

‘Moving Forward Together’ event – Thursday 22nd October 2009

Feedback and action plan

Introduction from John Polychronakis, Chief Executive, Dudley Council

The Council Leader, Anne Millward, and I greatly valued the opportunity to meet and discuss issues with such a good range of people from the voluntary and community sector in the borough at Himley Hall on 22nd October. We felt that the event was really useful in understanding the challenges we face as a local authority and voluntary and community sector in moving forward together over the coming months and years. The number of issues discussed on the day was broad but there was a clear emphasis across the workshops on the areas of commissioning, engagement and volunteering. The true test of success for the day is, of course, in what happens next and I am glad the event was focused on identifying the actions we can work on together in these areas. The attached paper summarises the key issues raised and actions that we are proposing to respond to these issues.

Certainly, we can't hope to resolve all of the concerns straightaway, but I gave the commitment on the day for the dialogue to continue with regular events becoming a feature of the calendar.

Anne and I would like to thank all those who were involved in organising, running and participating in the event and we look forward to the next one in the summer of 2010.

Attendance list

Mike Abrahams – Dudley CVS
Ann Adams – Dudley Stroke Association
Chris Barron – Cancer Support
Levene Bruce – African Caribbean Befriending
Suzanne Callen – Summit House
Richard Carter – DMBC Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services
Jane Clarke – CHADD
Brendan Clifford – DMBC Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services
Phil Coyne – DMBC Directorate of the Urban Environment
Teresa Culverwell - Orchard Partnership
Caroline Dimbylow – District CAB
Julie Duffy – What Centre
Anne Evett – Thomas Pocklington
Ian Ferguson – Beacon Centre for the Blind
Marjorie Ferguson – Top Church Training
Menna Flavell – DMBC Finance, ICT & Procurement Directorate
Cheryl Gillis – Home-Start Dudley
Abbie Goodwin – DMBC Law, Property and HR Directorate
Andy Gray – Dudley CVS
Jenny Hartnell – Look out Project
Janet Hilken – St. Thomas's Network
June Hill – Barnardos
Dennis Hodson – Dudley Community Partnership
Paul Jaunzems – Langstone
Carol Law – Crossroads
Adrian Lowe – Amblecote Christian Centre
Paul Lynn – ABC Social Club
Simon Manson – DMBC Chief Executive's Directorate
Cllr Anne Millward – Leader of the Council
John Polychronakis – DMBC Chief Executive
Cllr David Stanley – DMBC Cabinet Member
Christine Szygowski – Age Concern
Geoff Thomas – DMBC Chief Executive's Directorate
Andy Webb – DMBC Directorate of the Urban Environment

+ 8 facilitators from Dudley CVS

Summary of main issues raised in workshops on identified key areas

Commissioning

- Clarity of commissioning processes locally
- Early awareness of commissioning opportunities
- How to ensure that 'local' is given appropriate weight in commissioning processes and decisions
- VCS to be part of needs analysis and design of services within the commissioning cycle.
- Developing tendering skills, expertise and time in local VCOS to enable them to compete on a more equal basis with private companies or national organisations
- Developing opportunities for tendering/delivering services through partnerships/consortia
- Maintaining grants/SLAs as part of the funding mix
- Promoting awareness of professionalism of VCS in delivering services

Engagement

- Genuine involvement in partnerships and development of more joint initiatives, e.g. might include secondment to a project
- Sharing of information, plans and opportunities for engagement
- Further events and dialogue between partners
- Mutual awareness and understanding of priorities and issues
- Respect and recognition

Volunteering

- Recognise and value the importance of volunteers
- Currently more volunteers than volunteering opportunities due to recession
- Resourcing for volunteers
- Training for volunteers

'Moving Forward Together' Action Plan

Actions	Responsibility	Timescale
(1) Hold 2 further joint events during 2010/11.	DMBC Chief Executive's Directorate/CVS	2010/11
(2) Council Chief Executive/Leader to undertake a programme of visits to voluntary and community organisations.	DMBC Chief Executive's Directorate/CVS	From January 2010
(3) Circulate/raise awareness of the Building Blocks VCS Commissioning guide.	CVS Building Blocks	Ongoing
(4) Arrange events around future commissioning opportunities: (a) Transforming Social Care (b) Children's Services (c) Adults, Community & Housing Services (d) 'Local commissioning'	(a) DMBC DACHS/CVS (b) DMBC Children's Services (c) DMBC DACHS (d) DMBC/CVS through Targeted Support Fund Commissioning Programme *	(a) February 2010 (b) Spring 2010 (c) Spring 2010 (d) Commence Spring 2010
(5) Research good practice from other authorities/ applying good practice from World Class Commissioning processes in local commissioning.	CVS/Targeted Support Fund Commissioning Programme	Spring 2010
(6) Ensure VCS is integral part of future recession planning and economic regeneration and explore potential for making better links between volunteering and future employment opportunities.	Dudley Means Business Group Economic Development & Regeneration Partnership	Ongoing
(7) Develop role of Compact champions (to include visits to voluntary and community organisations and workshops).	DMBC Compact Champions Group	Ongoing

(8) Promote DMBC community engagement database and toolkit to the VCS.	DMBC Chief Executive's Directorate	Spring 2010
(9) Look at further ways to promote/market and recognise the value of volunteering.	DMBC Marcomms/CVS Volunteer Development Officer	Spring 2010
(10) Run joint training sessions on good practice in volunteering	DMBC Human Resources/CVS	From December 2009

*The Targeted Support Fund Commissioning Programme is part of the National Programme for Third Sector Commissioning which will be delivered by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA). This is aimed at improving joint commissioning, commissioners' knowledge of local third sector providers' services and these providers' ability to access commissioning opportunities. DMBC/CVS have agreed to take part in the programme during 2010