



Shaping our Future

The council's announcement of plans to deliver joint services with neighbouring boroughs Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster will have big implications for some voluntary and community organisations and service users.

The 'Tri-borough' project will save the three councils up to £35 million a year through the reduction of overheads and management costs. The proposals are intended to help minimise cuts to frontline services, but with 500 job losses planned across the three boroughs there is concern that there will be a knock on effect on services.

Education and children's services will see schools sharing services from September and management will be more closely integrated in a host of specialist areas such as youth offending, fostering and adoption.

Savings of £9.8 million by 2014/15 are being sought in adult social care, mainly through cutting back office and management support staff. A single commissioning team will be introduced to work across the three boroughs under the directorship of Marian Harrington, currently head of department at Westminster.

Other changes will see RBKC Chief Executive Derek Myers also take overall responsibility for Hammersmith & Fulham from October 2011. Concerns over council autonomy are being addressed by a 'Sovereignty Guarantee' which pledges to retain the current number of councillors and entitle each council to sets its own policies and budget.

For local voluntary and community organisations the tri-borough plans may represent opportunities to work more closely with partner organisations in the neighbouring boroughs. The need for organisations to prove their worth will increase as services are



Dragon's and mentors at the Social Enterprise Showcase Dragons Den on 15 April – see page 6 for details.

commissioned across the three boroughs.

The Social Council has been talking to its sister organisations in the neighbouring boroughs to ensure that the infrastructure support we offer remains appropriate in these changing times.

On June 17 we will again be holding a joint Funding Fair with CAVSA Hammersmith and Fulham and this year we are expanding the event to look at the tri-borough proposals and their implications for our sector.

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Kensington & Chelsea Social Council (KCSC)

works to support locally focused voluntary and community organisations serving local residents.

The views expressed in Link are not necessarily those of KCSC.

A WORD FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

As a sector we have seen a lot of change in the last few months. Some of it has been negative but national government has been keen to stress the part we can play in supporting community life.



Mary Gardiner

which we will also celebrate and tell you why we won a NAVCA quality award. We will listen to what else you would like to see us do to help develop/keep services at a sustainable level over the next few years.

Community centres deliver much of the Big

Society agenda and are a place for diverse communities to develop a true sense of belonging. Our new work alongside them will help ensure that local communities are heard and responded to.

Our work with local Somali organisations (some of whom of have formed a network) to produce the report on the local Somali Diaspora energises us at the Social Council to continue to support all of you.

We want to encourage local organisations to continue working together to reduce local poverty and disadvantage with the pride, knowledge and expertise that has been present for more than 50 years. The sector's role in shaping change for the better can never be underestimated but we must always be aware of what is happening and apply our new knowledge.

The Social Council is here to support and promote the sector and help it promote itself. As we learn to work with less resources we need to illustrate our achievements more than ever. This is something we can do with and for you, please continue to stay involved.

TAKE PART IN OUR Community Voices Showcase FRIDAY 15 JULY

Aneesa Chaudhry will be working with 5 local groups to **build vocal confidence** and tell their story using the creative arts. She will also be running **Kensington Community Choir** rehearsals on Wednesdays at Chelsea Theatre, 12-2pm and at the Lighthouse 6-8pm. Free to KCSC member groups or £10 to drop in.

To join email:

aneesa@kcsc.org.uk

or call 07957 395 293

SHOULD WE CAMPAIGN?

Protesting has always been a means for progressive change throughout history and it continues to play that role across the world today. Through protest people have won and defended their rights to a decent standard of living as well as control over their lives and the societies in which they live. We can see today first-hand how protests have also brought down regimes when people demand change.

It should come as no surprise that in a world of vast and growing inequalities in wealth and power, protests are growing again. Over recent months we have seen a number of large student protests over the issue of tuition fee rises. In March we saw the biggest demonstration in Britain for eight years when up to 500,000 people joined the 'March for the Alternative' to protest against the scale of cuts being imposed by the Coalition government.

Local anti-cuts groups have sprung up across the country to oppose the loss of jobs and services at council level including here in Kensington and Chelsea.

But not all protests or campaigns are on this scale or make the headlines. Locally we have seen the residents of the Wornington Green Estate challenge the council's plans to demolish and rebuild their estate. Market traders in Portobello are still fighting the introduction of large retailers and chain stores.

A protest or campaign may or may not be successful in achieving its ultimate aim, however there is still much to be learnt from the process and its purpose.

