**Notes of the meeting: Public and Voluntary Sectors’ Partnership,**

**Wednesday, 24th April, 2013** (5.00 p.m. - 7.00 p.m.), **@ RCVS, Forest House, 16-20 Clements Road, Ilford Essex**

**Present:**

Councillors: H. Coomb, J. Fairley-Churchill and A. Phillips

**Voluntary Sector Reps:** John Garlick (Chair), Nicholas Hurst, Roy Emmett, Jon Pushkin

**Public sector members: Nil**

**Officers:** Ross Diamond, M Henry, John Turkson

1. **Welcome, Introductions, Apologies & Substitutes - John Garlick, Chairman**

Apologies for absence were received from: Shila Barber LBR, Louise Mitchell and Kirsty Boettcher (NHS) and Sudarshan Bhuhi Aanchal.

The Partnership welcomed Hermitage Residents Association and Age UK.

1. **Declaration of Interest - All**

None.

1. **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13th February 2013 & Matters Arising – John Garlick, Chair**

It was agreed the minutes of the meeting 13th February 2013 be approved subject to the following changes:-

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Item 6 – 3rd paragraph should read

“When questioned about how the view of GPs would be fed into the monitoring network, Louise replied that a clinical representative from each practise will form a member committee as part of the new governance arrangements. Each locality has appointed a Clinical Director who will represent them at the main governing body”.

Item 6 – 4th paragraph, 2nd sentence should read “Louise reported that NHS officers recognised the importance of the Health and Well-Being Board as a forum where both LA and CCG work collectively to identify the health and wellbeing priorities for the Borough, this includes public health. The LA and CCG have established a framework for working together to mitigate such risks during transition”.

1. **Raising the Profile of the Voluntary and Community Sector - Age UK, Redbridge - Funded as LBR Strategic Partner - Andy Petty**

Andy Petty, Director of Age UK, Redbridge gave an outline of Age UK Redbridge, including the importance of the strategic partner role. Age UK had been established for 50 years, has a turnover of £700,000 year, employs 22 staff, 130 volunteers and provides services to 4,700 older people. Its priorities are to put kindness & dignity first.

Its services aim to:-

* Improve quality of life
* support Independence of choice
* promote Health and well being including monitoring where appropriate eg Dairy fresh service (bathing service staff have seen early stages of gangrene and alerted health professionals).
* Prevent harm to older people
* provide holistic care. All staff trained to assess and refer.

Specific services provided:

* Info and advice – (Hainault Health Centre and Main Office)
* Early intervention Dementia Advice Service
* Falls Prevention
* Befriending service
* Hospital discharge support
* Daisy Fresh Home Support Service
* Wanstead Activity Centre
* Voices of Experience
* IT Training

AGE UK are seeking to provide anything an older person wants, e.g. It has been working with McMillan with the aim to provide practical help to support people to engage with their treatment.

Strategic Partner Role:

Andy emphasised the Strategic Partners funding helps to acquire funding externally. This was invaluable to the organisation.

Examples include: Micrommunity Project (Intergenerational community cohesion IT Project where 6th form pupils taught older people IT skills)

Age UK received £48.000 funding last year; Community based Postural Stability Exercise Programme Pilot – funding awarded £72,000. The LB Redbridge Strategic Partner status enabled them to demonstrate in the bids that they had an important strategic role within the borough which provided confidence that we could deliver outcomes.

The Strategic Partner Role requires them to engage at a Strategic level. They are involved in 20 strategic partnerships, planning and working groups including:-

Adult safeguarding board; Dementia Partnership; and Door stop crime.

Practical current example that underlines importance of Strategic Partner funding is

The Big Lottery “Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better” funding stream aimed at reducing social isolation and loneliness. The Local Authority is required to submit an ‘Expression of Interest’ to get the funding. Age UK are currently working on this expression of interest with a small group of partners. If successful, they would be required to be a part of a much wider partnership to develop a vision and secure a substantial amount of funding for the borough. From this point of the project the partnership has to be led by a voluntary organisation. The borough has asked them to be the lead, if Redbridge is selected.

The long established Strategic Partner programme will enable AGE UK to demonstrate Redbridge has a track record of strong partnership working across the public and voluntary sector.

