

Minutes of Harrow Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Forum
Ordinary Meeting held on 27 July 2015, 10:00 – 12:00 hrs
Committee Rooms 1&2, Harrow Civic Centre, Station Road, Harrow, HA1 2XY

Attendance:				
Attendee	abbreviation in minutes	Organisation	abbreviation in minutes	Forum Role
Alex Buckmire	AB	Voluntary Action Harrow Co-operative	VAHC	
Rachel Wright	RW	Voluntary Action Harrow Co-operative	VAHC	
Julian Maw		Hatch End Association		
Marie Dennehy		No Second Night Out (Broadway Homelessness & Support)		
Peter Lewy	PL	Harrow Foodbank	HFB	
Jan Irwin	JI	Harrow Domestic & Sexual Violence Forum	HDSVF	
Keith Chilvers	KC	Radio Harrow		VCS Representative
Sarah Kersey	SK	Harrow's Happiness Campaign	HHC	Forum Chair and VCS Representative
Linda Robinson	LR	Friends of Bentley Priory Nature Reserve		Forum Vice-Chair Minute Taker
Varsha Dodhia	VD	Harrow Interfaith Council	HIC	VCS Representative
Robin Webb		St Luke's Hospice		
Tajinder Nijjar	TN	Harrow Citizens Advice Bureau	HCAB	
Brian Whitehead		Welldon Activity Group		
Sania Sehbai	SS	Harrow Women's Centre		
Elizabeth Hugo	EH	Aspergers Syndrome Access to Provision		
Helen Alexander		Rethink Mental Illness		
Sophie Kathir		HOPE Harrow		
Manji Kara	MK	Harrow Patient Participation Network	HPPN	
Vandana Joshi		Brahmin Society North London		

Invited guests in attendance:				
Carole Furlong	CFu	Harrow Council – Public Health		
Sarah Crouch	SC	Harrow Council – Public Health		
Apologies:				
Stuart Dashwood		Carramea Community Resource Centre		
Avani Modasia		AGE UK Harrow		
Gerry Devine	GD	Harrow Community Transport	HCT	Forum Vice-Chair
Eileen Martell		HOPE Harrow		
Moti Lal Thapa		National Gurkha Veterans' Association		
Georgia Weston		Friends of Pinner Park Farm		
Carol Foyle	CF	Kids Can Achieve (Westminster Society for people with learning difficulties)	KCA	VCS Representative
Leandre Sahiri		Mary Bro Foundation		

Item	Minutes	Action by whom	Action by when
1.	<p>Welcome, Introductions, Apologies and Conflicts of Interest</p> <p>1.1 SK was pleased to see new faces around the table as well as regulars. The meeting began with a brief round of introductions. Apologies were noted. With reference to the topics on the agenda, SK called for any Conflicts of Interest to be disclosed. None were declared.</p>		
2.	<p>Harrow Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Focus Group</p> <p>2.1 After discussions at the last meeting about the need for the council to engage VCS organisations in shaping Harrow's JSNA, SK was glad to be able to welcome SC and CFu to hold a focus group with attendees. She handed the floor to SC, who underlined the council's aim to achieve more by working together to ensure that Harrow's Health and Wellbeing Strategy reflected the borough's whole population, not only the input of bodies like its Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), its Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Healthwatch. To begin the focus group discussion, SB asked for attendees' ideas about the meaning of wellbeing to them, their organisations and service users. CFu took notes of all points raised.</p> <p>Action: Notes and contacts to be circulated with the meeting minutes.</p>	CFu, SK, AB	with the minutes

