



VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS FORUM

Thursday 17 December 2020
 10:00am – 12:30pm
 Online via Zoom

Chair: Angela Spence (AS)
 Minutes taken by: Zina Serageldin (ZS)

1	Welcome and Apologies	ACTION
	<p>Angela welcomed everybody to the meeting and ran through the agenda and meeting rules.</p> <p>Agenda</p>	
2	<p>Insight into the future of the Voluntary and Community Sector - Karl Wilding, CEO NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations)</p> <p>Karl Wilding (KW) started by saying that it has been a very long year for everyone and that the sector should be proud of how charities and volunteers have responded to the pandemic by getting stuck in an involved. From people sewing scrubs to business offering to help while they were unable to operate.</p> <p>The main take away has been that people care but there were two challenge he wanted to examine that need to be considered going forward.</p> <p>Volunteering: How to mobilise volunteers? Ways that people want to volunteer is changing. Volunteers want informal short episodic ways of getting involved there has been a shift away from long term regular volunteering. Safeguarding and safety also have to be factored into this new model.</p> <p>Finances: This has been a difficult year financially for the sector. Social distancing restrictions have limited conference and café facilities. Social enterprise activities and fundraising particularly community fundraising have also stopped.</p> <p>Reserves have been used up by many with Trusts and Foundations putting on a surge of funding to try to ameliorate this. The future is dependent on financial resilience with even larger organisations saying they are struggling.</p> <p>Every year 5000 organisation start up and 5000 close. What Covid will do is widen cracks that already exist. NCVO are concerned about thee 2021-2022 financial year especially after many of the support schemes such as furlough end.</p> <p>On a positive note this year has seen unprecedented levels of collaboration within the sector and with local government and local industry.</p> <p><u>Looking forward</u> Sometimes the voluntary sector is pigeon holed as campaigners or service providers. One of the most important roles they play that needs to be talked about is the way the sector contributes to knitting communities together.</p>	

	<p>Economic uncertainty means that everyone needs to balance innovation and financial caution. There will be unknown element of Brexit ahead with a need to consider supply chain for food for example.</p> <p>Worldwide social attitude and culture are much more important than they may have been perceived previously. Change in social attitudes is reflected in the change in demographics. There is a need to make sure as voluntary organisations we are seen as relevant and reflect the needs and attitudes of the communities they serve.</p> <p>What the sector does has never been more needed. Organisations have to be clear about what they do and the impact that they have. People have a right to and depend on the services provided by voluntary sector organisations and they need to show this.</p> <p>The key discussion points are listed below:</p> <p>In a Polarised world we are less good at listening to the other half of the argument. Attitudes can be changed.</p> <p>It was felt that the local Council are perceived as reticent to speak to their communities. They talk to voluntary organisations as proxy which can lead to resentment.</p> <p>Labelling is seen as a deterrent for service users. There is work being done on creative evaluation of communities that need to be explored.</p> <p>Covid has damaged the financial model for many organisations. Financial support is needed. Listening to the VCS and using them as part of the solution would be a recommendation to Government by NCVO.</p>	
3	Black Men for Change – Viv Ahmun	
	<p>Viv Ahmun (VA) described himself as wearing multiple hats. Having worked in the voluntary sector and run his own businesses and being a trained psychotherapist.</p> <p>He is passionate about Technology, Finance and Africa.</p> <p>Technology will allow some levelling up in terms of support for the disenfranchised particularly in terms of employment. Financial services are needed to develop or grow anything without it. People who need it most don't often understand it or know how to access it. The African Continent is part of VA's heritage and is where the emerging middle classes are.</p> <p>Black Men for Change came out of a series of conversations led by Jake Ferguson. VA was invited to attend one of their meetings and felt an instant connection. The question being asked was can we do something going forward. Although at the start there was lack of agreement they soon began to think about what Black Men for Change could look like.</p> <p>The central flyer developed is a powerful tool showing the transitional Executive, specialist service leads and advisors that make up the organisation. All these men are tied into other organisation that are then linked together. This lead to a lot of interest and questions about topic like diversity which were responses that enabled them to look at their work going forward.</p>	