**5. Raising the Profile of the Voluntary and Community Sector - Hermitage Residents Association - Funded by LBR Community Fund - Minesh Patel**

Minesh Patel attended on behalf of the Residents Association of the Hermitage Estate in Snaresbrook which comprised of 330 flats (with 1, 2 and 3 bedrooms). He was talking about a ‘Community Day’ event which had been funded by LBR’s Community Fund. The event was held to revive local community spirit and to bring everyone together. Without the grant the event would have been very small and would not have generated as much interest as it did. With the funding they were able to attract a diverse community from toddlers to old age pensioners. Minesh showed slides of the day, with stalls and bouncy castles.

There was a Healthy Lifestyle stall which gave out free smoothies and showed people how to make their own. Tables for people to sit and have a drink and engage with each other for provided, including for older people. There was a community ‘young bus’ with games for young children to engage and interact. Redbridge Recycling had a stall. This stall had lots of ideas about recycling in the home and the wider environment. There was also football coaching, head and back massages, which all proved very popular. LBR Homes ran a survey (where you could win a games station) which got lots of responses. There were also popular ‘Fix your bike’ and Barbecue stalls.

All residents were given ‘goody-bags’ from the day with goodies and information and Minesh said the day helped to achieved a sense of belonging.

400-plus people attended and the Redbridge Information Service obtained 12 referrals for their employment scheme.

The winner of the games console shared this with all kids on the estate, who were all sharing their expensive games.

The Residents Association got 4 new committee members as a result of this event. They would like to be the voice of resident on the estate.

Minesh said there were issues about repairs on the estate, and they are proactive in dealing with the situation. They liaise with LBR and other parties to help provide a good place to live, so all can live a decent life.

The residents would like to thank Cllr Dunn, who has been very proactive and positive.

Minesh thanked LBR for the funding, and said although they received a grant from LBR, most of their support is voluntary in-kind support.

The committee is now hoping to get Lottery funding to provide somewhere for young people to play and meet, and they are also looking for football funding.

**6. Introduction of Healthwatch Redbridge - Cathy Turland, Chief Executive Officer**

Cathy explained that in April this year the previous work of Redbridge Local Involvement Network (RedbridgeLINk) was transferred into a new independent local organisation called Healthwatch Redbridge. Local Healthwatches were created to take the place of LINks and there will be one in each Local Authority or Unitary Borough across England (152 in total). They are supported by and work closely with the national organisation, Healthwatch England.

Local Healthwatch will:

* promote and support the involvement of local people in having a say about the way their local health and social care services are run;
* harness the expertise of local communities, charities and voluntary organisations, especially those working with people who have a hard time getting their voices heard. They will make recommendations on how services can be improved;
* support people in taking more control of their own health by providing information and advice on access to local services and the choices open to them; and
* provide people with a single point of contact for information on how to make a complaint about their local health and social care services.

Cathy spoke about pieces of work carried out by RedbridgeLINk. Calling it the ‘LINk Legacy’; she referred to a series of engagement events aimed at seldom heard groups such as the Roma community in Loxford, newly arrived migrant men from Eastern Europe, and people with sensory impairments. She also spoke about partnership work completed with the support of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board in Redbridge. This work sought to engage with older people living in sheltered housing.

Some of the projects mentioned will continue with new proposals will continue to engage within sheltered housing and through new organisations developed as a direct result of working with blind and partially sighted people.

As a non-statutory organisation with statutory powers Healthwatch Redbridge will have a seat on the new Health and Wellbeing Board and is actively seeking to engage with the GP led Clinical Commissioning Group.

Healthwatch Redbridge’s role is to support and identify health and social care issues, assist people to find relevant information about the health and social care services available to them by ‘signposting’ to appropriate services and to ensure that statutory local and national organisations are made aware of local people’s views on those services. They have a role to support people to access advocacy and complaints services if they wish to make a complaint about health services being provided and will work in partnership with Voiceability to do so.

Cathy said RedbridgeLINk had been a ‘Pathfinder’ for Healthwatch over the last 18 months and has actively worked in partnership with RedbridgeCVS as the original host of the LINk, and the London Borough of Redbridge. Redbridge was one of the few areas across England that used grant funding to establish Healthwatch from the current LINk instead of going out to tender. This had shown that the Council had the confidence that the organisation was supported by local people and would seek to work with all communities within Redbridge.