Our local voluntary and community sector has its modern roots in campaigning to improve conditions for local people after the race riots of 1958. This is a tradition we should remember and be proud of. Whilst some people think there is a conflict between our sector's role in providing services and support to local communities and campaigning we believe the two go hand in hand.

There are a number of ways to campaign and protest and not all involve demonstrating or manning the barricades! Campaigning is often at its most successful when it works alongside decision makers

“A strong and united message of dissent over decisions that affect our lives can help influence future decision making. The very act of coming together to fight for a common cause can engender a sense of community and empowerment.”

and identifies common goals.

For example child poverty is an area in which we can all agree that we want to see positive change. We know it exists in Kensington and Chelsea and believe that by working with the statutory sector to address and find local solutions to local issues we can begin to tackle some of the aspects and causes of child poverty.

That is not to say that we cannot bring to the attention of decision makers the issues we know need to be addressed through campaigning. An effective strategy that aims to make a difference should be the

priority rather than the campaign being an end in itself.

We have often written in Link about the way in which the sector needs to prepare itself for the difficult economic times ahead. As part of that preparation we encourage the sector to raise its voice and speak out. Campaigning, lobbying and protest are methods that we can use to have our voices heard.

The Social Council can advise your organisation on campaigning. If there are local issues that you feel strongly about but you are not sure about how you can act then get in touch.

CAMPAIGNING EFFECTIVENESS

Tuesday 24 May, 10am - 1pm, London Lighthouse, W11 1QT

A half day workshop for voluntary and community organisations that want to develop their understanding of the campaigning and lobbying role and how to devise effective strategies.

Register your interest in attending: www.kcsc.org.uk/training

Community Centres – The H

Community centres are hubs of local community activity; the engagement and strengthen community spirit, contributing s

In our borough we have centres that offer children and young people a place to play and express themselves, families a space to meet and celebrate and older people a place to make friends, learn new skills and have fun.

The Social Council is strongly committed to supporting the vital work of our community centres. Earlier this year we organised a conference entitled 'Community Centres in the 21st Century' that hosted by the Venture Centre on Wornington Road. 53 people attended including community centre staff and trustees, representatives from organisations that use the centres and council officers.

The aim of the day was to celebrate the work of our community centres and inspire a vision for their future. It explored the importance of leadership in times of austerity, discussed how centres redress disadvantage and explored enterprise models for a sustainable future.



Councillor Victoria Borwick

Guest speakers included Linda Damarell from the Development Trusts Association, Bassam Mahfouz from the Beethoven Centre and Councillor Victoria Borwick. Participants also

attended workshop sessions in which they discussed local needs, developing models / living with change and marketing and communication.

Some of the key suggestions for further action that arose from the day, for both community centres and the Social Council are highlighted below.

What can community centres do?

- 1** Examine ways of working more closely together, for example sharing skills and cutting overheads by sharing backroom functions
- 2** Ensure their building tenants are on at least 3-5 year leases. This would not only provide security for the tenant but help guarantee a steady income for the centre
- 3** Be more pro-active in identifying the needs of the community by carrying out more research
- 4** Consider in-kind donations such as advice services. These may not need funding just space for an advice worker
- 5** Look at ways they could sell services which appeal to the Personalised Care budget holder



ubs of Local Communities

They are places that bring people together, harness community energy and contribute significantly to the wellbeing of our communities.

What can the Social Council do?

- 1 Support a mapping exercise of local community centres and activities
- 2 Support community centres to explore more opportunities and creative ways of developing sustainable fundraising models
- 3 Work with community centres to look at a joint marketing approach to reach a wider network across the borough
- 4 Help community centres build stronger links with voluntary and community organisations to identify gaps and resources and strengthen links across the sector



What can the statutory sector do?

- 1 Fund a joint outreach worker post across all centres
- 2 Encourage and support the development of community arts services delivered within community centres to address social and health issues
- 3 Support and resource community centres as key drivers of Big Society and the Localism agenda.

Read the full report on the **Community Centres in the 21st Century Conference** available on our website: www.kcsc.org.uk/communitycentres



FUTURE WORK...

Since the conference work has continued to help strengthen joint working and collaboration amongst community centres.

Some of the community centres are working together to plan the August Big Lunch which will take place this summer. The event will bring local communities together to celebrate

local life, find out more about local support and enjoy the diversity of local food.

Funding is also being sought for a support worker who will work across two or three community centres to strengthen outreach across organisations and provide back office support.

Desta Membership Information Event

Thursday 14 July 2011, 2-4pm in Hammersmith

Our neighbours in Hammersmith & Fulham have developed a voluntary-sector health consortium called Desta. (Desta is an Ethiopian word meaning 'happiness'.)