3.	<p>Agenda Review</p> <p>3.1 SK checked that all were comfortable with the order and content of the agenda. There were no objections.</p>		
4.	<p>Forum Membership</p> <p>4.1 Online Membership Form. SK referred to the paper and emailed application forms that had been requested for completion after the last meeting. Only nine had yet been correctly filled out and submitted. VAHC had now developed an online application process, for which SK thanked AB. All were encouraged to use it to join the Forum officially.</p> <p>Action: Membership Applications to be submitted by all would-be member organisations.</p> <p>4.2 Membership Applications received. AB distributed and read through the list of applications that had already been received and needed to be approved by the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harrow Citizens Advice Bureau <i>represented by</i> Tajinder Nijjar • 38 Degrees, Harrow Local Group <i>represented by</i> Richard McCaffrey • Harrow Community Transport <i>represented by</i> Gerry Devine • Namaste Care CIC <i>represented by</i> Varsha Dodhia • Radio Harrow <i>represented by</i> Keith Chilvers • Sangat Centre <i>represented by</i> Kanti Nagda • Friends of Bentley Priory Nature Reserve <i>represented by</i> Linda Robinson • Harrow's Happiness Campaign <i>represented by</i> Sarah Kersey • Harrow Women's Centre <i>represented by</i> Sania Sehbai <p>LR pointed out that, at the last meeting, VD had been elected to the Management Board as a VCS Representative on behalf of HIC, and so could not officially represent Namaste Care too. VD had by this time left the meeting, so was unable to clarify which organisation she wished officially to represent. EH queried the membership criteria, concerned that 38 Degrees was a political organisation without direct beneficiaries. LR confirmed that it was non party political. JI wondered about the eligibility of groups like HDSVF, which was not constituted. SK referred to clauses 5a and 5b of the Constitution, stating that members did not need to have direct beneficiaries or be formally constituted in order to be eligible to join. Indeed her own group, HHC, was unconstituted and the Forum was open to groups of all shapes and sizes.</p> <p>Agreed: All above applications were approved for membership except Namaste Care.</p> <p>Action: VD to be asked to specify separate representatives for her organisations and submit applications appropriately.</p> <p>4.3 Meeting Ground Rules / Members' Code of Conduct. LR referred to the draft document that had been proposed and circulated for approval. All were happy with the content, except that AB felt it unreasonable to expect attendees to refrain from using their phones silently during meetings, for example for texting or accessing the internet.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>SK</p>	<p>as soon as possible</p> <p>next meeting</p>

	<p>Agreed unanimously: The Members' Code of Conduct was adopted, with the removal of the wording "We will not text or play with our phones" from its Appendix II.</p> <p>Action: Appendix II to be amended as above and Members' Code of Conduct to be re-circulated.</p>	LR	with the minutes
5.	<p>Nomination and Election for Vice-Chair and VCS Representatives</p> <p>5.1 Reminding everyone of those elected to the Management Board at the last meeting, SK announced that GD had since put himself forward as the second Vice-Chair, and nominations for VCS Representative positions had been received from CF and SS. As LR had agreed to fill a VCS Representative's role only temporarily whilst awaiting further nominees, she was willing to step down from this position and remain as a Vice-Chair. SK would continue to double as Chair and VCS Representative until an additional one could be elected. This proposal would meet with the requirements in clause 6f of the Constitution as CF would be the only VCS Representative from a group with more than one full-time paid employee or equivalent. SK called for attendees to elect GD, CF and SS to the Management Board.</p> <p>Agreed unanimously: GD, CF and SS to serve on the Forum Management Board in the roles as nominated.</p>		
6.	<p>Voluntary & Community Sector Capacity Building Service</p> <p>6.1 AB outlined VAHC's new capacity building service for the sector, funded by Harrow Council via Harrow Community Action (HCA). He passed around details of the training opportunities involved. RW confirmed that these were free for Harrow groups, except for those on Health & Safety which were not part of the council's programme. She sought ideas for further topics needed. EH suggested sessions on collaboration and partnership working. RW reminded all that advice and training on funding was being delivered on behalf of the council by Capable Communities.</p> <p>Action: Information about VAHC's capacity building service to be distributed. www.harrowca.org.uk/capacity-building.</p>	AB	with the minutes
7	<p>Harrow VCS Forum News</p> <p>7.1 Management Board update. SK circulated and ran through her written report (Appendix I), highlighting that the VCS Representatives were due to receive an allowance via HCA, of which they had agreed to contribute £200 each to the Forum. As a newly elected VCS Representative, SS confirmed that she too was happy to do so. RW confirmed that the allowance amounts would be prorated to the time served. The Board had considered priorities for the Forum's work, and had thought to begin with finding out groups' barriers, building better communication links between the VCS and the health sector and the Council, and improving Forum engagement with members and the wider sector.</p>		