There were still parts of the community that were under-represented and Cathy said that one of Healthwatch’s first tasks was to engage with LGBT and Children and Young People within the community.

Healthwatch Redbridge has also been receiving national recognition and was recently asked to present at the nationwide launch of Healthwatch in London attended by the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt.

**7. Social Value Act - Ross Diamond**

Ross explained that the Public Services (Social Value) Act was now in force. This Act intends to make winning tenders easier for local voluntary and community groups. The Act requires that public bodies assess “social value” in addition to price and quality when judging tenders. Ross circulated a number of handouts which explained the legislation and its implications. He noted that the definition of ‘social value’ would change with each piece of commissioning, but would usually cover such things as use of volunteers, local employment and surpluses generated being spent on the same client group as the commissioned service is intended to serve.

It was noted that including strong ‘social value’ in a tender would not guarantee that you would win a contract, but it would give you extra points.

The concept of social value is a win-win situation and would be good for all.

The Social Value Act was very empowering for the public and voluntary sectors.

**8. Compact - Annual Report 2012/13 and Action Plan - Ross Diamond**

The Redbridge Compact is a joint agreement between local voluntary and community sector groups and public bodies and exists to help partners improve their relationships for the benefit of local people. Ross presented the meeting with the Compact Champions’ Annual Report and Action Plan for the meetings endorsement. This was received.

The report noted that breaches and possible breaches of the Compact were discussed by the Champions group, and ways to resolve these and improve future situations were actively considered.

It was also noted that Redbridge had been shortlisted for 3 categories in the national Compact Awards, and one of these had been won.

**9. Corporate Grants 2013/14 and Community Fund 2012 - Round Two – John Turkson**

The Corporate Grants recommendations went to Cabinet in March 2013. 13 Strategic Partners made applications and 11 were awarded. One had ceased operations and one had been refused (and had been informed of the reasons). Emerging Needs and New Initiatives Funding was awarded to 5 groups and £34,000 given for future small grants applications.

John Turkson said that the next round of LBR’s Community Fund Round would include funding previously unspent in the last round. (This was due, in part, to the tight timescale for that round which meant that some groups could not arrange the necessary match-funding in time.) The Cabinet had now agreed and published criteria for the next rounds of this fund. Information had been circulated about the next round, but this was now being withdrawn, as LBR wanted to run the grants programme later in the year in order to give voluntary organisations more time to make good applications.

**10. Volunteer of the Year Awards - Ross Diamond**

Ross Diamond reported that the Compact Champions group had proposed a local Volunteer of the Year Awards event to raise the profile of volunteering locally, and had suggested that the PaVSP take part in the selection and awarding of the awards. It was agreed that the PaVSP would host the awarding at its Away Day later this year, when it was hoped that the Mayor would be present. The PaVSP were also invited to take part in the short-listing and selection of winners. Ross said he would draft application forms and publicity for circulation by all partners during Volunteers Week (1-6 June). Suggested categories were: Young Volunteer of the Year, Inspirational Volunteer of the Year and Outstanding Achievement in Volunteering.

Cllr Fairley-Churchill suggested that the winners be given a present to demonstrate the value of their contributions and it was noted that he has a discretionary budget that might be used for this. Some concerns were raised about the appropriateness of giving ‘rewards’ of this kind to volunteers and Ross agreed to discuss this with the manager of Volunteer Centre Redbridge. Ross was asked to write to Cllr Fairley-Churchill and John Powell (LBR) to request a sum for purchasing appropriate prizes.

**11. Any Other Business - All**

Cllr Phillips noted that this committee had recently heard from the local Food Bank, and noted that recent research had shown that the need for Food Banks was often caused by mistakes in Benefit payments. He suggested that the Committee request a report from Payments and Benefits regarding this issue, and to ask DWP what they will be doing to help people in crisis (due to mistakes in benefits).

It was agreed that this would be considered for next year’s work plan, at the Away Day. The Away Day (and all dates for next year) would be set up once names of next years’ Council membership was confirmed.

**12. Dates of Future Meetings - Away Day to be scheduled**

Chairman