

# Hounslow Community Network

*Hounslow's voluntary sector voice*

HCN General Meeting

14.00-16.00 ON MONDAY 6 MARCH 2017 AT MONTAGUE HALL, 30 MONTAGUE ROAD HOUNSLOW, TW3 1LD

**Attendees:** Debbie Brenner (DB) Chaired, Iain Elliott (IE) took minutes. For full list see Appendix 1

Items/Discussion	Action Points
<p><b>1) WELCOME, MINUTES AND APOLOGIES</b>            Debbie Brenner (DB) HCN Chair welcomed those in attendance. An apology was noted from Henry Gewanter.             Previous minutes were APPROVED.</p>	
<p><b>2) HCN MEMBERSHIP</b>            Iain Elliott (IE) updated on 2 new HCN members since the last General Meeting.            Yarrow Housing and Afghanistan and Central Asian Association.             These new members were AGREED            Total HCN Membership is now: 320</p>	
<p><b>3) NEWLY ARRIVED COMMUNITIES</b>            Aine Hayes from CPU at LBH presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hounslow council are committed to accepting 10 Syrian refugee families and the Home Office has asked them to have a resettlement programme in place</li> <li>• They are looking at providing a range of support that families need, however it is hard to predict the level of support</li> <li>• Support could require arranging visas, entitlements to work, housing, benefits, helping them to apply for indefinite leave to remain, <b>help registering with GP's</b>, awareness of local services, using oyster cards and finding language classes.</li> <li>• The main problem is finding affordable accommodation for the families so they are looking for landlords to rent at local housing allowance rates</li> <li>• The refugee families will be in the borough for 5 years and they are hoping that by the end of the first year that they will be able to live without formal Council support.</li> </ul> <p>Tom Gillam from Friends of Faith presented on the Refugee Welcome Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The group has met three times and has 80 people signed up and came out of Hounslow Friends of Faith. It is modelled on international best practice.</li> <li>• He said that they know that there is accommodation available in neighbourhoods and they are co-ordinating a group of people to provide support,</li> <li>• The group has committees on housing, fundraising, education and employment and work is delegated to them.</li> <li>• Rent is guaranteed for two years with good tenants receiving support.</li> <li>• He said he had been thrilled by the level of support in Hounslow.</li> </ul> <p>If you are interested in providing accommodation please contact <a href="mailto:Aine.Hayes@hounslow.gov.uk">Aine.Hayes@hounslow.gov.uk</a></p>	
<p><b>4) HOUNSLOW COUNCIL DIGITAL STRATEGY AND NEW CIVIC CENTRE</b>            Susan Austin from Hounslow Customer Services presented on Council plans to provide services online and on the new Civic Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They want to get online for self-service but are not closing all channels</li> <li>• They have launched a new website where people can create their own personal account similar to online shopping</li> <li>• This will enable people to request services and get updates on their request</li> <li>• It also has a feedback button allowing people to give feedback on the new site,</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They have added more new pages and volunteers tested the site before the launch</li> <li>• The website is easy to use on a tablet or mobile phone</li> <li>• The new civic centre is much smaller, so it is important to get people online,</li> <li>• The new telephone system recognizes dialects and inflections,</li> <li>• They are looking at the phone system to have speech recognition, so that it picks up key words.</li> <li>• Footfall has been declining at the civic centre</li> </ul> <p>Richard Eason asked what had happened to the old VCS directory and Susan replied that she will have a look for it.</p> <p>Richard Foote asked about problems linking to secondary sites which were accessible through the old site which is no longer available. Aine said she will speak to the coms team about it.</p>	
<p><b>5) HOUNSLOW VCS SURVEY</b></p> <p>John Wyman-White from Hounslow CPU presented on key findings from the latest Council VCS Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This was the fourth annual survey looking at the state of the sector.</li> <li>• This year was the largest response rate at 16% due to an amended format with lots of open questions.</li> <li>• It provides detailed information they can use when support the sector by focusing on trends of the last few years.</li> <li>• They are developing a more partnership based system in the last year, working with the HCN Exec to produce a new Compact and Thriving Communities Strategy</li> <li>• The survey found that health was the sector with the most number of groups</li> <li>• There has been a large increase in organisations supporting community cohesion and volunteering</li> <li>• There has been an increase in awareness of what the VCS does and what is done by the BMER sector.</li> <li>• Challenges include taking on more volunteers and finding new funds,</li> <li>• There is more partnership working and sharing premises and knowledge</li> <li>• 60% of respondents use the Hounslow Hub website</li> </ul> <p>They asked for groups' best achievements and John thought this showed impressive work. Andy asked that they extract these achievements and put in a separate document to show <b>the 'value of the voluntary sector'</b></p> <p>The full report is available here:  <a href="http://democraticservices.hounslow.gov.uk/documents/s131493/Appendix%20A%20-%20VCSE%20Survey%202016%20Findings%20Report.pdf">http://democraticservices.hounslow.gov.uk/documents/s131493/Appendix%20A%20-%20VCSE%20Survey%202016%20Findings%20Report.pdf</a></p>	
<p><b>6) VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING IN HOUNSLOW</b></p> <p>Debbie informed that HCN reps would have a meeting with the Council Chief Executive</p> <p><u>Further potential reductions in the Council VCS grants budget for 2018/19:</u></p> <p>The Council is considering further £160,000 cuts in VCS budgets in 2018/19. Andy stressed that under the Compact the Council would <b>need to give 3 months'</b> notice on any future cuts and consult the VCS. He thought this was a very serious issue as the Council was facing massive funding pressures.</p> <p><u>Review of current criteria and priorities for Council grants</u></p> <p>The CPU be carrying out consultation on priorities for future grants.</p> <p><b>Note</b> : there will be a presentation by the CPU on the review of criteria and priorities for Council grants at the HCN General Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June.</p>	

