



VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE - 18TH JUNE 2014

SUBJECT: ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

REPORT BY: GWENT ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

GAVO'S THIRD SECTOR SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT

Voluntary Sector Representation and Forums

Voluntary Sector Forums were held on:

- Upper Rhymney & Mid Valleys West Forum – 23rd January
- Caerphilly Basin Forum - 18th March
- Islwyn & Mid Valleys East Forum – 12th March

Caerphilly Voluntary Sector Representatives meet quarterly to discuss items of interest to the sector and to inform the agenda for Voluntary Sector Joint Liaison Committees.

A Voluntary Sector Leadership Network is being established to ensure that the interface and influence with statutory partners is maximised.

Community Planning Co-ordination

The Community Planning Co-ordinator continues to work as part of the Policy Unit on the LSB / Single Plan / Citizen Engagement work and spends time weekly in Ty Penallta, attending policy unit meetings and other partnership meetings including the Sustainable Development core group and WG LSB Support Team meetings.

The quarterly Local Service Board meeting took place in February 2014 attended by Martin Featherstone for the first time as GAVO Chief Executive. The Community Planning Co-ordinator provides administrative support to the meeting. The Single Plan process has continued, and the inaugural meetings have taken place of the Leads Group, Delivery Group and a joint meeting of the two at the end of January. GAVO will be represented on the Leads Group by Martin Featherstone or Emily Forbes and on the Delivery Group by Emily Forbes and Alison Palmer in a support capacity for both groups.

As a result of further development of the delivery mechanisms the LSB multi-agency Citizen Engagement group has been reinstated and GAVO/third sector has 3 representatives.

The Spring/Summer Local Service Board Standing Conference was arranged for 13th June at Llancaiach Fawr and theme of Tackling Poverty.

Community Groups

Support has been given to approximately 80 community groups and organisations across the borough in non-Communities First areas. The support has varied from advice and guidance on governance issues, project planning and monitoring, finance, charity applications, training and practical help with applications for funding.

Funding has become increasingly difficult to obtain (especially for the smaller groups) as the current economic climate seems to have reduced the amount of money available and many funders have changed their criteria to link to the poverty agenda and expect groups to demonstrate a high level of sustainability.

Despite this there have been several successes. These have included Cwmfelinfach Allotment Association who were awarded Lottery grants to improve facilities and create a wildlife area for the children, Blackwood Little Theatre who have gained funding to carry out renovations and also have a survey and plans drawn up for future improvements and Newbridge Tabernacle Church who were awarded various grants to improve their kitchen facilities and now have a very successful luncheon club.

Grants Co-ordination

Unfortunately, due to reduction in core funding, our resources for grants co-ordination has decreased and from June will sit at 12 hours a week. This will impact on the level of detailed advice provided and is an area that we are looking for a sustainable solution to. In the last period, 20 groups received funding advice through this post.

Volunteering

The first three months of the year have continued to see referrals increase to 91, this quarter, with an increase in young people referrals. A total of 200 new volunteers were registered, 80 of which were interviewed face to face. This increased demand also impacts on the crucial partnership meetings, networks, events attended and presentations made.

Collaborative working with CCBC staff has put in place a way forward for the Annual Volunteer Awards, set against a backdrop of less resources. It was felt important to continue to hold the awards evening to show appreciation for volunteers and their commitment. The format was agreed and the Volunteer Star Awards were launched on 17th March with a closing date of 2nd May. The presentation evening will be held at Ty Penallta on 2nd July.

Beverly Boulton has decided to resign from her Volunteer Information Officer role (due to personal commitments) but will continue as the Youth Volunteer Officer. We are in the process of appointing a replacement, who we hope will commence with GAVO at the end of June.

Sunflower Volunteer Project

This Lottery funded project commenced in January to provide befriending to isolated patients in single room accommodation in hospitals. The project is running well in Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr and Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan. A recruitment exercise appointed a full time Co-ordinator and Support Worker to each hospital. The dedication of the staff and volunteers to setting up these projects in the early stages is notable, as well as the continued strong partnership working with Health Board staff. Activities in both hospitals have been well received and volunteer numbers continue to increase.

GAVO PROJECTS UPDATE

Caerphilly Communities First

The team at GAVO (8 Communities First Development Officers) successfully met their delivery targets for the last year.

