

VOLUNTARY SECTOR PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES OF MEETING Thursday 12th April 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Janet Emsley (Chair); Councillor Ashley Dearnley, Councillor Keiran Heakin, Lutha Magloire, Darren Muston, Marenka Vossen, Shirley Waller, Jonathan Yates and Mark Wynn.

OFFICERS: Carlo Schroder and Val White (Neighbourhoods Directorate) and Alison James (Resources Directorate)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Alistair Sheldrick, Molly Brown and Anne Wignall.

APOLOGIES

53 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Brett, Councillor O'Neill, Councillor Rush; Kerry Edwards, Emma Salloway, Kathy Thomas, Holly Stephenson and Sheila Acton

MINUTES

54 **DECIDED - that the Minutes of the meeting of the Voluntary Sector Partnership held on 7th December 2017 be approved as a correct record.**

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

55 The Partnership received a presentation from Anne Wignall from Business in the Community (BITC) which gave an overview of the following:-

Business Connectors

A Business Connector is a talented employee from either the private or public sector who is seconded to BITC to work across a specific city or area which typically has greater social needs.

Trained by BITC, they seek to understand local needs and match them to business objectives.

Businesses and the public sector have seconded over 275 Business Connectors to help achieve their ambitions of being a force for good and helping to create healthy communities.

They bring together local businesses and community organisations to create sustainable and rewarding collaborative partnerships across sectors, to make a positive difference.

As at October 2016 nearly 13,000 organisations had received support from a business connector

£45.4 million had been leveraged (value of cash, in kind and volunteering)

55% of the income came from businesses. 26% from other VCSE groups, 12% from public funding and the remaining 7% directly from individuals.

The income had been distributed as follows:-

- 33% to Education
- 29% to Community Cohesion
- 19% to Enterprise
- 17% to Employment
- 2% to other

In Rochdale, it was intended that the Business Connector would:

- Raise awareness of funding streams, promoting networking opportunities;
- Support to local businesses and linking up with charity/voluntary groups in the community;
- Sourcing and encouraging volunteers from businesses for education and voluntary groups/charities;
- Sourcing and matching up of work experience and apprenticeship opportunities;
- To be an ambassador for Rochdale and all it has to offer.

DECIDED - that the presentation be noted.

EXPERIENCES OF ASYLUM AND SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND

56 The Partnership received a presentation from Alistair Sheldrick providing an update on the PhD project he was undertaking relating to 'Experiences of Asylum and Welfare Services in Rochdale'.

The project was focused upon two service areas:-

- Mainstream welfare services, advocacy, and advice;
- Asylum-seeker/refugee-targeted services;

The project aims were, in consultation with partner organisations:-

- Record everyday impacts of Government policy and funding on services using accounts from asylum and mainstream welfare services in Rochdale;
- Record service users, service providers, and policy-makers experiences/perspectives;
- Develop evidence-base - highlighting issues, innovations, and value of local services.

This would be achieved through:-

- Participant observations;
- Interviews;
- Focus groups;

Issues that were emerging so far were universal credit and asylum seeker housing contracts.

Further updates on the project would be provided at future meetings.

DECIDED – that the presentation be noted.

UNIVERSAL CREDIT UPDATE

57 The Partnership received a presentation from Molly Brown relating to the introduction of Universal Credit in the Rochdale Borough.

Universal Credit was:-

- One simple payment;
- Paid Monthly;
- For people in and out of work;
- Used PAYE in real time information (RTI);

Claimants with complex needs would receive assisted digital support, personal budgeting support, alternative payment arrangements and advanced payments.

For a minority of claimants, alternative payment arrangements may be required by paying the housing element directly to the landlord, making more frequent than monthly payments and splitting the payment within the household.

To receive Universal Credit and other benefits, customers would need a bank or building society account, or an account with an alternative provider like a credit union.

DECIDED – that the presentation be noted.

PREVENTING HATEFUL EXTREMISM AND PROMOTING SOCIAL COHESION

58 The Partnership received a presentation from Carlo Schroder relating to Preventing Hateful Extremism and Promoting Social Cohesion Commission.

The Commission was one of two Commission's established by the Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham after the Manchester Arena Attack

Four areas of focus:

- To consider how Prevent operates in Greater Manchester across all agencies;
- To look at the broader determinants of social exclusion and how we can work collectively to address these;
- To engage in dialogue with our communities and the business sector to develop a Greater Manchester Charter, which includes a set of shared values and commitments that will be used as the foundations upon

which the Greater Manchester Strategy work is built (not just principles that are called into action when something goes wrong);

- Develop a community-led Greater Manchester approach to challenging radicalisation (of all kinds);

The Independent Commissioners were:-

- Darra Singh (Ernst and Young, focus on working with the business community)
- Professor Hilary Pilkington (Academic with an expertise in radicalisation, University of Manchester)
- Nazir Afzal (Former Head of the CPS in the North West)
- Nigel Bromage (Small Steps, an organisation that counters Far Right extremism)
- Saima Alvi (Co-chair of the British Muslim Heritage Centre)
- Shalni Arora (Philanthropist-Savannah Wisdom)

Who can get involved?

- Anybody living or working in Greater Manchester
- Businesses
- Women
- Young people
- Voluntary groups: faith based, issue based, area based
- Statutory sector agencies who work with the public, e.g. local councils, police, health services, housing services
- Volunteers, e.g. Neighbourhood Watch, police Independent Advisory Groups, Police Specials, etc
- MPs and councillors
- Community representatives

How can you help?

- Provide honest feedback
- Give us your ideas – what is and isn't working?
- Let us know what information would be useful for you to receive and how best to communicate with you
- Is this approach the best one? How else could we work with our communities?

The Key Concepts of Social Exclusion, Radicalisation, Prevent, Channel, Charter were outlined.

Partnership members had an opportunity to discuss the themes in further detail in groups and were encouraged to provide feedback.

DECIDED – that the presentation be noted.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

59 **DECIDED – that it be noted that the next meeting of the Voluntary Sector Partnership will be held at 10am on Thursday 12th July 2018 at Number One Riverside.**