**ICNC Minutes 3rd July 2013**

**In attendence:**

Ruth Hayes Advice Network (Chair)

Mike Sherriff Voluntary Action Islington (Chair)

Chris Taylor Voluntary Action Islington

Roz Miller Faiths Forum

Mark Brennan Homelessness Network

Shannon Homelessness Network

Anita Grant Islington Play Forum

Rahel Geffen Islington Disability Network

John MacKinnon Sport Islington

Colin Adams Octopus Community Centres

Adrian Voce CYP VS Forum

Eyasu Buba Islington Refugee Forum

Aisha Forbes Islington BME Forum

**Apologies:**

Rachel Toogood Creative Islington

Rob Hamilton Older People’s Network

Phil Watson Voluntary Sector Health Network

**1. Previous minutes and matters arising**

A correction to item 5 of the previous minutes was noted: it is applications to Islington Council regarding assistance with homelessness that are down – not applications to homeless shelters. The minutes were otherwise agreed as accurate.

**2. ICN Update – vice-chair, MH&P Network, Equality in Islington report**

Members agreed to appoint RM as vice-chair of the ICN. Islington Mental Health & Poverty Networking Forum (IMHPNF) has agreed to join the ICN.

**Action:** CT to send membership forms to IMHPNF.

The VCS response to the council’s new Single Equality Scheme, drawn up based on the 14 May ICN / BME Forum / Disability Network focus group event, was discussed. The VCS can engage with the council through a series of dialogue sessions, the first of which is on 4 July. AF, RM, RG, RH, EB and AV are attending.

CT has met with the council’s Single Employer Face project. They are keen to engage with the VCS both to increase the number of residents referred to them for employment support and to support organisations to offer work experience, apprenticeships, etc.

**3. LBI briefing for VCS on Comprehensive Spending Review**

Members considered the 2 July meeting called to apprise the VCS of the impact in Islington of the Comprehensive Spending Review. A number of suggestions for how the council can help the sector cope with reduced funding were made: time and increased capacity for fundraising are needed more than skills; discretionary rates could be requested; more support should be given to local groups to allow them to compete with national groups in the commissioning process; and grants can allow more flexibility in the delivery of projects, which helps smaller groups, without any loss of accountability.

**Action:** Members to send evidence of examples of effective grant funding models to CT.

**4. Voluntary and community sector manifesto for local election candidates – event planning**

It was agreed to hold the event on 24 September 2013 from 10am – 3pm. It will be run on the Open Space model. A working group will be set up to arrange the event. Volunteers at the meeting were RG, MS, CT.

**5. Forums Feedback**

RM- The Faiths Forum is planning for the Islington Month of peace. There are discussions about expanding the work of the Islington Mental Health and Poverty Networking Forum.

AG – The Play Forum is looking at including Early Years groups. There is a playday on 7 August at Paradise Park from 11am – 4pm. On 9 August there will be barbeques on all Adventure Playgrounds to celebrate the council’s commitment to keep them as Adventure Playgrounds in perpetuity. Islington is known nationally as a good borough for play.

MB – There is a £10m fund to support homeless people discharged from hospital. The outreach surgeries contract, currently held by Pilion, is up for bid.

JM – The Sport Islington awards will be held on 15 June at Islington Assembly Halls. Sport Islington is supporting an asset transfer of Finsbury Park athletics track to community ownership.

AF – The BME Forum intends to research the impact of welfare reform on BME communities. The planning for Black History Month includes a conference event on how to sustain its impact if funding is cut.

**Action:** AF to circulate case study template received from council for feedback.

**Action:** CT to meet AF to discuss the case study project on the impact of welfare reform.

RG – Work to support clients through the benefit changes is on-going. The Disability Network is working with the council on the transition. A consultation on the mobility component of the Personal Independence Payment has been opened.

EB – The 18 June event celebrating Refugee Week was a great success. The Refugee Forum will be asking users to review the services it provides in July.

CA – The next Community Hubs meeting is tomorrow and will focus on resident engagement and welfare reform. Employability is residents’ biggest concern. Octopus is asking for computers from the council to offer people the facility to work on benefit forms. Groups are invited to attend the Octopus AGM to discuss collaboration. Discussions with Job Centre Plus on volunteering while looking for work are being held.

RH – The Advice Alliance has been campaigning on Legal Aid cuts. There has been a U-turn on the assignation of criminal lawyers – a choice will remain possible. Legal challenges to the bedroom tax and the total benefit cap, that would not be possible under new legislation, are underway. Proof of 12 months residency in the UK is proposed to qualify for Legal Aid. Islington Law Centre was featured in the Guardian on the impact of Legal Aid cuts.

**Action:** RH to circulate details of an Islington Advice Alliance welfare reform project.

**6. Feedback and discussion re. Public Health round table**

**Action:** CT to circulate contact details for the Islington Clinical Commissioning Group’s (CCG) Involvement and Engagement Officer and to re-circulate details of the CCG’s 9 July VCS workshop (CCG).

**Action:** MS to formally raise the possibility of the ICN being used as a mechanism for providing a VCS representative to the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB).

**Action:** CT to send MS details of VCS representatives on HWBs in other London boroughs.

**7. Community Chest update**

It was reported that AF and RG were briefed on the Community Chest (CC) programme today. The first meeting for 2013/14 is this Friday. A change to the CC funding priorities to focus on outcomes, rather than themes such as ‘health’, ‘art’, etc., is being looked at.

**Action:** AF / RG / RM to raise.the underfunding of sports projects with the CC Panel.

**8. VS Conference - working group**

The Islington Voluntary Sector Conference 2013 will be held on 23 November. Volunteers for the working group were, RH, CA, MS, CT.

**Action:** CT to invite ICNC members not present to join the working group.

**9. AOB; dates of 2013/14 meetings**

* **9th October** from 4pm to 5.30pm
* **29th** **January** from 4pm to 5.30pm

**Action:** CT to circulate meeting dates.