## **PRESENT**

## **Members of the Committee**

Councillor Gerard Hargreaves (Chairman)

Councillor Timothy Coleridge

Councillor Mary Weale

Councillor Monica Press

Councillor Kim Taylor Smith

## **Voluntary Organisation Representatives in Attendance**

Angela Spence (Kensington and Chelsea Social Council)

Laurence Wilson (Advice)

Jane Grey (Advice)

Val Patterson (Education)

**Also in Attendance**

Melanie Marshman (RBKC, Head of Community Engagement)

Tony Redpath (RBKC, Director of Strategy and Local Services)

Paul Rackham (RBKC, Head of Commissioning, Prevention)

Rupa Parmar (RBKC, Head of Commissioning)

Gary Lisney (RBKC, Asset Management Surveyor)

Susan Dolton (Kensington and Chelsea Foundation)

Erik Messel (John Lyon’s Charity)

**1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, AND INTRODUCTIONS**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Helen Leech, Councillor Campbell and Councillor Freeman.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

2.1 The following interests were declared: Councillor Press – Westway Trust, Councillor Coleridge – Kensington and Chelsea Foundation, Councillor Taylor Smith – Chelsea Theatre.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 SEPTEMBER 2016**

3.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

3.2 Councillor Press requested that the Group receives an update on efforts to resettle Syrian refugees. Councillor Hargreaves agreed that this could include an update on the Community Sponsorship Scheme.

3.3 Tony Redpath stated that he had not received a response from Housing with regards to the report on the demand for specialist housing advice.

**ACTION: Tony Redpath to follow up his earlier request for the report on demand for specialist housing advice to be shared.**

**4. VOLUNTARY SECTOR PROPERTY ISSUES**

4.1 Gary Lisney from the Council’s Property Department presented early results of an exercise to map voluntary organisations across the borough. He pointed out that the maps were based on data that still required some cleansing.

4.2 Angela Spence commented that it would be a useful tool if it could be used to identify areas where there are gaps in service provision. The information could be considered in deciding where a voluntary sector hub might be located.

4.3 Councillor Press asked if the maps could also include where Council services are delivered. Tony Redpath reminded the group that a good deal of information was already available on the People First website and we should avoid duplication of what is already there.

4.4 Councillor Coleridge noted the good spread of organisations across the borough, however he did question if there had been a loss of good affordable office space.

4.5 Angela Spence felt that the maps themselves would be of limited use to the Voluntary Sector if it was solely a property tool. However, it could help to highlight resources that could be shared e.g. meeting space.

4.6 Gary Lisney went on to give an update on the plans to relocate Canalside House tenants in new office accommodation. He had had some initial discussions with tenants about their requirements and some conceptual ideas had been commissioned in relation to property acquired by the Council in Latimer Road. Tenants will be involved in the design. It was noted that the location is not as accessible by public transport as Canalside House, and the Property Department are looking into steps to mitigate this including talking to TfL.

4.7 Val Patterson asked if the accommodation would be open plan. Gary Lisney replied that the concept is for flexible space that maximises utilisation. Organisations have expressed a need for private meeting space and this need will be met. Councillor Coleridge asked about the cost to organisations, Gary indicated there would be no additional costs to organisations. Councillor Hargreaves asked about timescales, Gary replied that this was a significant development that would take up to two years. He recognised that some organisations would need support to adapt to new ways of working.

**5.**  **COMMISSIONING IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND CHILDREN’S SERVICES**

5.1 Rupa Parmar gave an update on commissioning in Children’s Services. Officers had met with most providers to update them on the latest position with regard to contracts which had now been rolled on for two years. Services to the most vulnerable and safeguarding services had been protected. Other contracts would be reduced by 9 per cent. Officers would be meeting with providers to discuss what could be reasonably delivered given the reduction.

5.2 Jane Grey referred to one organisation who had expressed concern about the impact of a reduction in funding combined with a rent review. Rupa replied that the organisation would be covered by the rent policy and there should be no increase in the amount paid in rent.

5.3 Val Patterson stated that the real reduction in funding was more than 9 per cent when you take inflation into consideration. She also mentioned that some universal services in deprived areas are preventing safeguarding issues from arising. Rupa responded that the provision of targeted places will continue.

5.4 Paul Rackham provided an update on Adult Social Care commissioning. Providers have had their contracts rolled forward for a further two years from April 2017. Adult Social Care would be involving organisations in themed reviews but had wanted to provide organisations with some stability while these reviews were taking place.

