

**Cumbria Third Sector Network
Executive Meeting 1 April 2014
Minutes**

Present: Will Williams (Chair), Andy Beeforth (Deputy Chair), Sonia Mangan (Action for Health – Older People; Health and Wellbeing Board), Peter Smith (Transport), Jane Gibson (Culture), Nick Kennon (Safer Communities), Cath Clarke (Children and Young People), David Blacklock (HealthWatch), Martin Telford (Advice and Information), Rob Randell (Economy and Enterprise), Jozi Brown (Cumbria Compact), Helen Boothroyd (Faith), Karen Bowen (Generic Third Sector Support), Steve Lax (Action for Health – General – from Item 4 onwards)

Present: Carolyn Otley (Network Coordinator – Minutes); Conway Stewart (Cumbria County Council – Item 16 only)

1. Introductions and Apologies

Nick Kennon was welcomed as the chair of (and newly appointed representative from) the Cumbria Safer Future Communities Network.

Apologies were received from Stephanie Crosthwaite (Children and Young People), Lesley Dixon (Housing), Becky Underwood (Sport and Physical Activity), Lorraine Smyth (Rurality), Judith Holmshaw (Volunteering).

2. Minutes of meeting held 7 January 2014

The minutes of the January meeting were accepted with no amendments.

3. Matters Arising

The written “Matters Arising” paper was presented. The following points were discussed in more detail:

Environment network/representative – Will has been away for most of the period since the last meeting, so has not yet had a chance to follow up – will now do so.

C3C – Steve Lax was not present, so Nick Kennon (Company Secretary for C3C) gave a brief update. C3C is fully independent, and will manage its own finances, from 1 April; Cumbria CVS will continue to programme manage the NCI programme. C3C will hold its AGM in the autumn, review how the first 6 months of independence and plan for the next 2-3 years. Nick will be working to build relationships between the consortium and other third sector organisations, and is happy to be contacted directly if people have questions. It was suggested that it would be very helpful to have a short written summary of the new arrangements.

ACTION 1: Nick/Steve to distribute a summary of the new C3C arrangements

Action 7 (Third Sector involvement in the Health and Care Alliance) – David reported that the Health and Care Alliance was an informal (unconstituted) group of the chief executives and medical directors of the CCG & NHS Trusts, plus CCC and HealthWatch. A

programme board (with Terms of Reference) has been set up to oversee work on developing services in North Cumbria (one already exists for the Better Care Together work in South Cumbria); at the first meeting, David raised the issue of representation from the third sector. This received considerable debate, but there was concern that their presence could make it harder to “hold on” to key messages and maintain confidentiality, and so the group didn’t agree to representation from the Third Sector Network. It was noted that these issues had been overcome during the original Closer to Home work, and were currently managed successfully within the Children’s Trust Board.

ACTION 2: Will to write to Health and Care Alliance, including role description for representatives (eg HWB)

4. Horizon Scanning

Cumbria Museums’ Consortium – Jane explained that a bid for future funding (which is how the specialist network is supported) had been submitted, but the outcome was not yet clear.

Big Lottery “Conversation” – it was agreed that a joint response, emphasizing the need for infrastructure support at a time when frontline groups are struggling, should be submitted.

ACTION 3: Carolyn to draft response and circulate to Executive for comment

“Relational State” – Sonia noted that recent initiatives, such as the Better Care Fund, had so far failed to adopt this kind of thinking, but that it was useful for reminding colleagues what the world could look like. It was noted that this might be a good topic for a future Cumbria Leaders Board meeting, bringing in an outside speaker.

5. Review of Specialist Networks

It was agreed that it was very useful to have this information in one place; Rob calculated that the information suggested that the network had a reach of over 5,000 third sector organisations (and many more individuals).

It was agreed to change the minimum standards for specialist networks to include a requirement to review representation every 3-5 years. However, in order to maintain flexibility, this would not necessarily mean a change of representative; a specialist network could decide that it was most appropriate for the existing representative to continue.

It was noted that some networks were not comprehensive (e.g. the Community Transport Forum cannot claim to cover all transport issues), but that there is often a need to be pragmatic and work with the best existing network. Where necessary, the Third Sector network will work to involve additional groups to fill these gaps for specific pieces of work.

It was suggested that the network could consider joint responses with Cumbria Association of Local Councils (Parish/Town councils) on some issues.

