

**Gloucestershire VCS Alliance  
Strategic Board Meeting  
Monday 26 March 2018 2.30-4.00pm  
Young Gloucestershire, Greyfriars, Gloucester**

**MINUTES**

**Present:**

Tracy Clark	Young Gloucestershire	(TC)
Maz Jennings	YMCA and FRP	(MJ)
David Owen	GFirst LEP	(DO)
Cordell Ray (Chair)	CCP	(CR)

**Apologies:**

Mike Brain	(MB)
------------	------

**In attendance:**

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

Cordell Ray chaired the meeting in Mike Brain's absence.

**1. Minutes and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the Strategic Board meeting on 6 December 2017 were approved.

- The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) agreed to pay the Alliance £38,000 for this financial year and the full payment has now been received.
- Steve Mitchell has now left Business in the Community for a similar role at Lloyds Bank. It was agreed the Alliance Boards did not need an away day as the business plan has been superseded by the action plan and strategy. It was agreed the action plan needs broadening to include small groups.
- SW had circulated a breakdown on the type of organisations signed up to the Funding Bulletin. She now circulates Operational Board minutes to Strategic Board members.

**2. VCSE Strategy for 2018-19**

ML explained the Alliance strategy has been completed and signed off by Gloucestershire County Council and the CCG. MB is completing the Executive Summary. The Enabling Active Communities Board will monitor progress and ML will produce a dashboard to help show this.

ML had circulated the action plan. MB has asked him to create a granular plan with a breakdown of actions and responsibilities. . At present the plan focuses on VCS engagement with the public sector and there is not enough on engagement with smaller organisations.

**ACTION:** ML to produce the more detailed action plan.

The Board appreciated the time and effort that had gone into producing the strategy and action plan and is confident the Alliance is making good progress.

### 3. Funding for 2018-19

Gloucestershire County Council and CCG have both agreed a three-year funding deal for the Alliance for 2018-2021. The position on funding from the OPCC still needs clarifying.

The Alliance will receive £58,500 (£48,000 + VAT) from Gloucestershire County Council to test the feasibility of the CARMA community transport scheme (6a below). This will focus on rural isolated younger people, rather than the elderly because of safeguarding issues. ML has submitted a bid to Voltech for the social impact project (6b below) and will hear by the end of April if it has been successful.

ML is currently undertaking three large projects and does not have time to take on more. JS has agreed to work an extra day for the Alliance and is waiting for an agreement to pay him for his additional time.

**ACTION:** TC and MB to have conversation about Alliance staff resourcing and finalise OPCC funding. TC agreed to make recommendations on staffing, particularly regarding JS's contract, within two weeks.

### 4. Alliance policies and procedures

At the last meeting the Board highlighted that Alliance policies are not what they should be. Following a meeting in January, the trustees instructed Rachel Close, as an HR consultant, to provide the Alliance with all the relevant policies and procedures to protect its responsibilities to employees and the Alliance generally.

The Board recorded its frustration that this urgent work had not yet been completed.

**ACTION:** CR will contact Rachel again to get the process moving quickly and confirm what policies she will provide. He will ask her to provide all the necessary policies and procedures by the end of April.

DO said he could recommend another consultant if the end of April deadline could not be met. The Board will need to sign off the updated policies and ensure they meet current HR and financial legislation.

### 5. Gloucestershire 2050

The Alliance attended the launch event at Cheltenham racecourse in early February. ML has been tasked with providing a VCS response to the proposals. He raised this at the recent Health and Wellbeing Forum where it was agreed would be no one VCS view. The Forum wanted to see clear aspirations such as promoting a healthier county and requested a survey not a workshop to test views.

**ACTION:** ML to recommend everyone completes the Gloucestershire 2050 consultation as individuals and Alliance will run a survey about the impact on VCS organisations.

The Board agreed it was good to have a vision for the county, but there was general scepticism about the vision and what it means. It was acknowledged Gloucestershire 2050 is about more than the six big ideas, and indeed is actively encouraging more ideas. The conversation is an opportunity for individuals and organisations to share their views about the future of the county.

## **6. Current Projects**

### **a) Community Transport (CARMA)**

ML reported the County Council is funding the feasibility of this project. The project aims to provide an innovative and flexible approach to connecting people with transport through an app with two functions; an Uber-style volunteering model and a community car pooling system. The feasibility study will look at what impact this innovative approach using app-based community transport can have for Gloucestershire.

