

**FAIRNESS COMMISSION**

**6.00pm 26 NOVEMBER 2015**

**MOULSECOOMB COMMUNITY HUB NORTH**

**NOTES OF MEETING**



**Present:** Commissioners: Vic Rayner (Chair, CEO, Sitra), Wednesday Croft (Youth Mayor), Martin Harris (Managing Director, Brighton & Hove Bus and Coach Company), Ann Hickey (General Manager, East Sussex Credit Union), Dr. Rhidian Hughes (CEO, Voluntary Organisations Disability Group), Imran Hussain (Director of Policy, Rights & Advocacy, Child Poverty Action Group), Sally Polanski (Chief Executive, Brighton & Hove Community Works), Bill Randall (Writer, Journalist and Housing Consultant), Dr. Katie Stead (GP and Clinical Lead for Public Health and for Locally Commissioned Services and Quality for Primary Care), Rachel Verdin (Organiser, GMB) and David Wolff (Director, Community University Partnership Programme).

**Apologies:** Dan Shelley (Vice Principal, Sussex Coast College Hastings).

**1 INTRODUCTION FORM THE CHAIR**

1.1 The Chair gave introductions and provided an overview of the work of the Commission.

**2 DEVELOPING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE  
- SPEAKER: WARREN CARTER (THE BEVY, MOULSECOOMB)**

2.1 The Commission heard evidence from Warren Carter in relation to the community pub project, the Bevy. The Commission also watched a short video on the progress of the project.

2.2 In response to questions and in general discussion the following points were made:

- There were 12 people on the management committee, and a core of loyal customers. The pub was hoping that a member of the older person's tea club would come forward to serve as treasurer.
- The advice from the Council had been wrong at points which had made the project much more challenging at times. Meeting with other co-operative pubs had been extremely helpful to share information.
- It had taken approximately five years to open the pub; some of the best events for helping it become part of the local community were: the older person's club, the garden fair and the children's Halloween party.
- To better manage the risk in the early stages it would have helped to have more business minded people on board from the beginning as many of those involved were community activists; this would have also helped to get a stronger grasp of the financial aspects. Speaking to a similar project in the city, the Exeter Street Hall, had also been helpful. Some form of pan-Sussex team could also assist with such work across the wider area.

2.3 The Commission thanked Mr. Carter for his evidence and responses to questions.

### **3 DEVELOPING SERVICES IN COMMUNITIES - SPEAKER: PAT WELLER (HANGLETON AND KNOLL PROJECT)**

3.1 The Commission heard evidence from Pat Weller in relation to developing services in communities.

3.2 In response to questions and in general discussion the following points were made:

- It was important to ensure that groups were able to support volunteers.
- Community development was hugely important in this work, and the impact of not having it would be significant as communities were very different to how they were when the project was set up 40 years ago.
- Young people came into volunteering through the Youth Service and many were able to further themselves through volunteering.
- The next few years were going to be challenging for charities and this would have a knock on effect as the demand for many of their services were likely to increase. Using local schools as community asset was a good idea, and this needed to be recognised by the Council.
- It was important to discuss with and utilise the knowledge of local people in any community venture, particularly the proposal around community hubs. These were the individuals with the local expertise and would be helpful in ensuring the success of such projects.

- It was important to keep volunteers interested and supported; volunteers that felt valued and found the work enjoyable were much more likely to stay on.

3.3 The Commission thanked Mrs Weller for her evidence and responses to questions.

#### **4 VOLUNTEERING STRATEGY - SPEAKER: ALISON MARINO (COMMUNITY WORKS)**

4.1 The Commission heard evidence from Alison Marino in relation to the volunteering strategy.

4.2 In response to questions and in general discussion the following points were made:

- There were some roles that were not suitable for volunteers (such as acute care giving), but the more important factor to consider was how volunteers were supported.
- Figures showed there was a very real interest in volunteering from young people and 44% of queries, in recent years, had been from people under 25. Volunteering was also about personal satisfaction and a sense of meaning; there was a willingness to diversify the volunteering programme, but the block to this was the cost and time to make this actually happen.
- In relation to referral routes through volunteering this went back to investment that was required across the pathways, it was vital to have the opportunities to access them and more were needed across the pathways.
- In relation to savings this did not likely come in isolation from investment, but there could be more creative work about how the impact was valued.
- There was already infrastructure in place to help ensure groups were able to access the correct advice, and Community Works provided brokerage across the services under their umbrella, but the Council could assist in terms of investment to link up with the other partner organisations they worked with.

4.3 The Commission thanked Ms Marino for her evidence and responses to questions.

#### **5 BUILDING RESILIENCE - SPEAKER: PETER HUNTBACH (OLDER PERSONS HOUSING MANAGER - BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL)**

5.1 The Commission heard evidence from Peter Huntbach in relation to building resilience.

5.2 In response to questions and in general discussion the following points were made:

- The model described in the presentation could easily be transferable to other older people's schemes; there was also the opportunity that changing the culture of schemes could impact wider changes for residents. The ideal would be a self-governing community, with more empowered residents and less Council resource.

- The threat to this work was whether there would be the funding available in the future to deliver community based work.
- This kind of work could be a base for wider community activities; this took the pressure off the health service.
- The service redesign had also included a change to the name which had been driven by the residents.
- There was proof that the approach of spending on prevention worked, but there were challenges about transferring funds to undertake this work.
- It was important to consider the value this work brought to the rest of the city, particularly around the reduction of demand in adult social care.
- There were concerns that the evidence base was not consistent, and more work was needed to have a citywide evidence base.

5.3 The Commission thanked Mr Huntbach for his evidence and responses to questions.

## **6 COMMUNITY ACTION CASE STUDIES** **- SPEAKER: SAM WARREN (BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL)**

6.1 The Commission heard evidence from Sam Warren in relation to community action case studies.

6.2 In response to questions and in general discussion the following points were made:

- The service worked to undertake outcomes based monitoring; this was not always easy to, but they also considered change over time as well as case based studies. It was acknowledged that more refining could be done to this work, but it could be difficult to measure the value of building capacity.
- Further work could be undertaken across the organisation to empower managers to take decision in their own right. This kind of message was currently being promoted through staff roadshows.
- There was a great deal of expertise within the Council to serve as a broker, but the organisation needed to be less siloed; the resource was there but it needed to be better organised.
- In relation to the concept of 'resident defined outcomes' many of these testimonials had been heard by the commission that evening. Residents would define a strong and active community as a success; however, the Council had not specifically asked communities what they would consider to be the measure of success.
- The issue of 'siloing' was not such as issue in the partner organisations that the Council needed to work with. There was a very strong collaboration with the

Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and health partners, as well as good work with Police partners.

6.3 The Commission thanked Ms Warren for her evidence and responses to questions.

## **7 SUMMARY**

7.1 In summary of the session the Chair made the following points:

- Communities wanted and needed different working relationship with residents; this was critical to strengthening communities.
- There were committed Officers and members of the public; their excellent work needed to be communicated to other groups to show what was possible.
- Some important terms that had been heard that evening included: asset based approach; leadership (leadership contribution to fairness) and volunteering in the context of social cohesion.
- The importance of working with the resources and expertise that was already in place.

7.2 The Chair thanked the Commission, speakers and other attendees and closed the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9.00pm