Additional points raised in the review were:

- Is there a person specification for representatives (yes – Carolyn will circulate)

- Should the Credit Unions be involved in the Executive – there’s now a Cumbria-wide Financial Inclusion Network (Rob to invite to next TSE meeting as a first step)
- Are Neighbourhood Watch involved in the network (yes – the Cumbria-wide association is a member of the Safer Future Communities Network)

ACTION 4: Carolyn to amend Minimum Standard for Specialist Networks and circulate Person Specification for representatives

ACTION 5: Rob to invite a representative from the Financial Inclusion Network to the next (July) Executive meeting to give a short presentation on their work

6. Cumbria County Council Update

Will reported that a Liaison Meeting had been held last week, with Patricia Bell, Georgina Ternent and Helen Blake (deputising for Dawn Roberts) attending from Cumbria County Council. The key points had been circulated in a written paper.

Community Transport – Peter reported CCC have invited comment on the withdrawal of subsidies from the Community Transport Forum, but the only engagement with the CTF. However, it is worth bearing in mind that CCC are themselves a significant provider of community transport services, and so have knowledge of the subject. Andy noted that it would be useful to see the plan of where cuts are falling and the timeline, and that then a wider involvement (perhaps through the rural forum if these are the most affected communities).

ACTION 6: Carolyn to circulate plan when available; Lorraine to pick up through Rural Forum if appropriate

ABCD group – a masterclass run by Cormac Russell was held yesterday, primarily for elected members, which was very well received. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for 16th April; it was noted that whilst there are a number of executive members present, Cumbria CVS doesn’t have a place, and so another member of the group will need to take on the role of reporting back to the Executive. It was noted that there were still potentially conflicting views of ABCD – Cormac had noted a difference between “capacity building” which can be done by organisations and “community building” which needs to come from with communities themselves.

ACTION 7: Carolyn to put update from ABCD group as an agenda item for July Executive meeting; Lorraine to lead

7. Cumbria Leaders Board

Commission on Welfare Reform

3 of the 4 information collecting days have now taken place, and commissioners have interviewed individuals and organisations – Andy thanked Executive members for the support that they’d given to the process, and noted that CCC had also provided fantastic support with the logistics and policy context. The initial findings suggest that sanctions are causing significant issues, and also that rent arrears are becoming a problem. It is clear

that third sector organisations are the only source of support for many people affected by the reforms.

Commissioners are beginning to look at draft recommendations. The report is due out in late June, and it is hoped that the Bishop will give a presentation to the June Cumbria Leaders' Board; he also intends to host an event for the local MPs.

Martin noted that government funding for advice work had reduced with the legal aid changes; it had been suggested that this would be replaced by a levy on DWP, but nothing had yet materialised. This meant that the organisations providing advice and support had seen an increase in work, but a cut in funding.

Partnership Summit on Aging

The final report has been out for a few months, and actions will be taken forward by the Ageing Well Steering Group (which has been in existence since 2010).

Other items at the last CLB

Other items covered at the last CLB meeting were:

- presentation on the bid for a Lake District World Heritage Site
- presentation on the Clinical Commissioning Group plan (for 5 years, but budget only set annually) – some concern was expressed that they were not consulting widely on this
- Fair Finance pledge – this had been developed in the NE, and was brought to the CLB meeting by CCC to gauge interest in developing similar in Cumbria. It was noted that the third sector could not deliver directly on many of the points, but that the Executive could support the principles and pass them down to network members to consider. Andy noted that the Welfare Commission was likely to make some strong recommendations around the issues (pay day lenders, etc).

ACTION 8: Andy to write statement of support for the Fair Finance Pledge for the Executive to adopt

8. Health and Wellbeing Board

There have been no recent HWB meetings, but there has been a development session. The Better Care Fund application was submitted in mid February. Feedback was reasonably positive, but made the points that there was a lack of inclusivity (particularly around mental health), the application wasn't very specific to Cumbria, and there was a lack of detail on longer term plans and the fit with wider health and care issues. Cumbria now has to submit a detailed response during April. Some concern has been expressed by GP commissioners about the impact on third sector organisations, but the main discussion so far has focussed on statutory health and care services – there is still a lot of work to do on the wider implications.

The alcohol and obesity strategies have been discussed, and we have managed to secure third sector representatives on the working groups.

Colin Cox, the new Director of Public Health, starts in April, and this may lead to more work on the wider determinants of health.

9. Children's Trust Board

Cath reported that the Children's Trust Board itself hadn't met recently; however, there is a legal requirement for it to exist, and so it will continue in some form. It is likely to become a subgroup of the safeguarding board in the future.

Partnership work has still continued, though - a bid has been submitted to the Big Lottery for a Headstart Partnership (improving emotional resilience in 14-19 year olds) - £10k has been awarded to develop a full bid, with the possibility of up to 5 years funding at approximately £1m/year.

In 2013/14 the Health Transition Fund provided funding for a number of third sector organisations – the funding available looks likely to be significantly reduced this year, and will only be available if work was delivered successfully last year.