	<p>SK appealed for any member wishing to volunteer to observe the awarding of the council's Small Grants. Wary of the council's promised new approach to the VCS, JI recalled all the previous effort that the sector had already invested into developing the existing Third Sector Strategy and the Compact. She cautioned against reinventing the wheel. SK agreed that the sector's time must not be wasted further, acknowledging that groups had been suffering from consultation fatigue. The common theme that she had heard at all her meetings with council officers, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Clinical Commissioning Group was that there was no money available. Only by contributing and making documents like the JSNA more relevant to the sector could the Forum help to improve them. She gave the example of Devon CCG where 20 per cent of the budget was decided by the VCS.</p> <p>VCS positions would be available on the CCG's Equality and Engagement Committee and as a non-voting advisor to the HWB. These roles were not necessarily to be filled by members of the Forum's Management Board. SK was keen to open up the HWB opportunity to all members. Sessions would be arranged to explain the responsibilities, including methods of canvassing the sector and reporting back to it. SK had asked HPPN officially to join the Forum, and MK confirmed he was interested in being its representative.</p> <p>Action: Anne Whitehead, new Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, to be invited to the next Forum meeting.</p> <p>Action: Sessions to be arranged for those interested in becoming the VCS's advisor to the HWB.</p> <p>7.2 VCS Representative surgeries. Representatives had agreed to hold regular surgeries to listen to and try to help solve members' problems.</p> <p>Action: Surgery dates to be arranged and advised to members.</p> <p>7.3 Member issues: Payment of invoices by Harrow Council. HCT had reported its cash flow being affected by a change of payment terms by Harrow Council from 20 days to 39 days. SK asked anyone to let her know if they were experiencing similar problems with settlement of invoices to the council.</p> <p>7.4 September Networking and Community Information Event. KC announced that the planned event had now in fact been fixed for an October date, Saturday the 17th, at KCA's site in Harrow Weald.</p> <p>Action: Details of the 17 October event to be advised.</p>	<p>SK</p> <p>M Board</p> <p>KC, CF</p>	<p>next meeting</p> <p>with the minutes</p> <p>next meeting</p>
8.	<p>Forum Members' Offers and Wants</p> <p>8.1 SK reminded groups of this item as an opportunity to share their offerings and needs. KC repeated Radio Harrow's eagerness to promote fellow community groups.</p> <p>8.2 TN distributed leaflets about a new bespoke Bereavement Advice service being run by HCAB, funded for one year to give advice to the recently bereaved by telephone or email on Monday mornings. TN reassured SS that</p>		

	<p>bereavement time limits would not prevent certain ethnic communities from benefitting due cultural mourning constraints.</p> <p>8.3 PL encouraged attendees to become ‘voucher partners’ for HFB if they might be able to help identify potential food need. Interested groups should contact HFB on 020 8416 7344 or info@harrow.foodbank.org.uk.</p> <p>8.4 AB appealed for more micro-volunteering opportunities for VAHC’s Pop-Up Harrow project. There had been more volunteers than work available for small tasks of up to six hours. AB advised that Harrow Association of Disabled People had now moved into the Wealdstone Centre, which meant that its former training and meeting room facilities were no longer available. He asked for VAHC to be informed of any suitable alternative facilities.</p>		
9.	<p>Minutes of the meeting held on 01 June 2015</p> <p>9.1 Accuracy – Item 7.2 had given an incorrect email address for KC. It should have shown as keith.chilvers@radioharrow.org. With this correction the minutes were approved.</p> <p>9.2 Matters Arising – All had been covered except that the presentation and proposals planned at Item 5.2 for this meeting, about Harrow Community Network, had been postponed until a future meeting.</p>		
10.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>10.1 TL enquired how long it would be before groups would learn whether or not they had been successful in their applications to Harrow Council’s Small Grants Programme. AB stated that the shortlist would be announced in two weeks time. It would be even longer before anyone would know if they had actually been successful.</p>		
11.	<p>Member Networking</p> <p>11.1 There was no time for attendees to network informally before the scheduled end of the meeting, although they were able to do so afterwards.</p>		
12.	<p>Dates of future meetings to be held from 10am to 12pm at Committee Room 1 & 2, Harrow Civic Centre unless otherwise advised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28th September 2015 • 30th November 2015 		
	Meeting closed at 12.05		

Appendix I (Item 2.1)

Notes from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Focus Group...

