

**Gloucestershire VCS Alliance
 Stronger Safer Communities Forum**

**Wednesday 20 June 2018 1.45-3.45pm
 Roots Coffee and Community, 69 Alvin Street Gloucester**

MINUTES

Present:

Robin Agascar	Gay Glos
Sara Bennett	Young Gloucestershire
Lucy Lea	GOPA/Independent Consultant
Clare Mahdiyone	Stroud Valleys Project
Debbie Miles	Gloucestershire Police YST, CSE Unit
Nicola Simpson	Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust
Angela Spence	Gloucestershire Face 2 Face
Wayne Stevens (Chair)	Victim Support
Anne Young	Infobuzz

Apologies:

Farooq Ismail	2gether Trust
Angela Gilbert	GRCC
Karin Harrison	The Redwell Centre
Jessica Sherbourne	Gloucestershire Young Carers
Christine Sweet	Trust in You
Elin Tattersall	GRCC

In attendance

Hannah Clune	Prospects Services, YST
Ruth Greenwood	OPCC
Nigel Hatten	OPCC
Kezia Lane	OPCC
Matt Lennard	Gloucestershire VCS Alliance
Stacy Lewis	Prospects Services, YST
Susan West	Gloucestershire VCS Alliance

1. Welcome

Wayne Stevens welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained the Forum is for VCS organisations in Gloucestershire with an interest in community safety and justice to build mutual support and resilience.

2. Children First

Hannah Clune from the Prospects YST team outlined the Children First Initiative. In 2017 it was decided to look at managing first time young offenders under 18 in a better way. Until then young people who committed offences received a caution or went through the court system. There was no help or support to help them change their behaviour or repair harm. The Youth Restorative

Intervention(YRI) was launched in January 2018 to repair harm to the victim and reduce reoffending.

After five months the number of young people attending court has already decreased and issues are dealt with more quickly. A young person has to admit to the offence and be willing to engage in the restorative process. YST, Restorative Gloucestershire and Great Expectations are all involved. Great Expectations is made up of police, serving inmates and mentors. Offences have included violence, theft, and alcohol and drugs-related. So far the Youth Support Team has worked with 53 young people on YRIs. A victim officer contacts the victim within 2-5 days of the crime to see if they wish to take part, to date 20 victims have agreed to a restorative justice offer. At present there is no feedback from victims on how effective the process is for them. This is something the team hopes to introduce with support from Restorative Gloucestershire.

Discussion

Young people can generally have three YRIs but this is flexible. A YRI generally lasts for two months, but again this is flexible.

If a young person does not admit the offence or want to be involved, they will receive a caution or go to court. The longer a young person has already been in the criminal justice system, the less likely they are to engage.

Stroud Valleys Project is keen to offer its inter-generational project to under 24s and can take referrals. They mainly take people from Stroud but are available for referrals from a wider area provided people can get to them. Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust has opportunities across the county. Hannah said that generally it is small numbers of people involved, not large groups.

The project has been operating since the start of the year and is reviewed each month. Funding comes from different sources and Hannah does not know how long the initiative will last. However, a similar scheme in Surrey has been running since 2011.

The OPCC supports this project and wants it to become business as usual if the results are good.

Hannah stressed that YRI is not an easy option and not all young people want to be involved, but the early signs are encouraging.

3. Getting to Good Project

Nigel Hatten and Ruth Greenwood from the OPCC introduced the Getting to Good for Young People. The Commissioner's Forum had challenged the PCC on its response to a report on vulnerable children and safeguarding and wanted improvements.

The OPCC had talked to those who work with young people to discuss what actions would be effective. There was a desire to raise the profile of young people and ensure VCS views were heard.

The OPCC had looked at a child friendly Leeds model which had been operating for five years. Leeds had experienced a similar situation with a poor Ofsted report. They had tried to think from a child's viewpoint, what their priorities are and what improvements could be made. Children were put at the heart of commissioning and the aim was to make the city a positive place for young people, building links with education, the VCS and business. The Child Friendly Leeds website is at <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/childfriendlyleeds>.

There are real opportunities and challenges in Gloucestershire. The initiative will support other agendas such as ASIS and Gloucestershire 2050. There is an opportunity to raise the project of safeguarding and encourage it to be a whole community responsibility.

Ruth highlighted that are looking to engage statutory agencies and need to hear more from the VCS and young people as they develop their proposals.

Discussion

The project has been running in Leeds, a unitary authority, for five years for young people up to 18. This contrasts with Gloucestershire which has several authorities and a wish to run the initiative for those up to 25. Transport is an issue in the county, particularly in rural areas. There is a good link with Thriving Communities which is also looking at transport and social isolation, as well as Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children and Families framework.

The Forum acknowledged that engaging young people is difficult and there is no one solution. Young people need to have a voice and feel that they are being listened to in a meaningful way.

