



Kensington and Chelsea Social Council's Annual General Meeting

Minutes of the 31 October 2023
10.00am to 12.30pm

1. Opening and welcome

KCSC's Chair - Shelina Thawer (ST) formally opened the annual KCSC AGM meeting, noting that the annual report was available online.

[View KCSC's Annual Report here](#)

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted from trustees Simone Stephens, Judith Davey and Anna-Louise Thomond, further apologies were received from – Karimah Bint Dawoud (Karimah's Cuisina), Tiva Moltanbano (Exhibition Road), Keith Benton (Trellick Tower Residents Association) and Iain Cassidy (Open Age)

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the AGM held on 2nd November 2022 were formally approved by the members.

4. Matters Arising

Nothing to note.

5. Chair's Address

ST acknowledged the impact of the cost of living crisis on both staff, volunteers and residents, expressing gratitude to stakeholders, members, funders and supporters for their unwavering support for KCSC. ST noted work from KCSC's Community Resilience Programme, funded by RBKC that supports the co-ordination of services to support residents through the cost of living crisis. ST stated that an update on this programme would be provided later in this meeting. ST also thanked City Bridge Foundation for funding the Kensington and Chelsea Together programme and again noted that an update about the programme would be presented later in the meeting. ST informed attendees that the Doing Things Differently VCS Strategy developed in collaboration with One Westminster could be accessed on KCSC's website, welcoming people to also attend the Doing Things Differently VCS Bi borough event which would be held at the Town Hall on 17th November.

[View the Doing Things Differently VCS Strategy here](#)

ST reported that in-house financial support had been introduced in this financial year and one-on-one support had been provided to 110 organisations.

ST expressed gratitude on behalf of the Board of Trustees to Trust for London and the Tudor Trust for their continued funding of KCSC's Community Development work and the NHS for the ongoing investment into the local VCS via KCSC. ST went on to extend appreciation to the central team, supporting administration, communication and

management of external initiatives, and to Trustees for their support and guidance. ST ended her Chair report by stating that she was pleased to announce that two new Trustees had been appointed to the Board.

6. Treasurer's Report

MD presented the annual accounts for 2022-23, highlighting that income was at just above £1 million, a decrease of £642,000 from the previous year which was due to the receipt of £500,000 from what was West London CCG (now North West London ICS) to support the transformation of health and care. Total expenditure for 2022-23 was noted as being £1.57 million, the financial year ended with an amount of £1.1 million to be carried forward, much of which was committed through restricted funds.

MD was pleased to announce that over £760,000 of income had been distributed to voluntary and community organisations funded by the NHS, including £104,000 to Community Living Well, £344,000 to North Kensington Healthier Futures and £155,000 to My Care My Way. The total unrestricted funds for KCSC were just over £260,000 of which £150,000 would be held as reserves in maintaining six months of operating costs if needed. Of designated funds MD reported that Trustees had agreed £30,000 be set aside for project support and £17,000 check for fundraising support.

MD thanked funders for their ongoing support, particularly the NHS, RBKC, Trust for London, Tudor Trust, the City Bridge Foundation and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.

Looking ahead for 2023-24, MD reported that KCSC was in a secure financial position with ongoing support to continue to give grants to local organisations to deliver self-care services and for the organisation to continue to support the sector more generally.

The members confirmed they were happy to receive the annual accounts.

MD confirmed that the 2022-23 accounts had been professionally approved by Goldwins Ltd, proposing that they be reappointed as auditors for the next financial year.

The members approved the reappointment of Goldwins Ltd as auditors for the next financial year.

7. Community Empowerment and Participation Programme Update

1) Summary

Lucy Hughes (LH) presented the Community Empowerment and Participation Programme update, outlining the aims and accomplishments so far and a view to the future of the programme.

[View the Community Empowerment and Participation presentation here](#)

LH asked some key questions to members as to how they would like to see the programme develop?

II) Feedback/Comments from members

- A question was raised around engagement with residents, LH responded that a multi-faceted approach was in place, there was a steering group overseeing the programme which had been created to include three paid roles for local people. AS envisaged that KCSC would take more of a role in working with service users or eligible beneficiaries of member organisations.
- It was noted that KCSC's engagement programmes had worked well in the past.
- In response to a question about reflective learning, LH reported that the programme had provided training for residents to take on decision-making roles, adding that the future of the programme had taken into account that smaller grassroots organisations within the borough required specialist capacity building. AS added that all organisations were welcome to be invited to take part in the training.

8. Community Resilience Support Programme

I) Summary

Catherine Watling (CW) presented the Community Resilience Programme update, noting that wider issues with poverty had resulted in food banks in Kensington and Chelsea being one of the highest levels in London. CW outlined the progress so far and next steps for the project.

