

---

# Oxfordshire Voluntary Sector Development Partnership

---

c/o Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary  
Action  
The Old Court House, Floyds Row, St Aldates,  
Oxford, OX1 1SS

Tel: 01865 251946 Fax: 01865 204138

Email: kate.hill@ocva.org.uk

---

The Partnership met on Tuesday 7 April 2009 in the St Aldate's Room at Oxford Town Hall

## MINUTES

Present:

Alison Baxter (AB)	Pauline McCredie (PM)
Linda Chalcraft (LC)	Meryl Smith (MS)
Bishop Coin Fletcher (Chair)(CF)	Barry Tanswell (BT)
Julie Higgs (JH)	Patrick Tolani (PT)
Kate Hill (KH) minutes	Toby Warren (TW)
Val Johnson (VJ)	Jo White (JW)
Jacqueline Malone (JM)	

### APOLOGIES

Pat Chirgwin (PC), Jim Flux (JF), Emma Morris (EM), Nisha Prakash (NP), Janet Pring (JP), Nigel Randall (NR), Dene Robson (DR). Grahame Helm (GH) also hoped to attend but was unable to.

### Action

#### 1. WELCOME

The partnership welcomed Paul James (PJ) from OCC to discuss item 5 on the agenda, and Romy Bryant (RB) one of the voluntary sector representatives who attended as an observer.

#### 2. MINUTES

The minutes were circulated and accepted as a true record of the meeting.

#### 3. MATTERS ARISING

KH confirmed that the Communication Plan was on hold waiting for the new branding and logo that would be launched once OVSDP took on the Stronger Communities remit and agreed a new name. The communications plan would help position the Stronger Communities Partnership and its role in the county.

KH informed the group that the Job Centre Plus representative was interested in OVSDP but that she was not available to attend this meeting.

#### 4. COMPACT UPDATE

AB referred to the successful induction that took place at the end of March for new members of OVSDP. This highlighted the need for OVSDP as the Compact Steering Group not to lose sight of the huge team effort that went into writing the Oxfordshire Compact and the difficult task those involved had to find wording that everyone could sign up to.

OCC has recently circulated a draft OCC Disputes Procedure for comment. In 2006 the Compact Mediation Code was written and signed off by all members of OVSDP as the Compact Steering Group and it was felt that this new draft dispute procedure would overrule that code and would cause confusion. It was acknowledged that clarification was needed for larger organisations such as OCC so that if groups that have a relationship with OCC have reason to raise a complaint, that they know who to raise this with and what the process is. It was agreed that instead of a new disputes procedure just for OCC, some clarification should be added to the existing Mediation Code. This will make clear the job title of the individual a group should approach in each public sector organisation that is a member of OVSDP should they need to raise an issue. In larger organisations such as OCC and the PCT this will be by directorate or department to make it easier for groups to have their dispute channelled as effectively as possible.

KH updated the meeting that the Commission for the Compact had recently announced that the national Compact will be refreshed over the summer and widely consulted on. For this reason it would be worth waiting until this is published in the autumn before refreshing the Oxfordshire Compact so that it can reflect the national version. KH and Tamsila Tauqir of OCC will make a start on writing the new codes on equalities ready for consultation at the county forum event. **Action KH and TT**

MS reported that there is nothing in the funding code on withdrawal of funding. This has happened with a post at ORCC where the funding was cut on 1 April with no notice taking two days funding from a full time post. It was agreed that this did not fit with the spirit of the compact and was not acting in a 'reasonable' way and so the Compact would still support ORCC in this matter.

OCC agreed to look at this issue as part of the funding work the Compact sub group is looking at.

The Funding Code was discussed. As OCC are looking at funding internally this could impact on the Oxfordshire Compact and it was agreed that the funding code would have to be revisited to take account of the work going on at OCC when this is completed. OVSDP as the Compact Sub Group needs to remain involved. KH and Julie Higgs (PCT) sit on this group and can feed back to OVSDP.

The OCC Grants Guidance has been circulated and comments were requested by the end of the week.

KH and LC informed the group that a focus group looking at tendering and the commissioning process would be taking place in May to help inform OCC and the PCT on issues VCS groups have faced.

## **5. STRONGER COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP REMIT**

Paul James outlined the audit and review of partnerships that has been taking place to improve partnership working as a whole across the county now that this remit has grown and partnerships have responsibility for targets in the LAA and sustainable community strategy. Better resourcing is also required for partnerships including OVSDP and this will be discussed in more detail.