GAVO's Senior Development Officer has worked closely with the Cluster Managers in order to develop GAVO's role within the Communities First Cluster Plan. Part of this has been to ensure that each area has the same targets for 2014/2015 so that there is clarity and a uniformed approach with regard to future monitoring.

A CF Network event was held during the reporting period. The aim of the event was to gauge the opinions of the CF Community partners and Project Participants.

Project development support and funding advice has been given to 52 projects in the last period.

Successful delivery of Communities First work continues in each area on:

- Community Involvement plans
- Voluntary Work Placement Schemes
- Sustainable Group Development

Community Voice Project

The Big Lottery funded Community Voice programme aims to improve:

- Engagement and participation in the community
- Delivery of services, which meets citizens needs more effectively

GAVO operates two portfolios across Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire and Newport. 'Valleys Voices – Active Engagement' Portfolio – Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent is made up of 9 organisations working to jointly deliver the Portfolio outcomes and the projects are developing well:

1. Organisation: **Hafal**, Project: **'Mental Health Carer Participation Project'**
2. Organisation: **Sight Support**, Project: **'See it my Way'**
3. Organisation: **Stroke Association**, Project: **'Speak out for Stroke'**
4. Organisation: **Menter Iaith**, Project: **'Prosiect Llais'**
5. Organisation: **RVS**, Project: **'Care to Listen, Listen to Care'**
6. Organisation: **Caerphilly Borough Mind** Project: **Voices for Mental Health**
7. Organisation: **Caerphilly People First** Project: **Experts Through Experience**
8. Organisation: **Action For Children** Project: **Ebbw Fach School Family Links**
9. Organisation: **Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry Community Council**

Making the Connections (MtC) Project

The MtC projects are European funded in Convergence areas throughout Wales to support the work and engagement of Local Service Boards.

GAVO's MtC Officer continues to support the meeting of the credit union task and finish group, a sub-group of the LSB. The group works to advance the profile and membership of the credit union movement within Caerphilly County Borough. The group has decided to develop work with employees within the county, in particular work within the CBC. At the last meeting, the results of a CCBC survey showed that the profile and understanding of the credit union movement, is still low. The MtC Officer will be working with the Caerphilly credit unions to produce a joint leaflet and a co-ordinated publicity plan. Executive Officers of CCBC trade unions have already been contacted and are interested in developing the service as an extra employee benefit.

The MtC Officer continues to facilitate the No-one Left Behind group. Though there has been a little dislocation, the group hopes to start delivering service in Rhymney High School by Easter. Vaughan Gethin AM, has committed an initial amount to underwrite the project via Caerphilly Communities First. The Group worked with Caerphilly Communities First to achieve the above.

The MtC Officer met with the newly appointed Gwent Money Advice Service - Project Manager, funded under the Regional Collaboration Fund. It was agreed that the MtC Officer would publicise the services to the third-sector when the project was prepared to launch. In addition the GMAS Officer would like to utilise the GAVO third sector data base and engage with third sector organisations to ensure the distribution of relevant information and services.

The "GAVO Connections Project" has completed its development phase and has received an enthusiastic response. As a result of the testing some small alterations to the programme have to be developed. This will be funded under the new financial year allocation. The project has also received agreement, for the employment of a short-term data entry officer to ensure the initial entry of information. It is envisaged that over 500 organisations will be identified through this work and many will be in a position to deliver public services.

The MtC Officer has represented the third sector on the Caerphilly Empowering Communities Project. This will allow the citizen to access information and services easily. The MtC Officer has been responsible for supporting the design of the programme. The "GAVOConnections" data-base will be an ancillary programme to Empowering Communities and supply base-level data to the website and individuals will then be directed to the GAVO database for additional information in their sections, within the council.

The MtC Officer has organised in conjunction with the Enterprising Communities Officer a training day on Environmental Management Systems and Equality and Diversity. The day will be delivered by Cardiff University and CCBC's Equality and Diversity Officer. The aim of the day is to ensure that Third Sector not only has the correct policies in place but enacts these. This will put third sector organisations in a powerful position to tender to deliver services.