[View the Community Resilience Support Programme presentation here](#)

!!) Feedback/comments from members

- A question was raised around the ongoing need for food banks, with the comment that in an ideal society they would not be needed. CW agreed with that comment but added that food parcels were making a difference to people and would continue to be available for the foreseeable future, she felt that closing food banks would be a mistake.
- The counter opinion was expressed that because KCSC were providing a safety net for people, the status quo was being allowed to continue, and that people were prevented from taking action to change things. CW commented that waste food was being repurposed, the idea of food banks was being interrogated daily and the intention was to not just give people food but to link them into other support services. The view was expressed that food banks were a sticking plaster to a systemic problem and data should be collected to present to government.

9. KCSC Trustees

AS presented the list of trustees for this year.

[View the current list of trustees here.](#)

ST thanked the two trustees who had stood down, Christine Bennett and Miles Kerstein, expressing gratitude for their service to KCSC.

10. AOB

I) Board representation

A question was raised on community representation on the Board, AS responded that steps were undertaken in the recruitment process, people with lived experience were encouraged to apply to become trustees, board experience was not a requirement. As a result, we have a new board member from the local community on the board.

11. Adjournment

There being no further business, ST adjourned the meeting.

Winning with Communities Plenary Session

The plenary session following the AGM was introduced by Dr Henry Tam the guest speaker. Henry spoke about his work in government and with communities. Through his Book Tomorrow's Community which also includes his policy briefing – [Winning with Communities](#)', Henry talked about his policy recommendations on how systematic community cooperation can bring about positive changes in terms of inclusion, sustainability and personal wellbeing.

Henry gave examples from his 12 key findings from his policy briefing, some of which are listed below.

- Alternative mediums of exchange such as local currencies and time banking which can promote an ethos of mutual support
- The development of businesses that are owned and democratically controlled by local people
- Structural changes to engagement practices that empower communities to get involved as equal partners
- Communities being actively involved in awareness raising, option evaluation and selection, and impact monitoring in matters such as neighbourhood designs, energy, transport and air quality.

Round table discussions

Participants were asked to consider how we might bring about positive change for residents in Kensington and Chelsea, by discussing

- Where are we now?
- What is already working and what can we build on?
- What more could we do?

Feedback

1. Where are we now?

Relationships with the statutory sector

- Frustration with disjointed relationship with statutory bodies
- Stop sugar coating the major issues that are taking place when talking with our statutory colleagues and talk the truth on inequality and injustice, why it exists and why the current state of play is not working
- Experience of dealing with RBKC is that the size of the council is too large and bureaucratic to be able to respond adequately.
- Funding to support volunteer management has become more difficult to fund.

Buildings as assets

- Assets are not given to the community because of the money that they can raise privately, especially south of the borough

Staffing and wellbeing

- Workload of staff is a growing concern particularly in relation to staff wellbeing

2. What is working?

Resident participation and voice

- Residents participation in grant and decision making panels and being paid for their time. This way of working transforms collective buy in from residents.

Grassroot organisations and VCS services

- Grassroot VCOs ability to understand and respond appropriately to community needs
- There's a lot on offer locally for residents

3. What can we build on?

VCS networking/communication

- Events and workshops where the VCS can share best practices around the themes introduced by Henry
- One central place online to find all services

VCS/resident voice and influence

- Consider a model like Queen's Park Community Council (*a statutory body representing over 14,000 local residents within the Queen's Park and surrounding area. A devolved budget from the local authority to the Community Council where residents have ownership on how. The budget is spent*).
- Engage with local housing associations on more housing association accommodation for the local communities
- The council to see the asset that the VCS is, they could do an audit – they did this in Eastbourne and shocked everyone
- Shift from short term to long term impact focus, more long term services and funding.

Project ideas

- Intergenerational projects, for example the Dutch model on housing/rooms in under occupied homes for young people.
- Timebanks – great example of time credits/vouchers that used to be available – can we re-introduce them

3. What more could we do/could be done?

Lobbying and campaigning

- Advocate and lobby and support legitimate campaigning

- Support local level representation at a strategic level

VCS Workforce

- Support the VCS and work with the statutory sector to recognise staff burnout/exhaustion within the VCS and create responses on how these impact on the VCS

Community leadership

- Instead of residents sharing ideas and feedback, we need a structure to be developed and residents lead to steer actions and lead change i.e by the community for the community
- Learn from young people – changes perceptions and breaks down barriers
- Support the development of formal community feedback of local services

Race inequality

- Be more open on racism and marginalisation
- Target resources in order to dismantle structural inequalities

Partnerships

- More opportunities to create new relationships
- More co ownership of physical spaces
- Creation of cooperative platforms that enables partnerships to be formed
- Creation of VCS Care cooperatives/community caterers /providers
- Fewer standalone community events,