To build on OVSDP's success it has been agreed to add the stronger communities remit to the work of OVSDP. This is to drive objective 4 of the sustainable community strategy on breaking the cycle of deprivation.

It is proposed that two elected members join the partnership. This will give more political buy in to strengthen the voluntary sector. This shouldn't weaken the role of officers as active members of the group.

There also need to be a review of the voluntary sector representation on thematic partnerships to ensure that the VCS is where it needs to be.

Thematic partnerships need to be more involved with the work of the public service board in future.

It was agreed a small sub group meet to agree how best to start the process of moving towards the new remit and agreeing a new name. **KH to arrange the meeting.**

OVSDP submitted two bids for the LAA Reward Grant. This was oversubscribed and officers are working on the criteria for which bids will be accepted and this will go back to the Public Service Board. There was some overlap and duplication of bids.

## **6. MODERNISATION FUND GRANTS PROGRAMME**

KH discussed an offer by Capacitybuilders for OCVA as lead body for OVSDP to act as a Local Delivery Agent (LDA) for Oxfordshire for Office for the Third Sector's Modernisation Fund. This has been set up to help VCS organisations cope with the recession and only certain organisations will be eligible. As a LDA, OCVA would match organisations with the most suitable adviser, with organisations being able to access up to £1,000 of advice from an adviser in Stage 1. The main area of advice proposed is in collaboration and merger. OVSDP members agreed that merger was not usually an appropriate way forward for most groups and that the emphasis might more helpfully be placed on collaboration. It was agreed to accept the funding offer so that any eligible groups would not miss out on the opportunity this funding presents.

## **7. ECONOMIC DOWNTURN**

For the Capacitybuilders Resilience funding awarded in February, the Hidden Assets report from Raise's research will be presented on a county level, not district as previously thought so this frees up some more funding that can go to the advice sector to help the front line cope with an increase in demand for services.

KH raised the idea of writing a Local Resilience Action Plan (LRAP) for Oxfordshire to build an evidence base for the effect the recession is having on the voluntary sector and what is needed. NAVCA have offered the services of a consultant to help in the gathering of information and writing of the plan. It was agreed to accept this offer and go ahead and write the LRAP.

## **8. NI6 AND NI7 UPDATE**

Re NI7 the OVSDP needs to decide if we will stick to the results of the MORI survey or collect more data ourselves. This could include smaller organisations not registered with the Charity Commission that wouldn't have been approached in the original survey. It was agreed to write a paper for the next OVSDP meeting and look at resources needed to enable this to take place.

It is not known what monitoring is required for the local target on Community Lead Planning. **Action VJ to find out and report back**

## **9. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR FORUMS**

KH updated the meeting on forum events already planned for this year. The first evening event is to be held on 28 April in Oxford. The County Forum is scheduled for 9 November. PM indicated that Cherwell too would like to hold an evening event. Planning for other forum events is on going and KH is keen to get them

more evenly spaced throughout the year.

#### **10 BUSINESS AND STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE**

This was circulated prior to the meeting and no comments were made.

#### **11. LAA REWARD GRANT**

We are still waiting for confirmation of the projects that have been successful to the oversubscribed grants pot. This is due to be agreed at the next Public Service Board meeting.

#### **12. FORTHCOMING TRAINING EVENTS**

The group updated each other on training events coming up in the near future. KH talked of an event on procurement in Oxfordshire to be delivered by OCC and PCT jointly. PT talked of a Human Rights Conference OREC will be hosting.

#### **13. LINKS WITH OTHER NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

It was agreed that it would be useful to have a map of voluntary sector representatives and who is involved in each partnerships from the VCS. This would help identify and gaps.

A new name needs to be devised for the OVSDP as it takes on the Stronger Communities remit. It was agreed a memorable acronym would be an advantage. Oxfordshire Stronger Communities Alliance was suggested or OSCA.

AB talked about the newly launched ROBIN (Responsible Oxfordshire Business Involvement Network) which brings together business and community and voluntary sector organisations.

Oxfordshire Learning and Skills Partnership (L & SP) was discussed and issues with Action Group 4 of this partnership. It was felt that there was overlap with the work Oxfordshire Learning Network (OLN) is doing and the proposed work of AG4 could be taken forward by OLN. It was agreed that a letter would go forward to John Knights, chair of the L & SP from CF raising concerns.

#### **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business raised.

#### **15. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

All to be held at Oxford Town Hall

July 13 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm Panel Room

October 14 10 am – 12 pm St Aldates Room

January 13<sup>th</sup> 2010 – 10 am – 12 pm St Aldates Room

Signed: ..... Date: .....