



**Action Points/Minutes**  
**Shropshire VCS Assembly Board**  
**8 September 2009**  
**1pm Wilfred Owen Room, Shirehall**

**Attended**

| <b>Board Members</b>      |                                       |      |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|------|
| Julia Baron               | Chair Assembly Board                  | JB   |
| Geoff Forgie              | Disability Forum                      | GF   |
| Bob Morgan                | Mental Health Forum                   | BM   |
| Gill Green                | Training Providers Consortium         | GH   |
| Anne Seymour              | Central Area Partnership              | AS   |
| Pat Bell                  | Shropshire Infrastructure Partnership | PB   |
| Carola Fielden            | Visual Arts Network                   | CF   |
| Linda Cox                 | Community Based Transport             | LC   |
| Elaine Griffiths          | Children & Young People's Summit      | EG   |
| <b>In Attendance</b>      |                                       |      |
| Ruth Turner               | Shropshire Partnership                | RT   |
| Helen Herritty            | VCSA Coordinator                      | HH   |
| <b>Observers/Visitors</b> |                                       |      |
| Hannah Thompson           | CInCH                                 | HT   |
| Jenny McNicol             | Shropshire Partnership                | JMcN |

**Apologies**

|                  |                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Heather Osborne  | Older People (Co-opted Member)        |
| Sonia Roberts    | Vice Chair Assembly Board             |
| Dee Ploszay      | Shropshire Infrastructure Partnership |
| Laurel Roberts   | Northern Area Partnership             |
| William Thornton | Visual Impairment Forum               |

| <b>Item</b> | <b>Description</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Action</b> |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1.          | <p><b>Welcome, introduction, apologies</b></p> <p>JB welcomed all to the meeting and introduced Helen Herritty who is will be covering for Sarah Dodds' maternity leave. Julia commended Helen for picking the work up so quickly. She also advised that Sarah had given birth to a baby boy and circulated a congratulations card for Board members to sign. Apologies were given. Jenny McNicol and Hannah Thompson were welcomed as visitors to the meeting.</p> |               |
| 2.          | <p><b>Declaration of Interest</b></p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |               |
| 3.          | <p><b>Consultation on Sustainable Community Strategy(SCS)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |               |

JMcN explained that SCS was now out for consultation (started 1 June ends 30 Sept). The SCS sets out our vision for Shropshire in 2020, and how it will be achieved. The proposed 2020 Vision is Shropshire: Innovative, beautiful and community focused.

JMcN explained that the SCS steers both policy decisions and the services that public agencies provide across the county and leads the Local Development Framework, which is the plan that will provide for the physical and infrastructure development that will take place across Shropshire in the coming years.

The consultation document tabled described Shropshire; identified the challenges and opportunities faced; suggested a vision for the future; set out five key themes and seven cross cutting issues that need to be tackled and set out how to work towards achieving the 2020 vision.

Also tabled at the meeting was a questionnaire asking for comments on the consultation document. VCS Board members were asked to complete these questionnaires and also to take them back to their Forums of Interest.

JB asked it to be noted that the consultation was Compact compliant and that the consultation process had been well publicised, she hoped that it would receive the response it deserves.

#### **4. Presentation from CInCH**

HT explained CInCH (Community Involvement in Care & Health) is the Shropshire LINKs. LINKs (Local Involvement Networks) have been set up in each local authority area in England. The purpose is to develop community engagements from which to gather and assess local knowledge on the effectiveness of local care and health services, and then act to make improvements.

CInCH has a Board of Directors. The Board do not report to the Council or the Primary Care Trust, CInCH is totally independent and only reports to the Department of Health. Under the Board sits the Public Advisory Panel (PAP), the panel is made up of the public and organisations who deal with issues at grass route level. The next public AGM is being held middle of October 4pm-7pm at the Lord Hill, Shrewsbury.

JB asked if there was anything the Board should be doing for CInCH to link with other organisations. HT suggested that each Forum of Interest could elect members to sit on the PAP panel, therefore given them direct input into public opinion. This suggestion was noted by the Board members.

Leaflet on CInCh was circulated to the Board.

VCS Board  
Members/FOI

5. **Agreement of Minutes of meeting 2 June 09 and matters arising**

Pg 1 (Item 3). Amended to say North **East** of the County.

JB signed the minutes as true and correct record.