The focus will be on connecting young people in rural areas with transport and the IT required to develop the app. There are no restrictions on how the money is spent provided the job is completed. Part of the funds will be for the Alliance and the balance used to buy in resource, particularly to develop the technology. ML has been working with Community Connexions, the biggest county provider of community transport, and Cotswold Friends which runs a rural transport scheme where people use their own cars.

DO thought a suitable app may already exist but would not be designed for our market. The Board congratulated ML on what he had achieved so far and recognises there are significant risks which the feasibility study will identify and test.

### **b) Digital e-learning and training**

The business strategy makes several references to training. Many VCS organisations do not have the time, resource or funds to attend external training. ML is developing a proposal for e-learning using a content management system to enable VCS organisations to develop and access training. Using streaming software would make training more widely available. He has applied for funding from VocTech to look at the feasibility of such a system and expects to hear the outcome by the end of April. If this application is not successful, he plans to look elsewhere.

TC said that YG currently buys training from an external provider. She was concerned about whether this proposal would ensure the training would be compliant. CR said most training at CCP is carried out face to face, as it is an opportunity to get to know staff and volunteers and introduce them to the organisation's culture.

The Board agreed to wait for the outcome of the funding application.

### **c) Crowdsolving**

ML explained this project would use an app for peer to peer for volunteering to create a more flexible way to volunteer. It is about creating an infrastructure for people to volunteer and for organisations to offer volunteering opportunities. Existing volunteer schemes such as Fair Shares or Volunteering Gloucestershire tend to take a traditional approach and are not app based.

CR said that Volunteering Gloucestershire is interested in being involved. TC wondered if something similar already exists.

It was agreed the Alliance could facilitate this project and act as brokers but would not become involved in any service delivery.

#### **d) Social Impact project**

ML explained he is working with Gloucestershire Community Foundation, Young Gloucestershire and others, on a youth social impact event on 20 April as part of the #iwill campaign. The project is about young people demonstrating the social value of actions they take, using peer pressure to change culture. For example this could be not buying plastic bottles or disposable coffee cups and demonstrating the results.

**ACTION** ML & TC to discuss at their meeting with Gloucestershire Community Foundation this week.

#### **e) VCS conference 2018**

ML said he is booking Gloucester Rugby on 10 October for a VCS event themed around mental health on World Mental Health Day. The OPCC is prepared to provide £7000 to fund the event. ML has requested support in developing the agenda.

CR and DO are taking part in a sleep out in the Shed at Gloucester Rugby on the evening of 10 October and there may be an opportunity to link the two activities.

### **Information updates**

#### **a) Head of Operations**

ML had circulated his Board report and highlighted that he is keen for JS to work for an additional day provided his contract is amended and he will be paid.

**ACTION** MB and TC to discuss Alliance resourcing (linked to action under 3 above).

#### **b) Health and Wellbeing Officer**

JS had circulated his Board report. He gave an example of where he had actively raised VCS issues at a recent Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board. This showed the benefits of being able to circulate CCG agendas in good time.

To try and establish better links between the Alliance and smaller organisations, our action plan suggests spending time in each district to make contact with grassroots organisations. To make this happen JS is proposing to visit community hubs/community centres on set days to find out more about the issues for local grassroots organisations. This fits alongside the "Know your Patch" workshops which are being held on a district basis, but not necessarily reaching all areas, particularly those at some distance from central towns.

#### **c) Operational Board**

MJ reported that the Operational Board is due to meet on 4 April. Gareth Parry has resigned from the Board as he has been promoted to a new role at Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. It is hoped to get a new representative for the VCS environmental area onto the Board.

### **7. Any Other Business**

MB reported the Alliance accounts need to be externally verified because of a change in Charity Commission requirements and were therefore late again. TC suggested Phillip Godden and Taylor could assist.

**ACTION:** ML to send the 2016-17 accounts to Patrick Forde at GFirstLEP in the first instance as he may be able to do what is needed.

**ACTION:** ML and SW to complete the 2017-18 accounts ready for verification by the end of April 2018 to avoid late submission again.

ML has spoken to Deborah Potts, the VCS representative on the GFirst LEP Board, who has agreed to use the Alliance for any messaging that needs to be shared with the VCS.

TC explained that Young Gloucestershire is carrying out work for the OPCC on 'What good looks like for young people'. She has introduced ML to Nigel Hatten, a trustee for Infobuzz, to facilitate communication on the project with the Alliance.

#### **8. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be on Monday 11 June, 10am-12pm at CCP, Royal Crescent, Cheltenham.