5.5 Councillor Press asked if reviews should be put on hold until a decision about a rise in Council Tax had been made as this might alleviate the situation. Paul responded that the reviews were longer term than this. Councillor Coleridge also pointed out that the proposed rise in Council Tax would bring in around £1.5m which would not have a significant impact on overall budgets. Councillor Weale stated that the reviews were more about a change of approach which would take a more holistic view of service provision, reducing duplication and improving services for customers.

5.6 Any further questions could be addressed to Paul or Rupa outside of the meeting.

**6**. **ESTABLISHING A YOUTH FOUNDATION**

6.1 Erik Messel, from John Lyon’s Charity gave a presentation on the proposal to establish a youth foundation in the borough. Erik introduced the John Lyon’s charity and shared information on the areas of London which benefit from the charity, which includes the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The Youth Foundation model was developed as a response to changes that the charity had noticed since 2011 including a drop in funding applications from smaller groups and the closure of some larger organisations. Youth Foundations are membership organisations that aim to bring in additional funding into an area for children and young people, operate a ‘venue bank’ and support capacity building and networking. John Lyon’s wish to explore interest in establishing a Youth Foundation in Kensington and Chelsea, and some initial discussions had taken place with Epic CIC.

6.2 Councillor Hargreaves asked how the model could be adapted to take account of local circumstances. Erik responded that the various Foundations had differing levels of support from the relevant local authorities. Certain core elements of the foundation model are considered necessary. Councillor Hargreaves went on to ask if a new Foundation was always established, or if there was scope to build on existing structures. Erik stressed that the organisation had to be a membership organisation solely focused on children and young people.

6.3 Jane Grey questioned what additional funding a Youth Foundation may be able to access. Erik explained that the model encouraged the commissioning of local groups working together as opposed to national organisations and that working together in foundation structure strengthens the position of individual organisations in gaining access to funding.

6.4 Angela Spence asked about City Bridge Trust funding. Erik explained that the City Bridge Trust tended to prioritise outer London boroughs. Inner London boroughs such as Kensington and Chelsea would receive £50k funding from John Lyon’s plus a £50k small grants fund.

**ACTION: Council to convene a meeting of interested parties to discuss this approach and agree a way forward.**

**7.** **REVIEW OF THE ORGANISATIONS IN DIFFICULTY PROCEDURE**

7.1 Angela Spence reported that the voluntary sector representatives were broadly in agreement with the changes. Further feedback will be sought by email.

**ACTION: Melanie Marshman to seek feedback on the procedure by email with a view to agreeing the proposed changes.**

**8.** **VOLUNTARY SECTOR MATTERS**

8.1Angela Spence introduced her report. She asked for the Council’s views on the recent personnel changes at CWL Healthwatch. Councillor Hargreaves reassured her that despite the difficulties retaining a Director, the Council was confident that there was a lot of good work happening.

8.2Angela asked how the Council had prepared for the introduction of Universal Credit and a subsequent potential rise in the need for support in completing the process online. Melanie Marshman informed the group that change in pilot areas had led to a relatively small increase in requests for assistance. In preparation, staff in the Customer Service Centre had been trained to assist. Tony Redpath suggested that Libraries staff could also be trained.

**9.** **COUNCIL GENERAL MATTERS**

9.1 Melanie Marshman informed that group that the Key Decision relating to Corporate Grants for 2017-2019 would be published the following day. She highlighted that the Council had also recently awarded the latest round of Small Grants. Councillor Press asked if, in future, the report could provide a one-line description of what had been funded.

**10.** **ANY OTHER ORAL OR WRITTEN ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

10.1 Councillor Press asked that the Group could discuss the Youth Foundation again at some time in the future as she had been impressed by the amount of MOPAC funding that had been secured elsewhere. Councillor Hargreaves pointed out that a lot of MOPAC funding was now being reviewed. Tony Redpath suggested that a meeting was convened of key stakeholders to carry out a SWOT analysis.

10.2 New Voluntary Sector reps will take up their roles for the next meeting which meant it was the last meeting for Jane Gray and Laurence Wilson. Councillor Hargreaves and Angela Spence led the group in thanking them for their time and contributions.

**11.** **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

11.1 The next meeting will be held on 16 March 2017.

**Meeting ended 20:00**