

Minutes for the Regional Strategic Partnership meeting at 1.30 pm on 10th September 2008

Guildford YMCA, Guildford, Surrey

Present:

Jacinta Thorley	(JT)	SERCC (Chair)
Dave Ahlquist	(DA)	Social Enterprise South East
Yvonne Arthurs	(YA)	SE Regional Public Health Group
Stuart Brown	(SBr)	Make Music South East
Mike Daly	(MD)	South East Coast Strategic Health Authority
Andy Ferrier	(AF)	East Hampshire District Council
Robert Hardy	(RH)	Kent County Council
Peter Johnson	(PJ)	Progress through Partnership, SE Employers
Louise McGrath	(LM)	Big Lottery Fund
Carol McKinley	(CM)	RAISE
Tony O'Donnell	(TD)	GOSE
Kat Pearce	(KP)	Capacitybuilders' Regional Manager
Steve Polden	(SP)	Local Consortium Perspective (Southampton)
Dev Sharma	(DS)	UNI c/o NW Kent REC
Jo Shockley	(JS)	South East Regional Assembly
Mark Walker	(MW)	ICT Regional Champion/Brighton & Hove Consortium
Kathryn Williamson	(KW)	RAISE
David Wrighton	(DW)	SEEFF/ Hampshire Local Consortium
David Wylie	(DWy)	Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

Apologies:

Chris Cowap	Bracknell Forest Local Consortium Perspective
Siddo Deva	UNI Project Manager
Fiona Mabbott	Local Consortium Perspective (Portsmouth)
Lesley Nicholas	GOSE
Barbara Poole	Frontline Perspective
Paul Rideout	East Sussex Council
Angela Warburton	SEEDA

1. Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Introductions took place as there were new people around the table.

2. Minutes of the last meeting 20th May 2008

JT said that she has written a paragraph relating to Equalities for the business plan and it will be circulated for any additional comments. Three consortia made comments on the Metaplan and it will be adjusted accordingly. JT said that the Regional Empowerment Network does not at present have an accountable body but one should hopefully be in place by the end of September. KP added that following discussions with Capacitybuilders and the publication of new monitoring arrangements, Bracknell Forest local consortium will take the Consortium Development Fund money.

Action A: New paragraph on Equalities to be circulated.

3. Financial Update

The summary of the Consortium Development Fund budget had been circulated with the agenda. KP commented that she thought the budget was £27,000. CM confirmed that in future the funding of the new regional modernisation project would be included.

Action B: RAISE to provide regular financial update on modernization project

4. Presentations on Third Sector and Health

Yvonne Arthurs spoke about the Department of Health's strategy on volunteering. YA said that the role of the VCS was hugely important and was always highlighted but the Department of Health wanted a more streamlined approach to relations with the VCS hence the funding review. The volunteering strategy which was out for consultation until the end of September will be published in early 2009. There have been lots of statements about the critical role of volunteering but some opportunities for partnership working have not been taken up. There is an assumption that volunteers are free, which of course is not correct, so it is important to raise the profile of volunteers as part of the care pathway. There needs to be proper infrastructure and processes. Volunteers can be service users, which enables expert patients' knowledge and understanding to be used to communicate messages. The strategy aims to promote partnership and leadership.

Regarding user groups in social care, SP asked how disabled people were being encouraged to get involved by the Department. YA said that they are using service users to feedback from the local areas to inform policy. RH asked for clarification around the fact that it seems that the Department sees the Third Sector and volunteers as interchangeable. YA confirmed that it is about supporting volunteers and supporting organizations. AF asked whether YA was talking about organisations in a commissioning role or the third sector doing preventative work that is not normally funded. MD responded that PCTS are being encouraged to look at alternative providers and have been developing their strategic plans for the next five years. Third sector providers are being encouraged to compete.

DS commented that there is a need for the department to go the extra mile to get volunteers from BME communities. YA said she would expect a range of volunteers to be involved but urged DS to make that point in reply to the consultation. SB commented that the health and wellbeing partnerships that are developing as part of the LSPs can provide opportunities.

Mike Daly's presentation gave an overview of what is happening at a regional level and good practice locally. MD highlighted various initiatives in the region including the first regional health strategy looking at how we improve health; the 'healthier people excellent care' new vision for services has just been out for consultation. At the SHA level they work with regional organizations for example the SEPS on the regional assembly. MD said that he had had discussions with RAISE to see where influence, funding and networks can be used to help the VCS engage. MD also highlighted the Chances for Change programme funded by the Big Lottery Fund which is a major health and wellbeing programme for the South East with many individual organisations involved. MD said that he was also involved in discussion for the Regional Compact on behalf of the SHA. The SHA role is to performance manage and support PCTs.

MD gave some good practice examples of health working with the VCS including the West Sussex project to expand service uptake to new migrant populations, and the healing arts project on the Isle of Wight. MD invited questions and Dev Sharma spoke of his experiences in West Kent which he said were very bad. No approach has been

made to BME community to input into strategies and funding to the Racial Equality Council has been cut despite the need to cater to all Equality strands now. Funding is needed for consultations. DS did say that he had had good experience on mental health, working with VCS. He said that he had heard of poor experience of BME staff in the SE Coast SHA. There is a Directors group being set up to take forward equalities work.

