

Minutes of CCEN Executive Board Meeting Held on Tuesday 15th November 2011

Present: Peter Ward, Simone Hensby, David Devoy, Helia Evans, Francis Bacon, Shelagh O'Connor, Jan Knight (arrived at 2pm),

Also present: Donna Turnbull, Alex Charles

1. **Apologies:** Eleanor Botwright, Ruth Appleton, Lincoln Lin, Anju Bhatt

2. **Minutes and Matter Arising**

Minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

Matters Arising

6.0 Helia was unaware of any further development on the draft Statement of Community Strategy or Camden Community Strategy. It appears to have been side-lined in place of the new governments focus on planning (Local Development Framework) and the Localism Bill.

3. **Update on the CCEN and the future**

3.1 **Strategic boards and partnership work- Simone**

We have seen and continue to see, a period of rapid change across strategic board and partnership work.

LSP: Under the new government, LAA funding of the LSP was withdrawn. The future of the LSP still remains uncertain and it is not clear what will happen, or how partnership work will continue in the future. It appears unlikely at this stage that the LSP will continue to work in the same way as it has done previously.

Children and Young People's Partnership Board: continues to exist but is not meeting. The existence of the board is no longer a statutory requirement.

Health and Well-Being Board (HWBB): is set to become a statutory requirement once legislation is passed, its role being to develop HWBB strategy and oversee the clinical commissioning group. At present the VCS lacks any presence on the board and further discussions are necessary to ensure VCS involvement. Simone will put together a paper to this effect and will meet with the board's Chair and Head of Scrutiny to discuss further. Francis raised concern about how men's health issues are fed into strategic partnerships and both David and Shelagh mentioned they have information around older men's health and youth homelessness in relation to Health and Well-Being which they can send to Simone. Shelagh has also expressed an interest in being involved in the future as recently work demands have not allowed her to do so.

Simone noted that it remains essential for the VCS to ensure its involvement at strategic level and across any future partnership work.

3.2 Function of CCEN- Simone/Donna

Funding: Simone explained that CCEN funding will cease on the 31st December and further funding is not available to continue the network. The CCEN will not exist post-December. Some of its work (mainly electronic communication and support) will be absorbed into other aspects of VAC's work through the Organisation and Market Development (OMD) contract of which VAC is the lead organisation in consortia with five other Camden Infrastructure organisations¹. The contract begins in January.

VAC has also put in an application to the Social Action Fund to roll out the Neighbourhood Planning project across the borough, the results are expected soon.

Francis asked what will happen to the board post-December. Donna and Simone explained that as the CCEN will no longer exist and the board's job is to oversee the CCEN, the board will disband with the CCEN on 31st December. Peter, Shelagh, Francis and Jan wished to add that the CCEN has consistently provided them with a bigger picture of what's happening across the borough at a strategic level and has served a useful purpose. They also raised concern as to how the sector would receive the same level of support and strategic input without the CCEN in place. Simone reiterated that the communication involvement loop between the sector, council and other partners in the OMD contract would absorb that aspect of CCEN's work to keep strategic communication going e.g. through the communications portal, annual 'priority' events, focus groups, internet forums, one-to-one communications etc. Both Helia and Francis stressed that electronic communication is only one aspect of communication and emphasised the importance in ensuring that communication is accessible, open and transparent for all. David wished to commend CCEN/VAC for finding ways to continue the CCEN's good work, albeit in a different form.

Strategic Partnership Boards: Donna explained how most representatives sit on a number of boards and the challenge has been how to enable their support without VAC network workers and without funds to do so. The CCEN has been working in a limited capacity to address this issue and ensure the VCS maintains representation at strategic levels.

Alex has collated information pertaining to VCS representatives and strategic board meetings on the [CCEN website](#), emailed to the relevant VCS representatives and to relevant mailing lists, enabling interested parties to access contact information, meeting dates and meeting papers/related paperwork. Any feedback received is relayed back to the designated representative for inclusion at the next meeting.

Only two boards appear to have been active in this respect- the Adult Safeguarding board and Sustainability partnership - reflecting the uncertainty facing partnership work now and in the future.

Alex is exploring how to add comment feeds to the website to enable further communication and Simone suggested that VAC look further at the IT components of this work to carry it forward after CCEN funding ends.

Simone expects the council to make a statement soon about the future of partnership work and Helia requested regular updates be sent if possible.

¹ VCC, BME Alliance, CENTA, Mary Ward & DISC from January 2012 to March 2015

Neighbourhood Planning: The Localism Bill, of which Neighbourhood Planning is a key component, will soon become an Act of Parliament. Donna demonstrated CCEN's work on the Camden Blueprint project through the neighbourhood planning pages on the CCEN website. Alex has A page was set-up pages to explain [neighbourhood planning](#) in relation to the Localism Bill and Local Development Framework with subsequent pages set-up specifically for the [Camden Blueprint project](#) and the two project pilots in [Bloomsbury](#) and [Somers Town](#). Michael Parkes, a volunteer community planner, has been working with the CCEN to provide town planning expertise and advice to residents and is helping with both the input and development of the Camden Blueprint. It is aimed to complete the Blueprint before December 31st.

Donna explained how Bloomsbury is moving ahead with the plan very quickly. The 'Bloomsbury Village neighbourhood boundary' was defined and stakeholders have already set-up a shadow neighbourhood forum and several working groups around key topics. Donna is helping them with the constitution. A Planning for Real event is scheduled for 5 December.

Somers Town presents different challenges to Bloomsbury which will be documented in detail in the Blueprint. Further work is necessary to promote the benefits of neighbourhood planning for the area and to ensure the neighbourhood forum is inclusive and credible. Candidates for a shadow forum and Planning and Development Working Group have been proposed.

Shelagh expressed concern that Localism may not suit organisations that operate services 'outside' of a designated neighbourhood, for example cross-borough projects or even pan-London or national projects. David questioned whether any concerns had been raised in Bloomsbury about St Mungo's hostels in the area. Helia was concerned that people who have little knowledge about local policy or community needs, or who have little involvement with the community itself, may make decisions on behalf of others.

Donna explained that all of these concerns can be addressed through the neighbourhood planning process and CCEN has adopted a neutral position of facilitation to address such concerns, lack of involvement, provide advice etc. about the planning and community engagement process.

CCEN Future: Simone informed the board that as part of the new OMD contract a Planning Summit has been scheduled for 4th Jan 2012 to look at how a range of work will be taken forward in the future.

4. Information Exchange

Shelagh felt it important to maintain information exchange across the sector e.g. the impact of cuts etc. Simone stated that cuts will most likely propagate as the New Year unfolds and agreed the importance of ensuring organisations are aware of the resulting impact (s).

5. AOB

Francis has joined the Camden Federation of Private Tenants which is scheduled to lose funding as of April 2012. Francis stated that the Federation provides advice to approximately 37% of residents across the borough and therefore ought to be supported in some capacity to ensure residents have access to sound advice.

Helia stated that she is a board member of the Camden Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations which is also at risk of funding cuts and ought to be supported too.