**Chair's Report
Harrow VCS Forum
28th July 2015**

Progress to since the last meeting

- 1) Forum Management Board is currently working on:
 - Website and logo to help communicate the purpose of the Forum which KC is leading on.
 - Opening a bank account.
 - Develop finance, data protection and H&S policies.
 - Reps have agreed to contribute £200 of their rep allowance to a Forum development to help with costs we may incur as we develop.
 - Regarding Chair handover SK hasn't met Julie Browne in person but has had email handover.
- 2) SK met with Marianne Locke and Alex Dewsnap who is taking over from Marianne as having responsibility for VCS liaison. Community Development officers Michelle and Jaz will be transferred and managed by him. Main points from the meeting:
 - They were very clear that they view the Forum VCS reps as the representatives who they would consult with to attain the voice of the sector.
 - They were positive about the development of the Forum membership and new structured approach.
 - They confirmed Forum VCS reps will be invited to regular meetings with the Council Leader and the CEO.
 - Alex Dewsnap said that he would like to work with the forum management board to establish principles for the relationship with the Forum.
 - They requested an Observer for the small grants and have asked SK. Happy to do this but wanted to ask if there is anyone else who may want to do this.
- 3) SK met with Sanjay Dighe who chairs the Clinical Commissioning Group's Equality and Engagement Committee. Main points from the meeting:
 - Need for groups to feed into JSNA which creates the Health and Wellbeing Strategy followed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and which the CCG uses to establish commissioning intentions.
 - Gave an example of Devon CCG where 20% of the budget is decided by the VCS sector.
 - New VCS rep needed to fill position on the committee previously carried out by Deven Pillay.
 - The committee's Terms of Reference and role description for VCS rep is being reviewed.
 - The committee needs a 'critical friend' who is able to make a contribution on how to engage with the VCS and advise on equality and diversity so that this is properly considered.
 - Discussed potential for intern help from the committee to map groups in the borough working within health
 - Will help to connect the Harrow Patient Participation Network with the Forum.
- 4) Meeting with Cllr Anne Whitehead who is the new Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Meeting main points:
 - Non-Voting VCS Advisor required for the Health and Wellbeing Board, SK and Cllr Whitehead will be organising info sessions, Deven Pillay who has carried out this role for the past few years will be involved. A process for selection of a new advisor will be circulated along with info session dates and times.
 - Invited her to the meeting as a speaker, she may be able to attend September's meeting.

Progress by next meeting

- 1) Clarity on Forum programme of work for the next 6 months to 1 year. The Management Board have agreed a) identifying and addressing the barrier to the sectors voice within Health and building better communication links with the Health sector b) Building better communication between VCS and the Council and c) Forum engagement with members and the wider sector.
- 2) Agree surgery dates and circulate to Forum members.
- 3) Plan VCS networking and community information event.
- 4) Promote membership and encourage groups to join.

Glossary

CCG	<p>NHS Harrow Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is the GP-led organisation responsible for planning and buying (commissioning) many of the health services needed by the people who live in Harrow. It is made up of all 34 GP practices in the borough and its vision is to work in partnership to ensure local residents receive high quality, modern, sustainable, needs led and cost effective care within the financial budgets available. Its overarching purpose is to improve the health and wellbeing of the local residents of Harrow by commissioning a sustainable model of high quality health care within the resources available.</p> <p>www.harrowccg.nhs.uk/about-harrow-ccg</p>
Healthwatch	<p>Healthwatch is the new consumer champion for health and social care in England. There are 152 Local Healthwatch organisations in England. Healthwatch Harrow was set up by Harrow in Business to make sure you can influence and challenge health and social care services in Harrow. Healthwatch Harrow will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and signposting to help people choose and access services. • Signpost people to independent complaints advocacy so that people can, if they need to, complain about services. • Provide information about people’s views and experiences of health and social care to make sure they are taken in to consideration when services are planned and delivered. <p>Its objective is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give children, young people and adults a powerful voice • ensure their collective views and experiences are heard by those who run, plan and regulate health and social care services. <p>http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/100010/health_and_social_care/812/healthwatch_harrow www.healthwatchharrow.co.uk</p>
HWB	<p>Harrow's Health and Wellbeing Board is a multi-agency group which brings together the Council, NHS Commissioners, GP Commissioners and the voluntary sector to focus on improving the health of Harrow residents. Its purpose is to provide leadership and direction across agencies that deliver services to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents in Harrow. Chaired by the Leader of Harrow Council, it is the executive body responsible for agreeing what the needs of the local population are, promoting integration and supporting alignment and joint commissioning.</p> <p>www.harrow.gov.uk/info/100010/health_and_social_care/499/health_and_wellbeing_board</p>
JSNA	<p>The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment(JSNA) is a strategic set of documents that contains a range of information for commissioners, planners and senior managers across statutory and partner organisations. These documents work as a tool to identify the health, wellbeing needs and inequalities of the local population. These elements are used as a format to improve current and future service developments. It is a national government requirement that local authorities and CCGs work in conjunction with each other and with stakeholders to establish the needs of the local community.</p> <p>www.harrow.gov.uk/info/100010/health_and_social_care/130/harrow_s_joint_strategic_needs_assessment</p>