

**Minutes of a Meeting of the External
Partnerships Select Committee held at
Surrey Heath House on 28 June 2016**

- + Cllr Paul Deach (Chairman)
- Cllr Dan Adams (Vice Chairman)

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Cllr Ian Cullen | + Cllr Robin Perry |
| - Cllr Ruth Hutchinson | + Cllr Chris Pitt |
| - Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans | Cllr Joanne Potter |
| + Cllr David Lewis | + Cllr Nic Price |
| Cllr Jonathan Lytle | + Cllr Darryl Ratiram |
| - Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper | + Cllr Ian Sams |
| + Cllr Alan McClafferty | - Cllr John Winterton |
| + Cllr Max Nelson | |

- + Present
- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Jonathan Lytle (for Cllr Dan Adams)
Cllr Ian Sams (for Cllr Katia Malcaus Cooper)

In Attendance: Cllr Colin Dougan

Guests: Arthur Birkby, Voluntary Support North Surrey
Laurence Cottis, Tringhams
Gill Gibson, Surrey Heath Age Concern
Ian Graham, Surrey Heath Age Concern
Libby Holcombe, Voluntary Support North Surrey
Suzie Tobin, Voluntary Support North Surrey
Solette Shepherdson, Voluntary Support North Surrey

1/EP Chairman's Announcements and Welcome to Guests

The Chairman welcomed Laurence Cottis, Tringhams, Arthur Birkby, Suzie Tobin, Solette Shepherdson and Libby Holcombe, Voluntary Support North Surrey, and Gill Gibson and Ian Graham, Surrey Heath Age Concern, to the meeting.

2/EP Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the External Partnerships Select Committee held on 29 March 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3/EP Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4/EP Voluntary Support North Surrey

Solette Shepherdson, Chief Executive Officer, and Arthur Birkby, Chairman, gave a presentation in respect of Voluntary Support North Surrey's work in the Surrey Heath area.

Voluntary Support North Surrey (VSNS), a registered charity limited by guarantee, provided a support service to third sector organisations across Surrey Heath and Runnymede Borough Council areas with the aim of building capacity and improving their resilience. Fifty percent of the organisation's work took place in the Surrey Heath area.

VSNS received funding from a range of sources including Surrey County Council, Surrey Heath Borough Council, Runnymede Borough Council and local Clinical Commissioning Groups. The £30,000 annual grant received by VSNS from Surrey Heath Borough Council represented approximately 8% of the organisation's budget.

A unique aspect of VSNS's relationship with Surrey Heath Borough Council was the presence of a Service Level Agreement that contained a set of objectives specific to the Surrey Heath area. Agreement of these objectives was an iterative process driven by Council officers and regular meetings took place to discuss and challenge the progress being made to achieve these objectives.

VSNS was working to reduce their deficit which currently stood at £18,000 and it was envisaged that the budget would be balanced by the end of the 2016/17 financial year. An increase in grant funding was acknowledged however it was stressed that this was negated by a reduction in the rent subsidy that the organisation received on its offices in the Ian Goodchild Centre.

Key areas of work for VSNS included developing and promoting volunteering, providing advice and guidance to the third sector on a range of subjects including governance matters and assisting with the identification of potential funding streams, provision of training opportunities and the administration of the vetting and barring service for local voluntary organisations.

82% of the groups and organisations supported by VSNS had made use of the funding advice and support services offered. These included access to the Grant Finder programme, weekly bulletins detailing any new funding streams identified, completing funding bids on behalf of organisations and proof reading funding bids before they were submitted. It was difficult to place a figure on the total amount of funding the VSNS had helped organisations raise however anecdotal evidence suggested that approaching smaller funds had a greater success rate than approaching larger national funding providers.

70% of the groups supported by VSNS have made use of the volunteer recruitment services on offer. Although the majority of people looking for voluntary work found placements without VSNS's assistance, the organisation had a good track record of success in finding voluntary placements for those with more

specific needs for example ex-offenders, job seekers and those with learning disabilities.

A Volunteer Plan had been produced to improve the recruitment and retention of volunteers by third sector groups. As part of the Plan, VSNS would work with third sector groups to improve their use of social media to raise awareness of their work and to recruit volunteers. The plan also set out VSNS's aim to help third sector groups invest more in their volunteers in order to improve volunteer retention rates.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- A requirement to produce quarterly reports for Surrey Heath Borough Council was felt to place an unnecessary constraint on resources.
- The two mobile home parks in the Mytchett area were classified as having high levels of deprivation compared to other parts of the Borough and would benefit from additional support.
- Although VSNS charged other voluntary groups rent to work from the Ian Goodchild Centre the income received did not cover the cost of the rent and service charge that VSNS had to pay to the Council.
- It was acknowledged that the organisation's lack of engagement with social media was an area that needed to be developed and work was now taking place to focus on this.
- It was suggested that Council media channels be used to help raise awareness of VSNS's work.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Consideration be given to reviewing the reporting requirements placed on Voluntary Support North Surrey to reduce pressure on resources
- ii. The use of Council communication channels to raise awareness of Voluntary Support North Surrey's work to be explored.

The Committee thanked Voluntary Support North Surrey for their update.

5/EP Tringham's Lunch Club

Lawrence Cottis, Treasurer, gave a presentation in respect of Tringhams; a group set up in 2004 to promote the welfare of the elderly within the parishes of West End, Chobham, Bisley and Windlesham.