Now that our local authority and NHS will be tendering for services across the three boroughs, the Social Council has decided to work closely with Desta, and support our local Kensington and Chelsea organisations to join. This event will provide an opportunity to find out about the consortium and the recruitment process.

More info: www.kcsc.org.uk/healthconsortium

SEXUAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

Tuesday 21 June 2011, 10am – 4pm
at London Lighthouse, W11 1QT near Euston Station

If you work to promote sexual health or support people living with HIV in Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea or Westminster this one-day conference is for you.

More info: Lev Pedro 0207 243 9809
lev@kcsc.org.uk www.kcsc.org.uk/sexualhealth

BME Health Forum

QUARTERLY MEETING

Wednesday 29 June 2011 at Soho Centre for Health & Care, Frith Street, W1

In addition to the usual important information sharing, the next quarterly meeting will have a stronger focus on developing partnerships between statutory and voluntary organisations that might be able to plan and deliver health work together. The theme is diabetes, and anyone working with BME communities to address diabetes should attend.

Contact: nafsika.thalassis@bmehf.org.uk 020 7150 8128
More info: www.bmehf.org.uk

CHANGES TO THE NHS how will they affect us?

9 May, 10am – 12:30pm
at Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre

In partnership with the
Local Involvement Network (LINK)

This event aims to:

- inform local people and local voluntary & community organisations (VCOs) about current changes in the NHS
- help local people and VCOs to understand how they can influence local health planning
- enhance dialogue between key NHS stakeholders and the local community
- inform local VCOs on future commissioning structures and opportunities.

Booking essential: www.kcsc.org.uk/health

Director of public health appointed

Melanie Smith, Director of Public Health at NHS Kensington & Chelsea has now been appointed as the Director of Public Health for the new NHS sub-cluster covering also Westminster and Hammersmith & Fulham. Melanie will be supported by five public health consultants, and a team of people drawn from the three PCTs, some of whom our members will already know, such as Steve Shaffelburg and Donalie Halstead.

We expect to hear in May how the voluntary sector fits in to the structure, and who in the new PCT structure will be responsible for the voluntary sector.



Melanie Smith

Congratulations to the Social Enterprise Dragon's Den Winners

Advice Now & Volunteer Centre K&C, Clement James Centre and Equal People (Arts Works) were all worthy winners of £1000 support bursaries at the Dragon's Den that featured as part of the Social Enterprise Showcase event on 15 April.

They will be able to use their prize to access support to help turn their income generating ideas into reality. The event was part of a tailored programme of support for local social enterprises.

More info: Lev Pedro lev@kcsc.org.uk www.kcsc.org.uk/sexualhealth

New Sector Representatives Elected to Kensington and Chelsea Partnership (KCP) and Borough Voluntary Organisations Advisory Group (BVOAG)

The Social Council would like to welcome the new voluntary and community sector representatives elected to sit on the KCP and BVOAG.

Two rounds of elections were held at the Main VOF in December 2010 and in March 2011.

The new representatives are:

Helen Leech (BVOAG), **Paula Murphy** (KCP), **Dahabo Guled** (BVOAG & KCP), **Heidi Riedel** (BVOAG & KCP) and **Abdullahi Ali** (BVOAG).

The Somali Diaspora in Kensington and Chelsea and the Somali Network

A new report 'The Somali Diaspora in Kensington and Chelsea' and the Somali Network were launched at a Social Council hosted event on 29 March.

Both are important steps to providing better services to the Somali community in the borough. The report, written by the Social Council with the input of local Somali organisations, recommends ways of working and development opportunities.

The launch of the Network will see member groups working in partnership to increase efficiency and reduce duplication.



Download the report:

www.kcsc.org.uk/somalinetwork

Roundup from the Voluntary Organisations Forums

Engaging Communities

The 12 January meeting featured discussion and action planning on the future of BME voluntary and community groups in Kensington and Chelsea. This was preceded by an informative presentation by Midaye, Somali Development Network which highlighted their work and achievements.

Actions which came out of the discussions will be addressed at future meetings.

More info:

www.kcsc.org.uk/ecvof

Children, Young People and Families

RBKC Planning Officer James Masini was invited to speak and answer questions on the spatial planning development of Kensington Academy on 1 March.

The meeting also saw RBKC Officer Joanne Hay deliver a brief update on the second round of CYPF commissioning. Although a lot remains unclear, this was the beginning of a discussion which we hope will clarify the changes made to the commissioning process. An eye opening presentation on internet safety for young people was also given by Belinda Evans (Primary ICT RBKC).

