

Minutes of the OVSDP Meeting 13th July 2009
Panel Room, Oxford Town Hall

Present: Colin Fletcher (CF) – Chair, Kate Hill (KH), Alison Baxter (AB), Val Johnson (VJ), Jo White (JW), Tamsila Tauqir (TT), Barry Tanswell (BT), Bede Gerrard (BG), Nigel Randall (NR), Jim Flux (JF), David Metcalfe (DM), Pat Chirgwin (PC), Patrick Tolani (PT), Nisha Prakash (NP), Lynda Chalcraft (LC), Jackie Malone (JM), and Vanessa Eley (VE) – Minutes.

Meeting opened: 2:30pm

1) Apologies

From Meryl Smith (ORCC), Toby Warren (Vale of White Horse District Council), Emma Morris (South Oxfordshire District Council) and Pauline McCreddie (Cherwell District Council). Janet Pring (JP) Dene Robson absent. The group welcomed Sergeant David Metcalfe to the meeting as a representative of Thames Valley Police.

2) Minutes from the previous OVSDP Meeting (7th April)

Added Bede Gerrard's attendance

3) Matter Arising

None

4) Compact

- ◆ Draft Equality and Diversity Code: OVSDP has two heads: firstly, it is responsible for Oxfordshire Compact (public sector/ voluntary and faith sectors); secondly for Stronger Communities Partnership. TT and KH produced a draft version. AB noted that it was good, as it is broader than original code for National Compact. However, the original code refers to a particular subset of voluntary sector organisations, whereas this one refers to individuals (and therefore does not differ greatly from organisations' normal policies). A discussion was held and points noted for TT and KH to take back to revise this first draft.

Action: KH and TT to work on code and develop it in light of comments. AB, PT, JF, BG, NP, LC and VJ to act as email consultants.

- ◆ Compact Policy Officer's Workplan: TT's contract ends October 2009 – questions over timetable due to the post's limitations.
- ◆ Do VCF groups feel confident to use the Compact? County Council and organisation relationship is not Compact compliant. JF and AB highlighted recent situations where non-compact compliance by OCC has been an issue. LC suggested they put things through the Compact mediation process. Problems associated with bid writers from the County Council – lack of communication. Despite short time-limit, this is still not acceptable.

Actions: matter to be raised at Compact Programme Board. KH will be present. AB and JF to send LC further details.

- ◆ Compact Week to be held in the first week of November: another version of Equalities Code to be consulted. Checklist ensuring good practice for contracting to be produced. Compact Codes booklet on the national website; TT has been developing an Oxfordshire checklist. FAQs and contact names/ addresses to be produced. CF and AB to give members briefing on 2nd November. County Forum (9th November) – update on National Compact

Review, followed by speed-dating for funding (key individuals from County Council and PCT about procurement). KH asked members if they had ideas for events in Compact Week to let her know.

- ◆ Grants Officers Group: has started meeting again. Duplications. Vast task – areas to be taken one at a time, starting with Advice (which will cover several areas, especially during the recession).
- ◆ Compact Policy Officer Evaluation Update: external consultant (Judith Unell) has looked at TT's role and will make recommendations for the future. She has consulted members of OVSDP and Oxfordshire County Council. Evaluation report and evaluations will soon be available.
- ◆ Compact Champions: KH and TT attended workshop from Commission for the Compact, focussing on a report detailing the benefits of having Compact Champions. There are no Compact Champions in Oxfordshire at present.

Action: KH and TT to put together a paper about Compact Champions (what they do, who they are, what are the costs/ outcomes etc.)

5) Stronger Communities Partnership (OSCA)

- ◆ Update on meeting over Stronger Communities remit (6th May): new name of OSCA (Oxfordshire Stronger Communities Alliance) agreed. There will be representation and elected members eg. Thames Valley Police on partnership. OVSDP to become OSCA as from now.
- ◆ Discussion over paper on resourcing of OVSDP/OSCA. Consideration needs to be given to funding both now and after Capacitybuilders funding comes to an end in April 2011. More work with special interest groups cannot be done on current resources.

Action: Issue to go on agenda of next LAA steering group meeting and to be revisited this time next year.