Tringhams collected elderly residents from across the area on two days a week and brought them to the Sports Pavilion in Benner Lane where they could enjoy a freshly prepared hot lunch and a range of social activities including exercise classes and day trips. The service was currently being provided to approximately 16 clients aged between 75 and 95 years old. It was hoped that these numbers would be increased to a regular client base of 20 however the demographic of the target client group meant that the client group was not static.

Exploration of alternative funding streams had resulted in Tringhams raising an additional £9,125 during the 2015/16 financial year from a variety of sources including: the Surrey Community Fund, Surrey County Council Fund, West End Parish Council, West End Village Society and donations and legacies from clients and their families.

Arising from members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Costs were kept as low as possible however this needed to be balanced against ensuring that clients remained safe. For example, for a period a trial ran using only one mini-bus however it had proved impossible to safely transport all clients to and from the centre within the timescales required.
- Whilst reducing the number of minibuses owned by Tringhams to one would save Tringhams approximately £2,000 a year this saving would need to be offset against the costs incurred by the increase in Dial a Ride use that would be necessary.
- Eight volunteer drivers provided minibus transport for clients however more drivers were needed and Dial a Ride was being used to supplement provision.
- It was agreed that an approach for funding would be made to the West End Village Fete Committee.
- Mobility issues meant that a number of clients were unable to get in or out of cars easily and as a consequence minibuses were required in order to transport clients safely.
- Discussions had taken place with Surrey Heath Borough Council over the possibility of Tringhams buying a new minibus which would then be managed and maintained by the Council who would be able to use it on those days when Tringhams weren't. However these discussions had stalled and to date no decision had been reached on the matter.
- Tringhams had assumed responsibility for running the Bisley Butts Centre however this service had since closed.
- Tringhams was pro-active in their promotional activities and information about the services on offer had in the past been placed in village newsletters, church newsletters, parish magazines, GP surgeries in Chobham and West End and on Webcare.
- Work was underway to raise awareness of legacy giving amongst clients and their families.
- It was suggested that Council communication channels be used to encourage people to become volunteers.
- It was suggested that the Council could help facilitate discussions with Clinical Commissioning Groups to raise awareness of the organisation and the benefits that referrals to the service could have for patients.
- It was acknowledged that whilst Tringhams' constitution stated that the organisation had been set up to assist residents of a particular area this could be amended if it improved the long term viability of the organisation.
- Raising awareness of the service amongst younger people as an example of the services available for their parents could help to increase the size of Tringhams' client base.

The Committee expressed their support of Tringhams and commended them for the service that they provided.

RESOLVED that:

- i. Officers to support discussions with appropriate Clinical Commissioning Groups to raise referral rates from GP surgeries.
- ii. Work would take place to explore how awareness of Tringhams amongst the children of potential clients might be improved.
- iii. Council officers to take a proactive role in discussions on community transport options and the exploration of the wider co-ordination of transport for voluntary groups across the Borough.
- iv. The use of Council communication channels to raise awareness of Tringhams to be explored.

The Committee thanked Tringhams for their update and commended them for the work that they did.

6/EP Surrey Heath Age Concern

Gill Gibson, Charity Manager, and Ian Graham, Treasurer, gave a presentation in respect of the work of Surrey Heath Age Concern.

Surrey Heath Age Concern received a grant of £10,000 from Surrey Heath Borough Council; a figure that equated to approximately one third of the group's total budget. The charity employed three part-time members of staff working a total of 38 hours a week.

The Group's main objective was to enhance the lives of older people living in the Surrey Heath area. This was done through three main activities: a visiting and befriending service, the provision of the Rainbow Café in Camberley and Tea and Chatter sessions.

The Visiting and Befriending Service used a network of volunteers to provide companionship and reassurance to older people living in the Borough. Volunteer befrienders were carefully matched with their older person and received training before they started making visits. Volunteers were expected to make at least one one hour visit a week to the person they were matched with and visits could be made at any mutually agreed time including evenings and weekends. In addition to providing companionship, befrienders also fed any concerns that they might have back to Age Concern to ensure that problems were dealt with appropriately. The service was provided free of charge and was heavily oversubscribed.

The Rainbow Café in Camberley town centre was run by a part-time manager supported by 36 volunteers. In addition to offering snacks and drinks to the over fifties the café also provided free monthly 'Tea and Tech' sessions so that older residents could learn new computer skills. It was reported that the café currently managed to cover its costs and takings had doubled since the recent refurbishment.

In May 2015, monthly Tea and Chatter sessions were set up to enable older people to socialise on Sunday's and help counter-act loneliness. These sessions

attracted up to 45 people a month and Age Concern was working with the housing associations to make use of under-utilised communal areas in residential homes so that the scheme could be expanded.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Managing the activities of the volunteers was particularly resource intensive and the waiting list for the volunteer befriending service had been temporarily closed to new applicants to ensure that the service was provided to an appropriate standard.
- The majority of those using the Rainbow Café were in their 80s and 90s.
- It was clarified that Surrey Heath Age Concern was independent of the national Age Concern organisation.
- It was suggested that experiential marketing would help raise awareness of the services offered.
- The possibility of Age Concern using Tringhams minibuses on Sundays to transport people to its tea and chatter groups would be explored outside the meeting.

The Committee thanked Surrey Heath Age Concern for their update and commended them for the work that they did.

7/EP Committee Work Programme

The Committee received a report setting out the proposed work programme for the Committee for the coming year.

It was agreed that the accounts of those organisations supported by Surrey Heath Borough Council would be appended to reports when the organisations were invited to attend meetings.

The Committee noted the report.

Chairman