More info:

www.kcsc.org.uk/cypfvof

Older Peoples

Steve Shaffleburg from NHS K&C presented on the future of Public Health at the 4 April meeting. He spoke about the shift of public health responsibilities to local authorities and its implications.

The forum also saw an in depth discussion on a proposal to expand the remit of the Older Peoples VOF to include health and wellbeing. A final announcement, taking into account this discussion will be made soon.

More info:

www.kcsc.org.uk/opvof

Main VOF

Members discussed and voiced concerns about tri borough proposals on 7 March ahead of a meeting of voluntary and community sector reps with RBKC Council leader Sir Merrick Cockell. Issues for reps to take forward included concern about a loss of local accountability.

The meeting also saw a second round of rep elections and a presentation by Elizabeth Usher (Focus K&C Foundation) on the 'Giving Green Paper' – the government's initial ideas for building a stronger culture of giving time and money.

More info:

www.kcsc.org.uk/mainvof

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday	25 May	10.00am – 12.30pm	Children, Young People and Families VOF	Kensington Town Hall
Wednesday	8 June	9.45am – 1.00pm	Main VOF	Kensington Town Hall
Wednesday	13 July	10.00am – 12.00pm	Engaging Communities VOF	Kensington Town Hall
Monday	18 July	3.00pm – 5.00pm	Older Peoples VOF	Kensington Town Hall

More details of VOFs as well as dates, agendas and minutes can be found on the Social Council website

www.kcsc.org.uk/vof

The 4Minds Project closed at the end of March after its funding came to an end. We spoke to Jill Watson, the project's Senior Community Development Worker, about the difference it made and its legacy.



Jill Watson

Can you describe what the project set out to achieve?

With 1 in 4 of us experiencing some form of mental health problem during our lives, 4minds set out to raise awareness of mental health, to address the stigma surrounding it and to make services more appropriate and responsive to the needs of the local BME communities in Kensington & Chelsea.

How successful was it in achieving its aims?

During the 18 months the project was running, we ran promotional stalls all over the area to raise awareness of mental health and well-being. Our free 2 day training course developed people's knowledge of the signs, symptoms, causes and treatments while paying specific attention to the effect that culture has on how people present themselves or are dealt with by professionals.

We ran sessions on what services are available to local people, and trained staff from over 40 voluntary and statutory organisations in the borough to identify the signs of mental ill-health. This means the people they are working with can receive appropriate support far more quickly.

The well-being sessions helped people keep themselves psychologically fit and our drop-ins and support work provided a safe and confidential opportunity for local people to explore what was happening for their family, friends or for themselves.

Do you think there was scope to do more if the funding hadn't come to an end?

Definitely. In this climate of changes to the benefits system, with people losing their jobs and the constraints on public spending, the incidence of mental ill-health is bound to increase. Far more people will experience depression and anxiety, both of which can be debilitating, so there is a need to concentrate on providing more support locally.

In terms of the local BME communities who are experiencing the highest health inequalities, it seems that not enough time has been spent on addressing the issues surrounding this and therefore not enough has changed.

In addition, the project identified that not enough work is being done around prevention especially for children and young people. The project piloted a programme of training around the use of recreational drugs, in particular 'skunk', and its links to psychosis. These sessions were run in youth clubs and hostels and our experience has already shown that this may lead to young people changing their behaviour and seeking help sooner rather than later when it becomes a crisis. Funding is currently being sought to extend this aspect of the project and details should be available shortly.

Has the project left a legacy?

18 months of face-to-face work was never going to be enough time to address the issues within the Borough however we feel that we have raised awareness of mental health, built capacity in a variety of local organisations and that people have a better understanding of the inequalities that surround mental health and therefore how to overcome them. The challenge is to continue to spread the messages throughout the Borough.

Although the funding for the project has ceased, the team feels passionately that there is still a need to address the inequalities and to promote prevention and are therefore currently working on developing an alternative programme and seeking additional funding.

Information on mental health, our work and the future can still be found on our website:

www.4mindsproject.org.uk

FUNDING FAIR *plus*

17 June, Kensington Town Hall

Meet with funders and development agencies and discuss the tri-borough proposals and what they mean for our sector.

For the second year running we are again teaming up with our colleagues in Hammersmith & Fulham to bring you Funding Fair Plus.

This year we are inviting a whole host of additional support agencies and are using the opportunity to discuss the tri-borough proposals with special sessions for children and families, and adult social care groups.

More info:

www.kcsc.org.uk/fundingfairplus