

Harrow Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Forum
Ordinary Meeting held on 25th September 2018, 1pm to 3pm
North Harrow Community Library, 524 – 429 Pinner Road, North Harrow, HA1 1HN

Attendance:				
Attendee	abbreviation in minutes	Organisation	abbreviation in minutes	Forum Role
Varsha Dodhia	VD	Harrow Interfaith	HI	Co-Chair
Gerry Devine	GD	Harrow Community Transport	HCT	Vice-Chair
Tajinder Nijjar	TN	Citizens Advice Harrow	CAH	VCS Representative
John Higgings	JH	Harrow Voluntary and Community Sector Forum	HVCSF	Cabinet Representative
Rachel Wright	RW	Voluntary Action Harrow Co-operative	VAHC	Minute Taker
Linda Robinson	LR	38 Degrees (Harrow Local Group)	38D	
Glen Hearnden	GH	Signature Housing	SH	
Ray Barber	RB	St Albans Church, North Harrow / North Harrow Community Library	SAC NHCL	
Andrea Lagos	AL	Harrow Council, Public Health	LBH	
Carol Grant	CG	Harrow Street Pastors	HSP	
Swan Kazi	SK	Harrow Parks Forum	HPF	
Jan Irwin	JI	Harrow Domestic and Sexual Violence Forum	HDSVF	
Kate Tuchett	KT	Harrow Citizens	HC	
Nigel Long	NL	Harrow Association of Disabled People	HAD	
Dan Burke	DB	Young Harrow Foundation	YHF	
Joy Collins	JC	Securing Success	SS	
Bharti Vyas	BV	1 st Hope	1H	
Liz Dann	LD	Harrow Law Centre	HLC	
Peter Juler	PJ	Harrow Quakers	HQ	

Julian Saunders	JS	Firm Foundation	FF	
Stephen Kyle	SK	EACH Counselling and Support	EACH	
Ann Sharples	AS	Street Pastors	SP	
Shaun Williams	SW	Jasper Centre	JC	

Apologies:				
Bill Phillips	BP	Harrow Association of Disabled People	HAD	Forum Co-chair

Item	Minutes	Action by whom	Action by when
1.	<p>Welcome VD welcomed all.</p> <p>GD welcomed the group to the library as the first external event after opening after three years. On Saturday there were approximately 600 people visiting for the Fun Day. The library is keen to have more community events.</p>		
2.	<p>John Higgins - Council Cabinet represent GD introduced JH to the group. JH has lived in Harrow for 11 years but is new to the forum. JH's role will be to represent the VCS on the Council Cabinet and build better links. He will aim to understand the issues and feed into the cabinet. JH attended first event in Sep, this is very organised meeting with a limited opportunity for discussion. GH highlighted that JH needs to get the key schedule ahead of the event to know what is coming up and can prepare his contributions in advance. VD explained that the sector needs to be involved in the pipeline and requested that members should alert the forum when they hear of relevant issues</p>		
3.	<p>Glen Hearnden Signature Housing GH was on the Labour Cabinet with the Housing Portfolio for the last 4 years, he stepped down in May. In May he set up Signature Housing to deliver affordable housing and community assets. Key Harrow issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LBH purchased and built council houses in last 2 years • Larger developments are in process e.g. Gatton Road (affordable housing) and Grange Farm • This only scratches surface with the situation getting worse • Attention moved to Brexit, less media focus • College Road has only 11% affordable housing • Current Mayor's Office is pushing for more affordable housing • Harrow has 1000 families in temporary housing, with more on waiting lists. • Council is in a cash crisis leading to service cuts. <p>Potential Opportunities being explored by Signature Housing (see document circulated):</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers are building in Harrow. • What else can be put into these buildings e.g. community centre. • There could be opportunities to put community space into different parts of the borough. • This would be offered with no rent and all utilities covered by the owners. • Social enterprise model could be considered to raise money to use for service delivery. • The developments would be a mixture of affordable housing mixed with private ownership to pay for development and the community asset. • The timeline would depend on LBH, if the will is in the right place a minimum of 18 months, in reality 3 years. 	<p>VD to organise a workshop with GH</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>Andrea Lagos – Public Health AL updated the group on the Child Poverty strategy which is available in the attached presentation. This is monitored by the Health & Wellbeing board. JI highlighted that details of family breakdown is missing in the presentation.</p>	<p>AL to invite JI to next meeting.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Dan Burke – Young Harrow Foundation YHF was set up by John Lyons Charity and City Bridge to understand the current situation for children and young people; to look at funding and; to set up a venue bank of affordable venues. Currently supporting 132 organisations in;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. development (in partnership with VAHC) focus on systems e.g. finance, monitoring 2. Funding; unrestricted last year £67k, this year target £80k. This is a big commitment from the members, bid writing (from proof reading to full writing). 3. Partnerships <p>In partnership with LBH, YHF have looked at the needs of the young people:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do the young people have to say. Questionnaire of 90 questions, 15% of population between 11-18 year olds across 6 schools in Harrow. 2. To get input from local charities where 50 forums were run. 3. The council existing data was analysed. <p>This has been put into a full report with a focus on 5 key issues. The report is backing up funding applications. Following from the report anyone can access and use the data and through a search engine where more targeted information to get stats for funding opportunities available on the YHF website https://youngharrowfoundation.org/analysis A partnership has been set up with members, LBH, NHS and schools on how they can work together to meet these needs. YHF have updated their website so members can upload programmes and the schools, parents and young people can find out about different opportunities. https://youngharrowfoundation.org/organisations Stage 2 is to have hubs to redesign services / working with funders to bring in additional funding to Harrow to address the key needs. Stage 3 to redo the exercise to see the changes / impacts as well as look at emerging needs TN: Do you support organisations whose applications have not been successful? YHF stand in the middle so can have conversations with funders, YHF have been connected with £1,164,000 funding brought into the borough as well as £5,500,000 that wasn't successful so are trying to work out why this is</p>		