**Matters Arising**

Page 2 (item 3)

- FOI Report Forms – request to Board for these forms was made a week before the Board meeting (reminders sent with agenda 2 weeks before) 5 forms have now been received back.  
**Action** – Board members were asked to make sure they all completed forms before the next meeting. Board members
- Interfaith Forum - Sarah Dodds looked in to this before starting maternity leave and advised that Steve Cunningham (Shropshire Council) was helping them look for funding and to leave as a ‘watch and wait’.
- Training – 2 local providers had now been identified. First proposal received, 2<sup>nd</sup> proposal expected by end of the week. Once both proposals have been received they will be passed to the Chair and Vice Chair for decision.
- Cost of running a Forum - only 2 completed forms had been returned. Group were reminded that they could contact VCSA Coordinator to book rooms at the Shirehall free of charge. Board members were encouraged to send any information about costs to HH in whatever format was most convenient. Board members  
**Action** – Board members to email costing to HH.
- Safer Stronger Board representative – Laurel Roberts had agreed to take up this role.
- List of who represents the Board at which group – would be looked at under Item 7 on the agenda.
- Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) – briefing to be held in November by Community Council of Shropshire under banner of Health & Social Care Forum. Venue, Shrewsbury Education and Conference Centre at the Hospital, half day morning event. ISA require 100 attendees and this will be a free event including lunch. JB to circulate more information when details are finalised. It was noted that NSPCC were having an event on 25 Nov and to make sure it did not clash. JB
- Presentation by Board members to the Board about the group they represent – still to be arranged. HH  
**Action** – this to be part of the training day.

Page 3 (Item 5)

- Annual Action plan – extra column had now been added would be covered under agenda item 9.

Page 3 (Item 5)

- Engagement of small groups
  - o Circulation of leaflet – leaflet now circulated and also tabled at the meeting for comments.

- MORI Survey – now have Charity Commission list for Shropshire and working through and starting to invite potential new members to join Assembly – on going task.
- Assembly membership – cross referencing had been carried out between Assembly members and attendees at Annual Conference and non members have been contacted and asked to join.

**Action** – Board are asked to email Forum of Interest (FOI) membership details to HH so that organisations who are not assembly members can be identified (a list of organisations which attend, not email circulation list).

- FOIs/Community Council to promote membership - packs circulated to Board members so they can use to promote membership. Packs also to be used in Local Joint Committee meetings/town and parish councils and to try and find non registered organisations.
- Survey Monkey - Contact made with communication team, still awaiting response. HH to follow up
- Monitoring of membership over next 6 months – revisit at December Board meeting.

Board members  
Board members/HH  
HH

Page 4 (Item 7)

- Publish Annual Assembly report on website – this has now been done.

Page 4 (Item 8)

VCSA Coordinator to feed 3<sup>rd</sup> sector report through to Council – report had now been submitted to Directorate Management Team, feedback awaited.

Page 5 (Item 9)

- Application from new FOI – will be looked at under item 10 on agenda.

Page 5 (Item 10)

- AOB, LAA Funding – JB tabled paper that went to Shropshire Partnership Leadership Board on 4 Sept titled 'Reward and Resources'. JB outlined the content of the paper. Explaining that £150k had been allocated to each Block Group over the next 7yrs to spend on capacity building and to enable the LAA to be successful.

**Action** – GG and EG to find out how the money is allocated in practice at the Partnership meetings that they attend.

- JB to contact Council re budget - JB has forthcoming meetings with Kim Riley (new Chief Executive), Michael Hyatt, (Assistant CE) and Cllr Martin Bennett (3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Member Champion) and will raise the issue at these meetings and feedback to the board.

GG/EG  
JB

## 6. Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP)

The LRAP was tabled and the Board agreed the content of the main report. HH explained the proposal to amalgamate the LRAP and the VCS Assembly Annual

Action plan for ease of monitoring.

**The Board agreed the following points:**

- To adopt the LRAP.
- To amalgamate the LRAP and the VCS Assembly annual action plan to facilitate monitoring.
- add a standing item to each FOI agenda to ensure that any additional pressures identified, on the local VCS, are brought to the attention of the Board. HH to amend feedback form.
- To complete a 2<sup>nd</sup> Recession Survey in May 2010 and subsequently update the LRAP.

Board/HH

**7. Operational Considerations**

JB introduced the paper and highlighted that Cllr Martin Bennett was the new 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Champion. After a group discussion it was agreed that Cllr Bennett would be asked to attend a VCSA Board meeting to speak on how he sees his role as the member Champion and what the Assembly can do to help him in this role. Michael Hyatt, Assistant CE, Shropshire Council would also be invited to attend a Board meeting.

JB/HH

JB added that she had a meeting scheduled with Cllr Bennett and asked the Board what issues they would like her to take to this meeting. The following points were agreed:

- What is his prior experience of the VCS in Shropshire and are there any knowledge gaps he would like us to fill to assist him in his role as Member Champion?
- How can he help us to promote the Sector? Where will he have the opportunity to influence that we may not otherwise access?
- Two key messages to champion on our behalf - "Volunteering is not free" and "The VCS should not be expected to take a disproportionate share of any cuts in Public Sector spending" (i.e. - don't treat the sector as a soft target).
- To extend the invitation to attend a VSA Board meeting, with Michael Hyatt, to meet the Board and also to attend the VSA Annual Conference as a speaker.

Board representation

JB referred to figure 1 in the paper which showed current Board representation. Action – Health & Wellbeing Board rep to be change to Heather Osborne.

