

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMISSIONING GROUP
MONDAY 12th NOVEMBER 2007**

Attendees:

Bill Edwards (Chair) BE
Jo Charlan JC
Richard Browning RB
Denis Durnian DD
Liz Wilson LW
Paula Boshell PB
Moir Blood MB

Apologies:

Laura Breslin; Mark Powell; Jo Farrington; Councillor Jean Stretton; Jonathan Yates

NB: The group on this occasion was not quorate, therefore any recommendations made are for members of the full group to ratify via e-mail by Wednesday 21st November. See attached notes.

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

Update on commissioned activities

Database

RB reported that feedback had been received from ERS regarding the database. Only 100 responses have been received out of 750 and therefore it would be difficult to launch the database, based on this figure. Currently, ERS are following non-returns via telephone and email. Some feedback from groups has been they have completed similar information for VAO and that pre paid envelopes had not been included and that this would affect response levels. The group requested that RB follow this up. LW reported that she had received a questionnaire in the name of someone else.

RB suggested that given the low response rate, that the launch of the database be delayed, perhaps to coincide with the end of the VCFP activity and the remainder of the project time be spent following up responses. PB stated the contract for the VAO database is coming to a close and this could assist in merging the two databases. The VAO database is up to date and if both databases are similar, there should be an opportunity to merge the fields.

Action: RB to arrange meeting for PB, BE and JS.

The group recommended the following:

- To remove the launch milestone from ERS contract and concentrate upon increasing the return rate.
- For a working group of RB/BE/Cllr Stretton to work with VAO to clarify issues and identify a solution

- That an amount of funding, not exceeding £5,000, is ring fenced for a launching the database during early 08

Actions: RB to check with ERS regarding the issue of pre paid envelopes and follow up the report that questionnaires went out with incorrect contact details.

Additional agenda item - Report of the Oldham Partnership Co-ordinator

A report was presented to the group outlining a series of activities to be carried out by the Oldham Partnership relating to consultation on the Corporate Plan and the Local area Agreement. The report requested that the CECG contribute £7,800 towards the activities. The group agreed to the request on the provision that the consultation process e.g., possible survey questions, places adequate emphasis upon the importance of engagement.

The group recommended the following:

That a contribution of £7,800 be made to assist in the consultation and engagement activities relating to the Corporate Plan and Local Area Agreement.

Finalising VCFP infrastructure commission

RB introduced this item and declared an interest in the proposed activity. PB gave an overview of the VCFP proposal submitted and PR & RB left the room for the group to hold a discussion. The group agreed that there was not sufficient information to establish what the funding would be paying for. The VCFP are asked to produce the following:

1. Targets for increasing the VCFP membership
2. Calendar of training events including numbers
3. Identify mechanisms of influence with associated plan and measurable outcomes
4. Communications plan
5. Forward strategy

Staffing levels and costings for the activity will be influenced by measures of success and the VCFP would need to account for actual spend. DD stated that job descriptions and a timetable are required for the activities.

Action: PB to supply information relating to points 1-5 by Friday 16th November.

Finalising infrastructure commission number 2

The group agreed to commence with commission 2 and requested DD to draft a brief and specification.

“Develop and implement a range of effective mechanisms to enable all VCF organisations in the Borough to have access to opportunities to undertake the delivery of LAA commissioned activity.”

The work should include benchmarking from other authorities.

Actions: DD to draft brief and distribute to members.

Discussion of volunteer commissions

The group discussed the proposals set out in the Oldham Volunteering Development discussion paper and agreed the following recommendations:

- Developing and promoting volunteering in the public sector should be an area of focus, using OMBC as an initial pilot. This commission will require the development of a strategy, policies and forward plan. The volunteer pilot will develop a volunteer programme that will create new volunteer opportunities and volunteers. RB to seek agreement from OMBC to be included in the work.
- The commissioning of a piece of action research using innovative outreach work and offering innovative volunteer opportunities to people facing barriers to participation. This activity will investigate the reason for individuals of target groups participating in volunteering opportunities and the reasons for non-participation.

Sustaining current Oldham Volunteer Centre activities and further research were not discussed in-depth and will be an agenda item on the next CECG meeting.

Actions: RB to consult with OMBC senior management regarding participation in the volunteer pilot scheme.

Community Engagement Strategy

RB reported that the Community Engagement Strategy had been agreed at the Oldham Partnership Steering Group (October) with the action plan to be further developed.

Any other business

There was no other business to discuss.

Date of next meeting

The date for the next meeting was not agreed, however the Chair suggests Wednesday 5th December, 3-5:15pm. Venue to be arranged.