

**Gloucestershire VCS Alliance
 Strategic Board Meeting
 Wednesday 6 December 2017 10.00am-12.00pm
 Young Gloucestershire, Greyfriars, Gloucester**

MINUTES

Present:

Diana Billingham	Gloucestershire County Council	(DB)
Mike Brain (Chair)	Severn Wye	(MB)
Tracy Clark	Young Gloucestershire	(TC)
Maz Jennings	YMCA Cheltenham	(MJ)
David Owen	GFirst LEP	(DO)

Apologies:

Cordell Ray	CCP	(CR)
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In attendance:

Matt Lennard	(ML)
Jem Sweet	(JS)
Susan West	(SW)

MB welcomed DB to her first meeting of the Alliance Board. DB is now the County Council's representative for the Alliance, replacing Phillip Williams. She is Lead Commissioner (Prevention) Public Health at the County Council and also Vice Chair of Carers Gloucestershire.

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the Strategic Board meeting on 13 September 2017 were approved.

Matters arising

- ML has amended and circulated the Board's Terms of Reference. The Chair will serve an 18 month term and serve no more than two consecutive terms.
- MJ has agreed to continue as Chair of the Operational Board. ML has amended the Operational Board's terms of reference so that the Chair will also serve an 18 month term and no more than two consecutive terms.
- Funding from the CCG for 2017-18 is still to be finalised. The Alliance has issued an invoice for an interim payment until the final amount is agreed. MB is keen to get agreement for funding for three years. DB is speaking to the CCG about a joint grant to support the Alliance.
ACTION: MB has now agreed the total funding for 2017-18 with Emma Savage at the CCG and all invoices have been submitted.
- DO and CR will sign the bank form to increase MB's authorisation limit as agreed at the last Board meeting. DO felt he should no longer be a signatory on the Alliance account as most of the money is paid to GFirst. Removing DO would leave MB and CR as signatories with SW able to authorise small payments.

- The Community Engagement Officer resigned from the Alliance on 31 October 2017. The Alliance will refund £3000 to the OPCC for this quarter. The OPCC has agreed to fund the Alliance for one year from 2018-19. ML is meeting the OPCC to discuss the way forward, and proposes either to manage the work within our current capacity or to recruit again.
- It was agreed the Alliance needs firmer outputs to align its hours and costs to identify what capacity exists or is needed. Funding needs to be aligned to days to deliver outputs rather than to fund staff. This needs to be agreed by April 2018.

2. Development of Business Plan

ML has developed a draft business plan which he has circulated. It includes a roadmap on how the Alliance will work with public sector. This will be discussed at the Health and Wellbeing event on the afternoon of 6 December.

It was suggested the values should be reordered with more emphasis on independence. There should be more emphasis on the Alliance being the voice of the VCS, rather than its relationship with the public sector.

- Understanding Commissioning only has input from the public sector currently. The Operational Board had highlighted that not all VCS organisations are involved in public sector commissioning.
- Shared Training and Resources is about having a central place for all training from the sector.
- Volunteering –CCG employees have two days for volunteering and there are plans to run a skills analysis for these days to be used more effectively.
- Unlocking Expertise is about the balance between expertise and independence. The Alliance is keen to improve VCS representation at meetings and draw more on VCS expertise. ML and JS attend meetings as VCS representatives but cannot be experts in everything. It was agreed the Alliance is a voice of the VCS, it cannot represent the whole sector because views are too divergent. JS commented that agendas are not usually available far enough in advance to get wider views. The VCS should be seen as equal partners with the public sector and not attend meetings as a tick box exercise to say the VCS has been consulted.

The business plan needs to be wider than our relationship with the public sector and should reflect our independence and impartiality.

Steve Mitchell has agreed to facilitate an away day for both boards to reflect on and review the business plan in more detail.

ACTION: MB and ML to meet Steve to pursue this.

3. Alliance policies

The Board is aware that Alliance policies are not as up to date as they should be. They are planning to meet in January to analyse what exists and what is needed.

ACTION: The Board will incorporate amended policies and procedures into the business plan.

4. New Projects

a) Community Transport

ML had circulated his proposal on Community transport. Funding may be available from the Nesta Innovation Fund or Comic Relief Tech for Good; both are highly competitive. ML said he has taken this project as far as he can and needs a partner to progress his idea.

Discussions have been had with possible funders and we have identified funders that would be prepared to fund the app. We are also in discussion with District Councils to look at where would be best to run a pilot.

- **ACTION:** ML to set up a discussion in confidence for groups that may be interested in testing the feasibility.

b) VCS conference 2018

The 2018 Conference will be themed around mental health and wellbeing, covering service delivery and staff welfare. The marketplace will be dedicated to mental health providers. The Operational Board will help with shaping and delivering the event. The Big Lottery Fund is prepared to support the event but not to fund it.

ACTION: MB/ML to speak to CCG about possible funding.

ACTION: ML/MJ to ask Catherine Kevis at Gloucestershire Community Foundation if the GAVCA Legacy Fund could offer funding.

After discussion about a paid membership model, it was agreed the costs of administering this would be high and that paid membership organisations are not performing well in the current economic climate.

ACTION: SW to circulate a breakdown of the type of organisations currently signed up to the funding bulletin.

c) Training

ML is looking to create a central training portfolio, similar to the funding bulletin.

5. Information updates

a) Operational Board

MJ reported that the Operational Board met on 4 December. The Board now has plenty of expertise and knowledge with individuals who could take pressure off Alliance staff in attending meetings. The Board highlighted that there was not enough recognition for smaller VCS organisations in the roadmap. ML welcomed the Board's feedback and ideas. It was agreed that information shared at the Operational Board is not to benefit individual organisations, but for the benefit of the wider VCS.

b) Head of Operations

ML had circulated his Board report and highlighted that he is keen to establish the Funders Forum.

At a future meeting TC would like to discuss whether the Alliance has a role in helping VCS organisations realise when they have fulfilled their objectives and should close.

c) Health and Wellbeing Officer

JS reminded the Board of the joint County Council and CCG health and wellbeing commissioning event that afternoon. He is co-facilitating the Mental Health and Physical Activity forum with Active Gloucestershire. The bulk of his work is around STP priorities.

ACTION: JS to circulate his report to Board members before each meeting.

6. **Next meeting**

It was agreed to have more time between Operational and Strategic Board meetings in 2018. All updates should be available in advance with an opportunity for questions at the meeting itself.

ACTION: SW to send the minutes from the Operational Board to Strategic Board members.

Dates for the 2018 meetings are to be arranged.