

**Minutes of the VCSF Management Committee
Meeting held on 22nd June 2009 at 2pm
At Ashton House**

Present:

John Taylor(JT)	Cheshire Neighbours
Tracey Langston (TL)	CNVA – minute taker
Ray Stafford(RS)	Parkinsons' Society
Andreas Weisner(AW)	Cheshire East
Wendy Gjerstad (WG)	CNVA
Val Butler (VB)	DRE
Bill Gregory (BG)	Samaritans
Helen Aspden (HA)	NSPCC
Peter Speed (PS)	YMCA

Apologies:

Tina Jones	CNBC
Jane Whetnall	Cheshire Academy
Amy Jones	CAB Advice Project

	Minutes	Action
1.	Welcome: JT opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted	
2.	Minutes of the last meeting: Minutes accepted as a true record of the last meeting. Proposed RS accepted VB.	
3.	Matters Arising: RS asked if the card had been sent to Yvonne Partridge to tell her that the VCSF were thinking about her in her time of illness – TL confirmed this had been actioned.	
4.	July Forum: TL summarised the reason for the July Forum, to allow the VCSF members to be updated on the Congress and LAP work and have the opportunity to contribute to the future development of both. TL circulated the agenda and all supported the Forum. VB asked how groups who were unable to attend the meeting would be consulted, TL advised that she was hoping to summarise the event in the August newsletter which would include details of how to contribute thoughts and comments on the Congress structure and the LAPs.	
5.	Autumn Forum: TL advised the group that work and planning for the October Forum was still continuing however owing to the July Forum being organised at such short notice, this had taken up the majority of TL'S VCSF time and she would start picking up	

	the planning for the October event once July was out of the way.	TL
6.	<p>Congress structure: TL circulated the Congress Structure proposal document which had been put forward to the Congress Committee. TL updated the group on the changes to the original agreed structure, now the group is made up of geographical representation but also reps from communities of interest. To date a rep from Children & Young People has been co-opted, as has a rep from the Rural Networks and a rep from Learning, Skills and Economic Development. Since the last Congress meeting WG has also identified a rep from the BME networks and Environmental networks – these will be co-opted at the next Congress meeting – 16th July 2009 – 1.30pm at Hope Street, Sandbach.</p> <p>VB advised that The Cheshire Centre for Independent Living was keen to be represented on the Congress steering committee – they have over 1000 users and cover mental health, children and disability. Contact Lynn Morgan to discuss further – TL to coordinate.</p>	TL
7.	<p>Any other business: PS fed back to the group on the Crewe LAP meeting – the first meeting was held on 19th May, and plans are to hold meeting every 6 weeks. The next meeting is planned for 30th June. The first meeting was looking at the Crewe area and a discussion took place about where it sits with regards to other areas. Statistics are being collated on the area and communication channels, to cascade information and seek views, have been identified. The VCS is in a strong position with regard to the communication channels that already exist through the VCSF and other Third Sector working. There will need to be more detailed work around how the Business and Private Sectors can be engaged. The priorities of the old LSP were very much focussed on the Super Output areas – the new LAP seems to be looking at the whole community rather than focusing on small pockets of deprivation. All sectors were represented at the first LAP except for the Business Sector; PS strongly recommended that the Chamber of Commerce be invited to attend.</p> <p>WG reported that the LSP Executive meeting had looked at how the LSP was going to impact on neighbourhoods through the LAPs etc.</p> <p>The proposal presented to the LSP Executive by WG, on behalf of Congress, was well received. Russ Glennon sees Congress as a project of the CVS – that is with CVS as a supporting role at arms length. The group were very</p>	

positive about funding but Russ Glennon suggested that the whole of the LSP Exec support the proposal rather than just Cheshire East. A suggestion was made about the secondment of a member of staff to Congress from Cheshire East; WG knocked this back saying that this could cause the sector issues with independence. WG/TL produced a breakdown of the £40k requested to support Congress, this will be circulated at the next Congress meeting.

PS supported WG that the independence of the VCS was important when considering a secondment. A key issue for the VCS is how it maintains its funding as well as social integrity.

WG advised the group that the LSP Exec had been considering the impact of the recession – WG had asked them to remember the impact the recession will be having on the VCS. For example CAB will have been dealing with recession caused enquiries as may Samaritans. Crewe & Nantwich Volunteer Centre has seen a huge increase in the number of people being made redundant who are seeking volunteer opportunities. Many of these potential volunteers are looking for short term placements; the challenge is to find ways for the VCS to harness this short term resource. CNVA has 2 new development workers starting in August – their role will be to work across Cheshire East, improving volunteer user organisations infrastructure and policy base. In addition they will be looking for ways to make the best use of the short term volunteer work force that is becoming available.

In a recent study by Voluntary Sector North West it is estimated that £360 million has been levered into the VCS in Cheshire East through contracts, grants and other income streams. This figure is likely to be significantly lower in the future owing to the recession, but at a time when demand for services from the VCS is going to increase.

WG also advised the group that the LSP Exec had been looking at an accessibility paper – in this there had been mention of older people and people disadvantaged through income but no mention of disability or health. WG had advised the LSP Exec that these areas needed to be considered. WG stated that it was of key importance that the sector gets to see the LSP Exec documents prior to the meetings and feeds back their comments and issues to Sue Pattinson for her to take forward.

RS commented that he was pleased to see the VCSF action plan up to date and on target.

VB asked if anyone had attended any of the LinK meetings

	– she had attended the one in Nantwich run by the Ambulance Service. 8 people attended the meeting. VB reported that the publicity for the Link events doesn't seem to be working well.	
8.	Date of next meeting: Wednesday 22 nd July 2009 10am	All