JT said that she will talk to MD separately regarding rural issues.

SP asked about disabled people and the need for their support workers to be involved. YA recommended highlighting in the research.

TO asked about the links with prevention eg sport. It is important to link the sector in and get people back into physical activity as part of the legacy for 2012.

KW asked whether the Local Strategic Partnerships see the PCT commissioning plans. This seems to be happening in Brighton and Hove and Kent. RH commented that Eastern Kent Coast have invested in infrastructure organizations in their area as they realize that volunteering does not happen by accident.

KP –increased focus on preventative work actually an effective evidence base, how are you addressing it? YA replied that there is an evidence base for quite a lot of preventative work but what is the process for making sure it is available. Are organizations in harmony about some preventative work? MD said that some of world class commissioning is to find out about more effective health therapies. NICE have done an evidence base for physical activity. YA suggested that there was a quarterly briefing on health to the RSCP to enable more systematic discussions

Action C: MD and YA to provide a quarterly update to RSCP

5. Presentation on Social Enterprise

Dave Ahlquist gave a presentation relating to the previously circulated paper on SE2, the Social Enterprise Network for the South East and its application to Capacitybuilders' Social Enterprise programme. The application proposed five projects which DA described. DA said it was important to build on previous work and develop an evidence base. The portfolio had to be submitted in mid October and the work would start at the end of January if funding provided. DA invited questions on the proposal.

RH commented that the proposals seem to be based on supporting new Social Enterprises rather than current VCOs that want to move to a social enterprise model. RH also said he saw no reference to the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership or the notion of social franchising eg the 15 Foundation. There is no mention of transport either in terms of community rail. DA said that it was not meant to focus on new starts only. The social franchise model was suggested but did not achieve popularity with the board. DA added that the programme was trying not to duplicate existing proposals about transport.

6. Update on recruitment of RSCP Chair

JT said that a description of the role and person criteria had been drawn up and would be circulated widely. Interviews would be held in November.

7. Updates from sub-groups

LAA research update

KW gave an update on the research which was now complete. The report was taking a bit longer than planned to pull together but would be printed shortly. A particularly useful point had been to talk to key contacts in infrastructure organizations, also Progress through Partnership, GOSE and some specialist organizations.

JT said the report would be used as an influencing tool. It had been hoped to have more resources to move this work forward.

Communication

The RSCP web pages are being created on the RAISE website

The series of RSCP events focus on the themes of LAAs (23 October, Woking), health (17th December, Reading), funding and finance (4th February, Hove) and finally ICT and Social Enterprise (19th March, Kent).

Regional Compact

KW reported that the draft Regional Compact will be launched for consultation by the Regional Minister, Jonathan Shaw MP at the LAA Roadshows on the 1st and 8th October. The draft will be out for consultation until 9th January. KW also highlighted the national Compact debate that was ongoing until 10th November.

ICT

MW gave an update on his work as regional ICT Champion. He reported that in terms of ICT the majority of local consortia spent ChangeUp money on a database or website or both. The goal of ChangeUp was to help key organizations in consortia to deliver support. MW said that there needs to be more signposting for IT volunteers and organizations needing help and he is preparing some helpsheets.

KP commented that there should be some marrying up between the fifth Social Enterprise project and ICT. It was agreed it should be cross-referenced.

RIO

JT reported that RIO met in July but there is little resource identified for the group to continue meeting. It will continue as an e-group and has planned another meeting for the 10th December, after the RSCP meeting. On a positive note, the BASIS programme did recognize the need for a regional disability project.

Funding and Finance

JT said that this keeps being identified as an important issue. It is important that the profile of it remains high.

JT asked CM to give an outline of the Regional Modernisation project RAISE is undertaking, funded by Capacitybuilders. CM said that the project focuses on giving the VCS a voice in the new regional arrangements. It will ensure engagement of stakeholders at a regional level, linking in with more socially excluded groups.

8. Capacitybuilders Update

KP's report was tabled. KP said that Capacitybuilders had changed their monitoring forms to simplify them.

9. UNI Update

Dev Sharma said that the UNI post conference report was now available. UNI has published its first newsletter too. DS said there is a need to get Gypsies, Travellers and Faith groups on to the management group of UNI. UNI are starting to respond to consultations and would like to do a survey on LAAs as a recent CRE report suggested that there was limited input in LAAs from BME groups. DS closed by saying that Siddo Deva the Project Manager for UNI will attend the next RSCP meeting. JT commented that UNI is a real success story from ChangeUp.

10. AOB

CM commented that the ChangeUp programme is currently being evaluated and said that we need to sell the success stories of ChangeUp and attempt to positively influence the Minister of the Third Sector.

JT said that it was KW's last RSCP meeting as she was leaving RAISE and thanked her for her work.

11. The next meeting will be on Wednesday 10th December between 10.30 and 1pm at MWB Business Exchange, 1 Farnham Road, Guildford GU2 4RG Please note change of venue.

**Future meeting dates:
Wednesday 18th March 2009 AM or PM**

Action	By Whom	Timeframe	Comments
Action A: New paragraph on Equalities to be circulated.	JT	By 10 Dec	
Action B: RAISE to provide regular financial update on modernization project	CM	Ongoing	
Action C: MD and YA to provide a quarterly update to RSCP	MD/YA	Quarterly	