- ◆ New logo suggestions: KH to circulate round to members by email for their feedback.
- ◆ New OCC Cabinet member and membership of OSCA: there will be two elected members (one from county and one from a district council, possible representing urban and rural wards. The cabinet member for place has been replaced by Judith Heathcoate who has VCS responsibility in her portfolio. AB has corresponded with Keith Mitchell about the cabinet changes and what this means for OVSDP/OSCA. Same person for stronger communities and safer communities partnerships (Judith Heathcoat)

6) Modernisation Fund Grants Programme Update

- ◆ KH has promoted modernisation fund. OCVA acting as local delivery agent. Money from Capacitybuilders is for groups thinking of working in partnership. However, due to the funding criteria on income, many groups are not eligible. Currently, six groups are benefitting, and the deadline is Friday 17th July.

7) Economic Downturn – Local Resilience Action Plan and how to take this forward

- ◆ An event was held on 16th June promoting the modernisation fund and looking at the recession.

- ◆ Predicted cuts in public spending will affect the voluntary sector (decreased funding vs. increased demand for services). Local Resilience Action Plan will look at how to protect organisations.
- ◆ Noted that Oxfordshire has a high number of public sector employees. Therefore, whilst it is currently relatively cushioned from the recession, it will be hit harder in 2010.

Actions: KH to write Local Resilience Action Plan (BT, JW, JF to be email consultants).

BT to take forward to the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership.

8) NI 6 and NI 7 Update

- ◆ Poll has taken place for organisations listed on the Charity Commission website asking how well supported they were by statutory and voluntary sector support agencies. It was noted that, since Oxfordshire is two-tiered, people gave a middling response as they could not distinguish between the different statutory bodies they could liaise with.
- ◆ RAISE questionnaire is not robust – there were only 33 responses (due perhaps to the fact that the questionnaire was long, given with a notice period of ten days, and cut out faith communities).
- ◆ Discussion of whether to use forum events/ OCVA membership survey to gather data.
- ◆ What do we want a baseline for? ‘Thriving third sector’ – how many organisations/ workers/ how much funding/ organisations closing (facts and opinion)/ number of volunteers (becoming increasingly important).

Action: AB to take up issue of questionnaire at RAISE board meeting on Wednesday 15th July.

LC and KH to look at baseline data.

9) Voluntary and Community Sector Forums

- ◆ Changed timetable – more spaced out: October – City (9th) and Vale (1st), November – County (9th), others in February/ March 2010; Cherwell – September (Sustainable Communities) – additional event and November.

10) Business and Strategic Plan Update

- ◆ Directory of Support Services is nearly finished and will be sent to members of OVSDP upon completion.
- ◆ OCVA has received money from Volunteering England, Migration Impact Fund bid, and LSC (will be used to connect voluntary to business sector).
- ◆ MS sent a message that all was on target.
- ◆ Improving Reach progress report: working with Community Champions – away day spent brainstorming about the way forward – how to pass on information to communities. Aim to help group in Banbury develop Community Champions.

11) LAA Reward Grant

- ◆ Public Service Board wants bids in September
- ◆ Grants of £500,000 – LAA reward money to go to OSCA and distributed to organisations.
- ◆ Work is ongoing.

12) Risk and the Partnership

- ◆ Ian Mills at Oxfordshire County Council looks at risk in partnerships.
- ◆ He has offered to support OVSDP to assess risk. This has already been considered in the business plan, but it was agreed to ask him to look at this again to see if more work needed to be done.

Action: KH to approach Ian Mills.

13) Forthcoming training events

- ◆ 4th September – Cherwell Sustainable Communities.
- ◆ Capacitybuilders business plan mentions 'social enterprise' – need to broaden organisations' understanding of social enterprise. JW to offer training to OVSDP/OSCA members.
- ◆ OREC – human rights/ issues around the Compact.

Action: JW to bullet point what 'social enterprise' means.

14) Links with other networks and partnerships

- ◆ No voluntary/ community sector representative recommended on Spatial Planning Partnership. KH to check with VJ why this is the case.
- ◆ A new voluntary sector representative is recommended for the Environment and Waste Partnership.

15) Any other business

- ◆ Swine flu information sent to partnerships and emergency planning.
- ◆ BG has been elected to South East England Faith Forum. The first meeting will be 20th July and he will keep members informed.
- ◆ KH has sent survey to all to determine how OCVA is doing as lead body. Only four replies have been received.

Actions: remaining surveys to be completed and returned to KH.

16) Date of future meetings

14 October St Aldate's Room 10 – 12 pm

13 January St Aldate's Room 10 – 12 pm

Meeting closed: 4:30pm