<p><u>Reductions in the Council youth services budget</u></p> <p>The Council had received large numbers of responses and the Council Cabinet would be reviewing these responses</p> <p>Ken Attwell said that Scouts groups had still not received a response over rents and leases on their buildings.</p> <p>Councillor Richard Foote stressed that concerns over buildings needed to rest with the Council Property Department. Andy said that the Scouts which had been raising this issue for over a year with both the Council Leader and the Chief Executive.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The Council has now agreed to commission out most in-house youth services</p> <p>The bidding spec should be available in September. Andy has requested they hold a bidders event so VCS groups can raise questions or comments on the spec</p> <p>A lot more detailed information will be available at the HCN General Meeting on 15 June</p> <p><u>Hounslow Future in Mind programme</u></p> <p>Andy said that under the Future in Mind programme which aimed to improve health services for Children and Young People Hounslow Council was receiving £430,000 for each of the next three years. They have agreed to commission £20,000 via the VCS with a proposal deadline of 20<sup>th</sup> March. <b>Note:</b> Three bids were received for this with funding potentially allocated to each of them.</p> <p><u>Council review of community centres and community buildings:</u></p> <p>Councillor Richard Foote said they were looking at the provision of sensible leases. It was AGREED that when the Council has finished its review HCN will ask to meet to discuss the proposals.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> HCN has written to the Council Lead Officer requesting overall information on the community buildings review and a meeting with HCN</p> <p><u>Hounslow External Funding Action Plan</u></p> <p>There will be a workshop between Council Departments and VCS reps</p> <p><u>Workshop on areas where VCS delivery could help the Council make savings</u></p> <p>Andy informed that the VCS Efficiency Survey would be coming out the following week and he thought it would be a good method for groups to exchange ideas. There will be a HCN Service Ideas workshop on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2-5pm at Isleworth Public Hall</p> <p>John Cooper asked if the Council would be commenting on areas where the VCS could deliver more efficiently. Councillor Richard Foote replied that they would keep an open mind.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> The Service Ideas Workshop has now taken place</p> <p>26 service ideas were submitted, though many were similar and could be combined into bigger proposals</p> <p>The next step will be for the Exec to have a small Panel to review and agree around 8 more fully worked up proposals to submit to the Council</p>	
<p><b>7) NEW HCN 12 MONTH WORK PLAN</b></p> <p>Richard Eason thought that the primary aim of HCN was to provide a local VCS voice</p> <p>The 12 month work plan was AGREED.</p>	