Enterprising Communities Project

GAVO's Community Enterprise Officer (CEO) has attended a number of partnerships and networking events to share information with colleagues in key roles. The CEO has worked with the following groups in the last period:

- Caerphilly Crafters
- Samye Foundation Wales
- RecRock
- Friends of Navigation Colliery
- 3G Project – Ynysddu Youth (Sirhowy Pioneers)
- Bedwas Gymnastic
- Crafts for Everyone
- Greencap
- Rainbow Enterprises

The 1st edition of **Caerphilly County Borough Social Enterprise Directory** was launched and lists some of the social enterprises within the Borough. This directory has been sent to CCBC, Aneurin Bevan Health Board, Gwent police and South Wales Fire Service, as well as GAVO members see <http://www.gavowales.org.uk/enterprising-communities>

Health, Social Care and Wellbeing

GAVO's Health and Social Care Facilitator delivers the Building Strong Bridges Project, which aim is to; strengthen the role, contribution and engagement of third sector organisations in the context of local, regional and national priorities for health and social care.

The Health and Social Care Facilitator contributed to 3 meetings of the Caerphilly Neighbourhood Care Networks (ABUHB) providing third sector service and news updates and organised a Caerphilly Health and Social Care Alliance meeting with a number of guest speakers.

The HSC Facilitator met with some of the Community Voice projects (mentioned earlier in this report) with a health and social care focus, to assist with key contacts and networking opportunities in the borough. Meetings were arranged with Stroke association, Sight Cymru and Caerphilly Borough Mind who host a service user voice project covering both Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent. The HSC Facilitator is a member of the Gwent project board established by the Royal Voluntary Service to support their Community Voice portfolio project.

Additionally, a meeting was arranged with the Supporting People lead Commissioner to discuss the supporting people forward plan and engagement with the third sector.

Work is underway with the CCBC procurement team to discuss working together to tackle any issues highlighted by members of the Caerphilly Health and Social Care Alliance. It was raised that third sector organisations are not making use of the Third Sector Relationship Officer's support through the procurement clinics. CCBC is the only local authority in Wales with this support for the third sector.

The Caerphilly Wellbeing Network are currently populating action plans and reporting scorecards for the Single Integrated Plan. The HSC Facilitator contributed third sector service and activity information for the Healthier theme through the Wellbeing Network. The Network's focus is predominantly public health and the membership includes Communities First.

The HSC Facilitator is part of a Task and Finish Group supporting the development in the Borough of the Public Health agenda in the context of '5 Ways to Wellbeing' a training module is currently being developed in relation to mental health and the workplace with Caerphilly Borough Mind.

Play

GAVO delivers of a number of play projects. Despite some funding issues earlier in the year and inclement weather to contend with, project delivery is on track:

- Adventure Play
 - Free play opportunities for 8-14 yr olds in the outdoor environment or community
- Inclusive Play
 - Working with children and young people with disabilities and their parents, to identify any barriers they face
- Creative Play / Pop in and play
 - Providing support to child centred settings for early years (up to 3yrs)
- Holiday Scheme
 - Development of young people's programme of activities and funding advice support for community groups running projects
- Play Development and Training
 - Raising awareness of play and provision of training courses

KEY DATES FOR THE DIARY

23 June	Youth Work Week
25 June	Mid Valleys East & Lower Islwyn Forum
2 July	Caerphilly Volunteer Awards, Ty Penallta
1 July	WCVA national Volunteering Conference
17 July	Reshaping Services with the Public – WAO Conference
17 July	Mid Valleys West & Upper Rhymney Valley Forum
6 Aug	Playday, Morgan Jones Park
14 Oct	GAVO Annual General Meeting at the Christchurch Centre, Newport
25 Oct	OneBeat Event, Ty Penallta

Links to statistical information and documents that may be of interest can be found below:

Local Area Summary Statistics for Caerphilly:

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/2014/140409-local-area-summary-caerphilly-en.pdf>

The latest Regional Economic and Labour Market profiles (for South East Wales):

<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/statistics/2014/140529-regional-economic-labour-market-profiles-may-2014-south-east-wales-en.pdf>

Communities First Baseline 2012:

<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/communities-first/?lang=en>

The updated Police and Crime plan for Gwent:

http://www.gwent.pcc.police.uk/fileadmin/user_upload/documents/Publications/14_04_29_V4_Revision_d_Plan_April_14.pdf

Welsh Government Research to support the duty to review the Mental Health (Wales) Measure 2010:

<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/research-support-duty-review-mental-health-measure-2010/?lang=en>

A reminder that Local Service Board papers can be accessed at:

<http://your.caerphilly.gov.uk/communityplanning/content/local-service-board-current-minutes-0>

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