would continue to commit resources to providing reassurance to the communities, building trust and confidence, and the group supported this.
- PC commented that this work had been very enlightening in understanding both the tensions within the city and the obligations of the police in this respect.

Action

6 Refugee Update - Discussion

- The Chair thanked PC for the update and the group noted that this work continued to be a challenge. PC reiterated that learning from it was very important and that the council must get the 'Prevent' work right.
- PC reported that there had been an excellent response to a call-out across the city for accommodation and support for a small number of refugees.
- Agreement had been obtained to look for properties the council might offer to help house new Syrian refugees. Accommodation would be offered for an initial 12 month period and landlords were to charge affordable rents only. The group agreed that caution would be required around the issue of an on-going duty of care.
- It was noted that Brighton & Hove CCG and Sussex Partnership Foundation Trust were also involved in this work and that there were promises of funding from the Home Office.
- PC confirmed that his team would continue working with the Home Office, the Diocese and 'Brighton Voices in Exile' on this and also focus on getting other groups involved. The Diocese had offered use of a former convent/rest home, which had 22 rooms but did not offer independent living. Work would be needed to establish how these premises could be used as a potential 'Move On' assessment centre.
- PC and team would be looking at what could be done next year, which could involve another city-wide call-out for properties.
- It was felt that the partnership had not over-promised on this issue. Signing up as an agreed partner had assisted in obtaining funding and had a benefit for migrants and refugees.
- However, it was agreed to proceed with caution, due to the large number of people already on housing lists. PC gave reassurance that this initiative currently involved very small numbers. It was noted that the CEF document would also link into this.
- It was noted that Radio Reverb had a weekly Sunday night show called 'Refugee Radio' which could be helpful in coordinating the volunteer response.
- The group asked that their thanks be passed on to Lucy Bryson for her work on this.

Action

7. Any Other Business

There was no additional business.

8. Close and date of next meeting

The meeting closed at 12.00.

Next meeting: 19th January 2016, 10.00 am at Friends Meeting House. GM to chair.

Summary of Abbreviations and Partnerships/Services referenced in minutes:

Equip: Equality & Inclusion Partnership
B&HCC: Brighton & Hove City Council
CCG: Clinical Commissioners Group

CEF: Community Engagement Framework
DEA: Disability Equality Assessment
BME: Black & Minority Ethnic