## 8) AOB

Eamon Rooke informed that Volunteering Hounslow was delivering anew Help your Health programme in the borough and asked for groups that had volunteering opportunities for people with mild to moderate long term health conditions to get in touch with him, his email address is [Eamon.Rooke@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:Eamon.Rooke@groundwork.org.uk)

Philip Doyle said he had joined the CPU to work on community cohesion and that he would like to speak to people about the topic. His email address is [philip.doyle@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:philip.doyle@hounslow.gov.uk)

Mel Collins said that the tenants forum AGM would be on 30<sup>th</sup> March and guest speakers included Deputy Borough Police Commander, Raj Kohli.

Hannah Philips talked about the Challenge which delivers the National Citizen Service in Hounslow. They are looking for organisations to partner with to offer 4 week volunteer programmes for 16/17 year olds during July and August. They are also looking for Dragons Den judges. For more information contact Hanna on 07908 948773 or [hanna.Philips@the-challenge.org](mailto:hanna.Philips@the-challenge.org)

David Williams from the Hounslow Council Adult Mental Health team informed that they were starting a mental health drop in at the Meadows Estate 10-1pm from 16<sup>th</sup> March with mental health social workers, this is a pilot focusing on the estate before scaling up.

Ciaran Biggins talked about a new employment support project funded by the national lottery supporting people with hoarding disorders. Get in touch with him via [ciaranbiggins@mindfood.org.uk](mailto:ciaranbiggins@mindfood.org.uk)

## **HCN MEETING PROGRAMME 2017 -PLEASE PUT THESE DATES IN YOUR DIARIES**

### HCN Executive Board

- Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September, 10 – 12, Can Mezzanine, Conference Room A & B
- Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November, 10 – 12, Can Mezzanine, Conference Room A & B

### HCN General Meeting

- Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June, 6 – 8, London Museum of Steam and Water, Brentford
- Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December, 10-12, Heston and District Community Centre, Vicarage Farm Road, Heston, Hounslow, TW5 0EE

### Annual Conference

- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November, 9:30-14:00, Isleworth Public Hall

## Appendix 1 – Attendee List

Name	Organisation
Aine Hayes	LBH
Andy Roper	HVSSS
Anne Urhoghide	Anne Shine Support
Beverley Fyfe	Age UK
Christine Hay	U3A
Ciaran Biggins	Mind
Debbie Brenner	Hounslow Friends of Faith
Eamon Rooke	Volunteering Hounslow/Groundwork
Fi Budden	Bridgelink Centre/ All Souls Ivybridge

Hanna Phillips	The Challenge Network
Iain Elliott	HCN
Ian Ross	Outside Chance
Susan Austin	LBH
John Cooper	Hounslow Pensioners Forum
John Seear	DNH
John Wyman-White	LBH
Ken Attwell	TGU Scout District
Mel Collins	Tenants Forum
Michael Bagg	LBH
Peter Blake	Hounslow Community Transport
Philip Doyle	LBH
Richard Eason	Activebase
Richard Foote	LBH
Roger Smith	Hounslow COPD Support Group
Sally Malit	Speak Out in Hounslow
Tom Gillam	Hounslow Friends of Faith
David Williams	LBH

### Apology List

Name	Organisation
Henry Gewanter	Chiswick Horticultural & Allotments Society & Friends of Chiswick Health Centre
Hussein M Hassan	ILAYS