



## **GRANTS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES FORUM**

**MEETING** : Thursday, 21st January 2016

**PRESENT** : Catherine Kevis, GAVCA - Chair  
Robin Agascar, Gay-Glos  
Anne Whitworth, Gloucester Law Centre  
Councillor David Brown  
Councillor Gerald Dee  
Councillor Hannah Norman

### **Officers in Attendance**

Ed Pomfret, Health Partnerships and Engagement Manager  
Gareth Hooper, Senior Engagement and Partnerships Officer  
Parvati Diyar, Democratic Services Officer

**APOLOGIES** : Councillor Usman Bhaimia, Councillor Kathy Williams, Councillor Terry Pullen, Pauline Reynolds (Gloucestershire African and Caribbean Association), Mike Harrison (Hucclecote Community Association) and Michael Teesdale (Abbeydale Community Association)

### **9. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR**

Catherine Kevis was appointed Chair for the meeting.

### **10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **11. MINUTES**

Robin Agascar commented that at its last meeting the Forum talked about the level of engagement with the VCS and the minutes did not reflect this. He requested for this to be recorded.

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2015 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

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**12. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (15 MINUTES)**

There were no questions from members of the public.

**13. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**

There were no petitions and deputations.

**14. VOLUNTARY SECTOR UPDATE**

The Chair amended the order of proceedings to consider this agenda item, in advance of agenda item 15.

In response to a query from Councillor Dee about the Gloucester Gateway Trust, Catherine Kevis advised the Forum that conversations had taken place with Mark Gale, Chief Executive of Gloucester Gateway Trust. It had been too soon to have generated the necessary funds but the project was heavily involved in local communities.

She gave news of a new project bid from the Voluntary and Community Sector which had got through to the second stage and was called 'Going the Extra Mile' and was a county wide project. The money would originate from the European Fund and Lottery Fund and would encourage economically inactive people back into employment. The project was contributing to the community and a delivery plan was being prepared.

Councillor Dee commented that when proposals for the Gloucester Gateway Trust had been discussed, emphasis had been made that profits generated would go to local communities and this should not be lost.

Councillor Brown reported that he had attended a presentation by the Chief Executive of Chase Associates. It had been confirmed that six local organisations would benefit from the profits but these would not be known until the end of the year.

Catherine Kevis added that GAVCA had continued to hold Forums in Gloucester and a number of special events had taken place. The Managing Director had attended an event held at Oxstalls Tennis Centre in September 2015. Groups had been divided into workshops and looked at funding and ways of working better together with Gloucester City Council.

Another event had been organised in October 2015 to discuss the budget for 2016/17 which had been attended by Jon Topping, Head of Finance. This event also included three leaders from local organisations who shared their experience of adapting their model to include trading activities as part of their income. Catherine explained that not all organisations were able to trade and sell their services; this was particularly true of social care providers working with vulnerable people with little income. Robin Agascar commented that it was important to recognise the different types of organisations and that not all could trade to raise revenue.

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Catherine Kevis added that a Funding Fayre had been organised to take place on 7 March 2016 at Cheltenham Pavilion. It is hoped this event would showcase the diversity of funding available to community groups and organisations.

A GAVCA survey had been undertaken and 19 organisations from Gloucester had responded. The outcome was that 44% had an income of £20,000 or less and 68% had an income of £100,000. The key outcomes from the survey was that organisations required the following advice and support:

- Fundraising / finance
- Marketing / promotion
- Working with businesses

The Forum noted the Aston Project and Great Expectations and the current consultation to develop the Hate Crime Strategy. Robin Agascar commented that there had been a lot of activity during the Hate Crime event and referred to the development of the county wide strategy. He added that a Hate Crime Summit would be held.

Robin Agascar advised the Forum that funding for a GayGlos youth group had been received from the Police Crime and Commissioner's office and a small grant received from the City Council. Robin explained how supportive the Commissioner had been of local communities and how engaged he was.

Anne Whitworth advised the Forum that the Law Centre continued to provide legal advice and representation. A new website, GAIN (Gloucester Advice Information Network), had been launched which would provide guidance and support on various issues and also ensure advice was readily accessible for everybody.

The Law Centre and Citizens Advice Bureau were unsure how much funding they would receive.

In response to a question from Councillor Brown, Anne Whitworth confirmed that the Law Centre continued to work closely with the Chinese Women's Guild.

### **15. WORKING TOGETHER WITH THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR (VCS) IN GLOUCESTER**

The Forum appreciated the attendance of the Managing Director and believed it would be useful for him to continue to attend quarterly meetings. The VCS said they wished to have a close working relationship with the City Council.

The Senior Engagement and Partnerships Officer asked the Forum to consider the current relationship with the City Council and clarify how they anticipated this to move forward.

Members discussed the future of the Grants and Community Services Forum and made the following comments:

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- Establish a working relationship and encourage Members to be invited to events
- An action plan be prepared
- Clear understanding of who the beneficiaries should be
- Change the audience – have meetings in a variety of Wards
- Elected representatives from the voluntary sector should be broader
- Talk to the associations to ensure no duplication
- Group to be more informal
- Consider re-naming the Forum

The Health, Partnerships and Engagement Manager suggested the Forum be dissolved and replaced with something less formal. An example of this could be a commitment to have three workshops a year to enable the VCS to meet, network and exchange ideas. He recommended that the current terms of the Forum as set out in the Council's Constitution be reviewed and the recommendations presented to the Constitutional and Electoral Working Group in March. He added that One Legal would be able to provide advice on the proposed amendments.

Councillor H Norman advised that any suggested recommendations would also need to be approved at a Council meeting.

Catherine Kevis confirmed that the VCS would review the current terms and feedback their comments to the Health, Partnerships and Engagement Manager.

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Social Prescribing Officer

Anne Whitworth commented that she had received a call from a member of the 'Social Prescribing Team' from the City Council which she was unaware of. She added that it would be helpful for a contact list to be circulated.

The Senior Engagement and Partnerships Officer advised that this had been rolled out by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and one Social Prescribing Project had been based in each of the six district councils. The post was funded by CCG and the City Council only provided office space. Ian Preston leads the project in the City Council on behalf of the CCG but was employed by the Independence Trust. There are three other Social Prescribing Officers and one Admin Officer, again all employed by the Independence Trust.

**17. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

Thursday, 4 July 2016 at 6.00pm.

**Time of commencement: 6.00 pm hours**  
**Time of conclusion: 7.10 pm hours**

**Chair**