	<p>City Hall awarded them funding to do work across Hackney, Harringay, Waltham Forrest and Lambeth. The team lobbied for the work to be about leadership development and infrastructure development.</p> <p>Early lessons were that this consortium is beginning to force individuals working at a local level to collaborate with counterparts in other boroughs this in turn leads to young men to do the same.</p> <p>This collective has also looked at what they mean about when talking about leadership and what it should mean to young people. The group developed 'Change 21' acknowledging perpetual change in this century and the need for resilience and preparing young people for the unknown. There is a commitment to bring people together across localities in a meaningful way.</p> <p>Other initiatives have developed such as project around police accountability and reform. There are signs now of traction around the topic.</p> <p>Finally VA discussed emotional wellbeing work, early intervention and prevention, in connection with Open Minds Alliance CIC making sure that everything works actively for communities.</p> <p>Black Men for Change is coming to the end of its London pilot. Partnerships are currently being sought.</p> <p>The Boabab Foundation was highlighted. It is a giving foundation for marginalised groups that aims to raise one million pounds. VA is working to make sure it is located in a global context.</p>	
4	<p>K&C Together Programme – Nada Sallam, Community Empowerment and Participation Programme Officer, KCSC (Kensington and Chelsea Social Council)</p>	
	<p>Presentation</p> <p>Nada Sallam (NS) introduced the K&C together programme which aims to bridge the gap between underrepresented communities and local organisations as well support effective engagement and involvement of service users in decision making and programme design.</p> <p>The context of the programme and the approach used were highlighted. The idea being to make sure that organisations create the kind of environment that allows people to come into an inclusive environment and be able to contribute fully. Equally to work with community members to make sure they have the skills and knowledge to actively participate as equal members.</p> <p>Please get in touch with NS if you have questions or would like to get involved. nada@kcsc.org.uk</p> <p>K&C Together resources page</p>	
5	<p>Voluntary Sector Organisations updates: Latimer Community Art Therapy (LACT) – Lucy Knight, Co-Director, LCAT St Mary Abbots Rehabilitation and Training (SMART) – Amelia Mustapha, Director, SMART</p>	

	<p>Men's Shed – Rasha El-Sady, Shed Programme Manager, ACAA (Association for Cultural Advancement through Visual Art)</p>	
	<p>Three local voluntary organisations provided a view of what worked well in response to the pandemic.</p> <p>SMART made the decision to put as much as they could online to continue to provide a service. They simultaneously created a physical presence with a food delivery /pick up service with signposting where appropriate. There are currently 300 people on the books that they are in constant contact with. Amelia's main takeaway is to remember to model behaviour we expect and listen and reflect.</p> <p>LCAT found the constant need to redesign services has been exhausting but the move online and onto Zoom and telephone services was quite seamless. Initial engagement was high but fell off after a while especially over the summer. One of the challenges has been having Arts Psychotherapy online. This has not been idea especially with regard to safeguarding and that lack of private space. A return to face to face session became possible when restrictions change.</p> <p>Men's Shed had been working to get people to leave homes before the pandemic. The service moved online but it became apparent that members were not tech savvy and were struggling alone at home. A decision was made to try to return to in person as soon as possible. A possible way was to hold events outdoors with adequate paperwork in place for risk assessment was identified. Luckily space was available and with numerous revisions to the paperwork especially following Government updates was completed. This had to be communicated to members with Rasha engaging them by making them a part of the solution. This preparation enabled Men's Shed to reopened in July.</p> <p>Rasha took a moment to thank those that supported her while this was taking place and stresses the importance of supporting each other.</p>	
	<p>10 minute break</p>	
6	<p>Change in 2021 (Closed session for voluntary organisations only) How will organisations effect change and how can KCSC support this?</p>	
	<p>Feedback following the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring is arduous and doesn't fit projects that people are running. It is a very time-consuming process. • Social isolation and loneliness need tackling in a systemic way. • Vaccination and the importance of detailed information in different languages adapting services to offer residents a range of services was noted. • There is a need to listen to people and to find out what they are comfortable doing. • The strength and scale of relationships have increased some service user numbers have fluctuated. • Suggestion for KCSC to help with development capacity of organisations as well as help organisations to develop the capacity of the community as well. 	
7	<p>The role of the Communities Team - Tunde Olayinka, Director of Communities, RBKC</p>	