RT

It was noted that there needed to be a process in finding Assembly representatives. After a group discussion the following procedures were agreed upon:

- Advertise the vacancy to Assembly members via e-mail news updates- this would include a short description of the purpose of the group and a description of what is expected from a representative sitting on that group.
- Interested parties would then reply giving a brief outline of their background and outlining their connections/ knowledge of the relevant parts of the VCS whom they would be representing.
- If several volunteers come forward then the Chair/Vice Chair of the Assembly were delegated the authority to choose the representative most suited to the group. Whoever came out of that process would then have a

chance to talk to the VCS Assembly Coordinator about how they can be supported in their role.

- If no interested parties come forward VCSA Coordinator to make contact with individual people who she feels can best represent the Assembly at this meeting based on knowledge etc (attempt will be made to approach people who are **not** already representing the Assembly at other meetings).

The board did agree, in principle, that it might need to take a pragmatic approach in future and occasionally allow two Assembly board members to come from the same organisation, in the event that no other volunteers come forward as representatives following the procedures outlined above (perhaps with some safeguards around voting rights). A Task & Finish group will be set up, after the next board meeting to look at Terms of Reference, and it was agreed that this group would further consider this issue.

Discussion took place regarding VCSA representation at LAA Block meetings. It was decided that EG/HH/JB would arrange to meet with Liz Nicholson (Chair of the Children's Trust) in the first instance to discuss representation. EG to organise this meeting.

EG/HH/JB

It was noted and approved that Nicola McPherson would be the VCSA representative on the Shropshire Physical Activity Network.

The Board agreed that the dates of the Board meetings should advertised more widely so that there is transparency in the business of the Board, as described in the Term of Reference.

## 8. Compact Update

JB introduced this paper and advised that the draft Compact was currently out for consultation. FOI were asked to make contribution to the consultation.

FOI

### The Board :

- Considered the specific references to the VCS Assembly as set out in the draft consultation document – and accepted them without amendment.
- Noted the date of the Annual Compact Conference, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009.
- Agreed to ensure that each FOI had sent in a response to the consultation by the closing date of 18 September.

A discussion took place around the role of the Assembly in the proposed Compact Implementation and Resolution groups. It was agreed that it would be desirable to use open adverts to recruit members to sit on the Resolution panels, but that no action need be taken at this point until the Compact working group had made further progress.

GF had to leave the meeting (3.20pm) but he asked it to be noted that he would

like to see the Board spend more time on supporting individual member organisations and FOI and less time on administrative and procedural issues - this was discussed further under item 11.

## 9. Annual Work Plan

The Board were asked if they were happy with the Annual Work Plan. Additional column to show brief notes had been added as requested at the last meeting.

After a group discussion for following amendments to the Work Plan were agreed.

1. Sections to be sorted chronologically.
2. Actions to be condensed and items that are deemed processes to be moved into separate table.
3. Top 10 actions to be created for each meeting.

The Board were happy with the Action Plan and the small number of Red actions.

## 10. Applications from new FOIs

An application from the Waste and Recycling Network had been received to become a FOI. The Board were happy with the content of the application.

HH to contact Waste and Recycling Network and advised that their application had been approved.

## 11. Feedback from FOIs and Partnership Groups

Feedback forms had been received from the, Mental Health Forum, Central Area Partnership, Shropshire Infrastructure Partnership, Disability Forum and the Shropshire Safer Stronger Group.

The Disability Forum feedback form raised a issue about how FOI's were going to have a voice at the Local Joint Committee (LJC) meetings (x 28 LJC each having x 4 meetings per year).

It was agreed that JB would contact Sam Hine (Head of Community Working) about making links with each area Team Leader.

A group discussion took place regarding the comment made by GF (under item 8). It was unclear what support individual member groups might require or be seeking. However it was reiterated that the purpose of the Assembly was to be a voice for the Assembly and to sign post opportunities for all groups including the Forums of Interest to network, access resources and influence local decision makers. It is not the role to provide organisational development support which is the remit of the infrastructure organisations and the SIP. It was expected that FOIs will identify to the board any cross cutting issues which they felt impacted on

HH

HH

JB

HH/Board members

the VCS as a whole, or in part, in order that the collective voice of the Assembly can be more influential in lobbying for change. The role of the VCSA Coordinator also encompassed ambassadorial support for the FOI.

Emphasis was made on FOI completing the feedback forms, if they had any issues these would be addressed at Board meetings. If there was a burning issue then this should be added as an agenda item for the next scheduled Board meeting and a paper should be produced by the FOI, and forwarded to the VCS Assembly Coordinator to bring to the meeting.

CF suggested that it might be possible to get a grant to commission an artist to do a piece of work to promote the Assembly and the Voluntary & Community Sector and the Board supported this idea. CF to look in to this further and feedback to the Board.

CF

## 12. Any Other Business

### Third Sector Leaders' Board e- Consultation

Deadline: Friday 20 November 2009 – Board agreed that this consultation was too remote to respond as a Board, but individual members could respond.

BM mentioned an Anti Stigma campaign that was taking place regarding attitudes to Mental ill health – for more details/ literature please contact Bob Morgan on 01743 354007.

Meeting closed at 4.10 pm

Date of next meeting: 1 December 2009, 1pm in the Wenlock Room, Shirehall