

# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMISSIONING GROUP

## MONDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2007

### **Attendees:**

Bill Edwards  
Mary Murphy  
Jo Charlan  
Denis Durnian  
Jane Hughes  
Moiria Blood  
Liz Wilson  
Mark Powell  
Yvonne Burtonwood  
Cllr Jean Stretton  
Jo Farrington

### **Apologies:**

Tim Mitchell

### **Minutes and matters arising**

Amendments to previous minutes

Target and indicators in the Economic block were not as strong or useful as they could be.

**Action:** Bill to go to support team to progress this.

### **Voluntary Action Oldham**

MM responded to Paula Boshell (PB) regarding the group's unease about VAO refusing the offer of interim funding until June. PB asked to be sent any tendering documents relating to community engagement. MM advised that these would be advertised publicly when they are ready.

### **Inter Faith Development Project**

At the previous meeting, group members had asked about some queries regarding the Inter Faith Development Project. Jo C reminded the Group of the points that were raised:

- That the groups of people the project worked with were perhaps easy wins and that more challenging groups were not being approached.
- Some concerns around cost and supporting the project, rather than the outputs.
- Additional information should be sought on what their outputs are.
- Possible duplication of other groups' activity.

- How is the project being matched?

Denis said that he had sent a delivery schedule to all recommissioned projects and that the queries stated will be answered by this, rather than contacting the project manager separately.

### **Report of Unit Head, Diversity and Cohesion**

Mary outlined the main points of the report, what had been recommissioned and priorities identified by the strategy. Four proposals were put to the group around what should be commissioned.

Jo F questioned whether the draft strategy was wide enough and if it works towards the engagement elements of the Community Cohesion Strategy. Specifically, section 3.1 does not specify how broad the Community Cohesion aims are and that the vision within the strategy should be broadened. Mary stated that the task of the group is to commission activity, which can be done alongside changes to the strategy. Bill suggested that perhaps the vision could be broadened outside of the meeting.

**Action:** Bill to discuss a redraft of the vision with Jo F and circulate and agree with Mary.

### **Discussion of activities to be commissioned**

The following four proposals were discussed:

1. Mapping exercise to be commissioned immediately with a six month deadline and an upper value of £40,000

Mark discussed with the group that Voluntary Action Manchester had an electronic database, which could be used in identifying groups to work with and that this had proven useful for work that he had done. The group decided that this could be a useful tool for Oldham to have and agreed that it should be commissioned. The database could also hold details of community development workers and the areas they work in.

**Agreed:** that a database should form part of the work commissioned. Mary to speak with VAO regarding how we can build on the database that is already there and produce a specification for this.

2. Development of collective community infrastructure capacity, to be commissioned immediately, with an upper value of £100,000

The group discussed the idea of professional community development worker training, particularly in relation to incorporating community cohesion objectives. There may be issues around getting employers on board to encourage development workers to carry out the training. Also, development workers and groups may choose not to take up the training, as the area they work in is so small and work to low level objectives.

Yvonne highlighted that level 3 community development training was provided by Lifelong learning but had ceased and such created barrier for people wishing to progress to level 4 and onwards.

**Action:** Cllr Stretton to raise this issue with the relevant Service Director.

**Agreed:** That level 3 community development training should be developed as part of this block of work. Mary to draft an outline specification for this piece of work.

3. Development/co-ordination of volunteering activity across the borough, to be commissioned immediately, with an upper value of £75,000

It was noted that VAO have similar work ongoing by means of the volunteer shop. The group discussed ideas around getting people ready to be volunteers. For example, by means of accreditation and CRB checks. As work has already begun on this, it was decided that commissioning should be based around promotion of volunteering and building up the existing volunteer network.

**Agreed:** The Volunteer shop would deliver some of this work, but not all of it. That some of the money should go to volunteer organisers and that some money should go on publicity.

4. 'On-the-ground' activities to be commissioned as a rolling programme throughout the year, with an upper value of £60,000.

**Agreed:** The group discussed the type of work that should take place and agreed that it would be more valuable to base this around youth engagement activity, building the skills of younger people and positive reward schemes that make a lasting change.

**Action:** Mary will write up business specifications and send them to the CEC Group for comments.

Group members to come forward with any relevant proposals.

### **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May**, 9-11am, Members' meeting room, Civic Centre.