	<p>e.g. quality of applications / funders not interested in Harrow. JI: There was some funding for support for domestic violence but no specialist organisations in Harrow to apply for it, how can YHF work here? DB: YHF is working with Harrow Council around partnership funding. YHF is working with partner Young Foundation Organisations in other boroughs so there could be opportunities for cross borough partnerships.</p>		
<p>6.</p>	<p>Julian Saunders – Firm Foundation JS presented on the work and challenges faced by Firm Foundation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single homelessness is a separate category, often they don't fit into priority need. • Rough sleeping in Harrow is increasing. • Official 2009/10 was 6 over 12 months but this doesn't present a true picture. • In 2009/10 Firm Foundation ran a small project and received 25 people through the drop in in that year. • FF run a Night Shelter and drop ins throughout the year. • The Night Shelter has expanded due to demand and added a women's section. Last year over 12 weeks they received 72 referrals and provided accommodation for 32 people made up of 6 ladies, 26 men, 70% of them were local residents. Firm Foundation managed to house 50% into accommodation. • Currently there are 55 people that they are working with case work / accessing services. 19 case work, 12-18 for shower and food. In the last week 4 people housed and moved on. <p>Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • day services need to be more robust, • funding needed, • Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into force in April but we have not seen any changes in the borough. • Over 50% of the homeless can't access the services. Their options are work, find somewhere free to stay or to return to country of origin. Some -people have cash in hand employment and use their earring to send money home rather than use it for their own housing needs. • There is a gap for those who need accommodation with support services but don't meet council priorities. Hope Place (supported flats run by Firm Foundation) provides this for 3 people and would like to be able to expand. <p>Housing First's principle is that housing is a right. In practice the person is put into accommodation which would be hard to evict them from. Additional support will be provided which the person has the option to access. Firm Foundation would like to pilot it in Harrow.</p>		
	<p>Liz Dann – Housing Solicitor at Harrow Law Centre National Audit office have produced a report that highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72,000 people in temporary accommodation. • A 60% increase in households in temporary accommodation • £1.15bn is spent by local authorities on homeless services during 2015-16 <p>Harrow has a small council stock, a large private sector with poor quality accommodation</p>		

	<p>Most HLC clients are working and not eligible for legal aid. They are inundated with enquiries but limited to who they can work with. Increasing stress on families, working but can't pay rent. HLC can help people get permanent accommodation, this gives people a new start. JI highlighted that families who are forced to stay together as they can't afford to move out would often lead to domestic violence. If HLC can't help there is a limited number of places for people to go for free legal advice. Housing Law Practitioner's website has some pro bono solicitors. LR: Rouge Landlord Checkers has a list of rouge landlords. Harrow Council hasn't signed up to this.</p> <p>KT highlighted that Harrow Citizens, a coalition of faith, schools are lobbying for change in the following four areas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low Pay 2. Affordable Housing 3. Refugee welcome 4. Mental Health <p>GH proposed one action is to put a pressure onto affordable housing, some are going shared ownership. Lobby to force 40% of affordable housing.</p>	<p>LR to chase up on why LBH haven't signed up. LD will also ask.</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Membership Update</p> <p>Forum membership applications received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Luke's Hospice www.stlukes-hospice.org Jessica Vasquez Cruz • Harrow Cyclists www.harrowcyclists.org.uk Penny Hayward • Harrow Natural History Society www.harrownaturalhistory.org.uk Margaret Huitson • Harrow Friends of the Earth http://www.harrowfoe.org.uk Jane Skelly • Jaspar Foundation & Centre www.jasparcentre.org Shaku Williams <p>All applications were approved.</p>		
<p>8.</p>	<p>VCS Forum Representative Requests</p> <p>VD highlighted the need for more people to join the VCSF as they currently only have 4 people on management team.</p>		
<p>9.</p>	<p>Next meeting 29th November 6pm – 8pm Focus: Health & Wellbeing Venue: TBC</p>		
<p>Meeting closed at 3.00 pm</p>			