	<p>Tunde Olayinka (TO) introduced Monsur Khan (MK) and Olivia Schelts-Harris (OSH) and Michael Kennedy (MKe) who are new to the team.</p> <p>Presentation</p> <p>TO outlined areas of delivery of the Communities team and its structure within the Council.</p> <p>OSH (Liv) is working on how the Council engages with residents including collaboration. She come to the Council from the Salvation Army. Next year will see the launch of a Citizen's Panel recruiting 2000 residents across the borough. They are aiming to reach difficult to reach groups. The outreach plan for reaching all citizens for Census 2021 was highlighted.</p> <p>MKe who joined the team last week explained that his role is to deliver improvements in the way partnerships with the Council work with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and wider community. He is eager to work with the VCS in the coming weeks.</p> <p>Other areas that the Council are looking at are digital exclusion and BAME communities disproportionately affected by the pandemic.</p> <p>TO finished by explaining the Communities Team aims to collaborate, to reach out to communities and to create platforms for facilitating conversations.</p> <p>Key discussion points following on from the presentation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Charter for Public Participation. There was surprise the Charter was not mentioned. There was also interest in knowing how the charter was going to be embedded into the rest of the Council. OSH explained that she will be working on the Charter next year as part of her role. Using the internal Community Engagement Network, Council staff have started to be shown the Charter and look at how it relates to their roles. OSH would like to have conversations with the VCS to hear their views on how the Charter can be interpreted. She felt that it was early in the process to begin testing but testing would take time to make sure it is working. 	
	<p>Charles Nyafouna, Census Engagement Manager for North Kensington and Chelsea working with the Office for National Statistics spoke briefly about the Census due to take place on Sunday 21 March 2021.</p> <p>Data gathered will help provide a detailed snapshot of the population and plan services in areas such as schools, doctors services and libraries. Charles is looking forward to working with the VCS in the borough.</p>	
8	<p>Libraries transformation including Q&A – Erin Caseley, Chief Libraries Officer, RBKC and WCC and Steven Lord, Head of Registration Service, RBKC, Katrina Palmer, KCSC</p>	
	<p>Presentation</p> <p>The team are looking to start a process of engagement to see how they can get more out of the libraries for the community.</p> <p>Steven Lord presented background to the Kensal Library transformation project. The team asked people to keep an eye out for the survey that will be publicised and to feel free to circulate the information to service users.</p>	

The team are also eager for any organisations who are interested partnership working in library spaces to get in touch.

[Sign up to the Libraries Newsletter](#)

Attendance

	Name	Organisation
1	Amelia Mustapha	SMART
2	Angela Spence	KCSC
3	Ann Goodger	Dalgarno Trust
4	Anne-Helene Biosse Duplan	Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
5	Baljit Badesha	Nucleus Legal Advice Centre
6	Charles Nyafouna	Census 2021
7	Dahabo Isse	Dadihiye Somali Development Organisation
8	Emma Cohen	Open Age
9	Erin Carlstrom	The Reader
10	Gianluca Failla	Spectra
11	Gina Zanfir	Portobello Business Centre
12	Heather Boxer	West London Action for Children
13	Igor Novokreshchenov	Carers Network
14	James Dunbar	West London Zone
15	Jamie Renton	ADKC
16	Jenny Dowell	POhWER
17	Jenny Greenfield	KCSC
18	Jess Millwood	Age UK Kensington & Chelsea
19	Joe Batty	KCSC
20	Jon Fryer	Kensington and Chelsea Foundation
21	Judith Blakeman	BME Health Forum
22	Julie Bristow	WCA (Wandsworth Care Alliance)
23	Lucy Knight	Latimer Community Arts Therapy
24	Melanie Nock	WCA (Wandsworth Care Alliance)
25	Michael Ashe	Volunteer Centre Kensington & Chelsea
26	Michael Kennedy	RBKC
27	Mohammed Mukit	RBKC
28	Monsur Khan	RBKC
29	Olivia Schelts-Harris	RBKC
30	Rasha El-Sady	Maxilla Men's Shed ACAVA
31	Sarah Sutton	Checkmate!
32	Silke Mehrgott	The ClementJames Centre
33	Sonia Benitez	Carers Network
34	Sonia Timlett	Equal People Mencap
35	Sophie FitzHugh	Rugby Portobello Trust
36	Stephanie Linden	POhWER
37	Stephen Duckworth	Notting Hill Methodist Church
38	Steve Bownds	Latymer Community Church
39	William Roberts	Venture Community Association
40	Zina Serageldin	KCSC