The OPCC is considering an event for key people across the county to discuss future developments. Forum members were not convinced that an event was the right approach, given the need to balance the needs of urban and rural areas. They suggested holding an event for the VCS first and then consult with young people using opportunities at events where they are. Examples suggested were Y5 and Y6 pupils, those in the restorative justice programme and those on National Citizen Service over the summer. Branding and marketing needs to be good so that people can see what the initiative is about and feel inspired to get involved.

Leeds had received £20,000 in grant funding and the rest from business. They had been able to create a grant fund for local projects.

Martin Surl is committed to the idea and the OPCC has some resource available. The OPCC is realistic about the amount of time involved when everyone is already stretched.

The proposal document for creating a Child Friendly Gloucestershire and a letter from the Police and Crime Commissioner are attached to these minutes.

4. **Round table updates**

Victim Support has received £5000 from the OPCC to run a pilot Simple Security scheme to enable tenants to feel safer in their properties. The scheme will provide door chains, door and window locks and spy holes for people who are not in a position to pay and where their landlord has no responsibility to provide these. This goes live in August and Victim Support will accept referrals from other organisations. Details will be available in the Alliance newsletter.

Infobuzz is operating in three areas: criminal justice, schools and mental health. They are working with the OPCC, Eastwood Park, alternative provision to schools for those who have been excluded, and families of those who have perpetrated crime.

Young Gloucestershire delivers services to disadvantaged young people under 25. They will be working with 1000 young people in July and August on National Citizen Service. They also work with the Prince's Trust who have good results working with young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). YG's Link in Southgate Street offers a holistic service with advice and assistance. Sara is keen to broaden its offer, especially on health and wellbeing.

VCS Alliance is organising a Mental Health conference on 10 October at Forest Green Football Club. This will be an opportunity for the voluntary sector to showcase its offer to the public sector through an exhibition and TED-style talks. The Alliance is working on a pre-feasibility study for a community transport project (known as CARMA). This is looking at another way of providing community transport using an uber-style app.

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust has community action and engagement programmes for education, wellbeing and nature. Our Bright Futures is for young people in urban areas to improve green spaces in areas of social housing. The Trust is working in Gloucester to develop wild communities with wildlife friendly areas that are better places for people to live.

Face2Face Gloucestershire is a peer mentoring support service for parents of children with additional needs. Angela highlighted the current consultation by Gloucestershire County Council on meeting the high needs challenge. The consultation is looking at the extra educational provision or 'high needs' funding for children with additional needs such as the top up funding for Education, Health and Social Care (EHC) Plans, alternative provision schools and special schools. Demand for services is increasing but funding is not, more children are being excluded or refusing to attend school. The Council wants to find ways to use the funding more effectively. As well as staff working with children, the Council is particularly keen to hear from young people and families. You can find the consultation at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/high-needs-consultation. It is open until 31 July.

Gay Glos works with young people in schools to change attitudes. They run a fortnightly youth group which has supported some young people on the fringes of anti-social behaviour. They work with Victim Support on Hate Crime and that work goes from strength to strength, raising awareness and encouraging positive behaviours.

Most of **Stroud Valleys Project's** work is on community development and education linked to the environment. They are creating a sensory garden in Stratford Park, Stroud. They host a GEM Navigator Developer for a project using the land, growing plants and running a market stall to help people into employment. They run a Wild Classrooms Schools Project. Clare encouraged everyone to look out for Stroud Festival of Nature, running until 31 August. http://www.stroudnature.org/uploads/2/0/2/1/20216191/sfn_guide_2018.pdf.

Lucy Lea is an independent research consultant, a volunteer with GOPA and a trustee of the Gloucestershire Deaf Association.

Debbie Miles is a CSE outreach worker and highlighted a CSE practice group meeting on 11 September in Gloucester.

She explained that Gloucestershire Public Protection Unit has a multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Unit. Six months ago the practice group started for practitioners who have a lead or interest in preventative and support work around CSE. It is open to those who work in the community with young people. If you would like to know more, please contact Debbie on 01452 753302 or 07816 784597 or email Debbie.miles@prospects.co.uk.

There will be more details published in the VCS Alliance newsletter.

5. **Any Other Business**

Wayne Stevens updated the Forum on the Gloucestershire Criminal Justice Board. This is a group of senior people working in the criminal justice system who meet to identify problems and issues in order to do something about them. The Board has been reconfigured and is chaired by Martin Surl. Wayne is part of a Victims and Witnesses sub-group which will hold its inaugural meeting in July to agree their terms of reference. An invitation to attend will be extended to the Gloucestershire Alliance.

Robin Agascar attends the Stronger and Safer Gloucester forum which is currently focusing on Kingsholm and Wotton. It was not known if any other Community Safety Partnerships or local stronger and safer forums were operating elsewhere.