10. Safer Cumbria

The Police and Crime Commissioner's secondees are coming to the end of their work, with two reports already released; one of these includes information on future provision of rape crisis support. The updated Police and Crime plan has been published, and PCC funding is likely to be linked to achieving its objectives.

There has been some frustration that paperwork for the Safer Cumbria meetings is not distributed in advance of the meeting, which makes it difficult for representatives to consult with those they represent.

Cath noted that the anti-hate crime group was concerned about a rise in hate crime (BME, disability, LGBT), and that there was an increase in BNP activity in West Cumbria, including near schools.

11. Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership

The final EU Investment plan was submitted at the end of January, but feedback has not yet been received. The input, via working groups, to the social inclusion and community led local planning sections, was noted as an exemplar nationally.

The social inclusion funding is expected to be worth £8m between 2014 & 2020. Many indicative projects were submitted, with a total value of over £40m. There will also be a local impact fund (£2m total – although this may be incorporated into a Northern fund) giving low value loans and grants, and £750k available for wraparound support (development work/capacity building with recipients).

It is proposed that the EU local management committee will include the third sector representative on the LEP advisory group (Rob).

The LEP no longer has an Executive group, and will have an independently appointed manager and support staff.

12. Compact

Jozi presented the written report.

Cath noted that there were still issues with Compact compliance, and payment in arrears when this was not appropriate.

ACTION 9: Cath and Jozi to discuss the most appropriate way to raise and resolve this compliance issue

13. Healthwatch

Healthwatch is currently undertaking a number of pieces of work:

- Care Homes – visits are now finished, report will be published soon
- Complaints group – still meeting
- Hospital Car Parking
- Transfers between West Cumberland Hospital and Cumberland Infirmary, Carlisle
- Food at community hospitals
- Partnership Trust Expert Patient Group
- Health and Care Alliance Programme Board
- Clinical Commissioning Group – major north Cumbria consultation will start in June, with some earlier engagement events in April – Healthwatch are involved in 11 local events, and Cumbria CVS in 2 events for the third sector.
- Scrutiny – Healthwatch was called as a witness to a scrutiny panel on the integration agenda, which was questioning if the work was on schedule, and if users were being adequately engaged.

14. Key issues from Specialist Networks

None raised

15. Event for Strategic Representatives

It was agreed that this would be a useful event, particularly if each representative prepared information on what their group does and what support is available.

ACTION 10: Carolyn to organise event

16. Reports from Specialist Networks

The written report was received

17. Any other business

Rob noted that the Cumbria Social Enterprise Partnership Awards will take place on 15 April at the Kirkgate centre in Cockermouth – all welcome.

18. Cumbria County Council Procurement Update

The Executive welcomed Conway Stewart to the meeting, to give an update on the consultation on CCC's Procurement Strategy and changes in the CCC structure.

Changes to CCC Structure

Conway reported that as of 1 April, the procurement functions (Procurement, Commissioning, Contract Management) of CCC have been centralised. Staff will soon be appointed to posts (by the end of May); there are expected to be 60-70 people in the new unit (around a 25% reduction in staff) and the changes in structure are expected to save nearly £1m. It is also intended to save £1m from contract values this year, but that is a small percentage of overall spend (£280m overall, with £50-70m out to tender this year).

Some specialist commissioning staff will remain within directorates (particularly around Adult Social Care), but the details of this relationship are still to be determined. It was noted that the third sector would welcome more information on this when available.

Sustainable Procurement Strategy

The strategy is currently out for consultation, having been developed by looking at national best practice and what members hoped to achieve locally. The third sector also commented on an early draft of the strategy before the formal consultation.

Key aims of the strategy are:

- To make staff in directorates close to providers and potential providers, and get more input to service/contract design
- To maximise spend with local SME and third sector organisations, within legal constraints
- Maximise the use of social value clauses (although these have to be "proportionate", so are not likely to be more than 5% - possibly 10% - of award criteria)
- To aggregate contracts where appropriate, but also to disaggregate to allow smaller providers to bid where this is more appropriate.

Q: Are alternatives to the CHEST still being investigated?

A: Yes – negotiating on behalf of 38 authorities – should see either extra functions within the CHEST, or a new system

Q: There still seem to be problems in Children's Services – e.g. contracts being let for 1 year, with TUPE costs higher than the annual value.

A: That is clearly a problem, but I can't explain the reasons without knowing which contract. One possibility is that the work was funded by a 1 year grant from central government.

Q: I'm still concerned that some commissioning function is being retained within adult social care – is there anything we can do to articulate how the third sector can help with co design?

A: I'm happy to talk specifics as long as it's clearly before the formal procurement process begins. It would be good to set up quarterly meetings with a working group of the Third Sector Executive.

ACTION 11: Carolyn to discuss and arrange quarterly meetings with Conway