

Wednesday, 28th March 2012
 6.00pm – 8.45pm
 Crewe YMCA, Gresty Road, Crewe, CW2 6EL

Minutes

Present: 45 Individuals representing 38 member organisations

Adullam	Disability Information Bureau	Plus Dane Group
Alsager Community Church	Disability Resource Exchange	RedShift Radio
C & N senior Forum	DRE (Disability Resource Exchange)	Rossendale Trust
CEC Leisure Development Team	FAST (Family Aid & Support Team)	Rotary Club of Crewe
Cheshire Communicators Club	Forum Housing Association	Rotary Club of Macclesfield Castle
Cheshire East Borough Council	Friends of Handforth Station	Samaritans Crewe South Cheshire
Crewe Samaritans	Future NW /FPN	Sandbach Methodist Church
Cheshire Wildlife Trust	GO Project	St John's Lunch Club
Community Education (South Cheshire College)	K.A.T.E. - Kreative Artistic and Theatrical Events	Stapeley Parish Action Group
Cr8 Youth and Community Programme	Macclesfield Youth Brass Band	The Hope Street Centre
Crewe & Nantwich Senior Forum	NPA	Visyon
Defra	Parkinsons UK (Crewe & District)	Willaston Community Opportunities Group
Department of Work and Pensions		Wishing Well Project

1. Welcome

Caroline O'Brien, Chief Officer, CVS Cheshire East welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. The Importance of our Local Voluntary Sector

Edward Timpson MP for Crewe & Nantwich gave a presentation on the role of the voluntary sector and the important role that they provide in supporting the community and delivering services.

3. AGM Business

3.1. Approval of Minutes of AGM held on 18th February 2011

The minutes of the 2011 AGM were approved

3.2. Chairman's Address

David Priaulx, Chair of CVS Cheshire East presented an overview of the work of CVS Cheshire East over the last 12 months (full report attached)

3.3. Our Future Plans - 'Transforming Local Infrastructure Fund Award'

Caroline O'Brien, Chief Officer, CVS Cheshire East presented an overview of the Transforming Local Infrastructure fund project.

This project would be delivered from March 2012 – September 2013 and aimed to create an efficient, sustainable and collaborative partnership which would transform local delivery building a streamlined, consistent, high quality and easy to access service. The partners will have strong current and future leadership, excellent links with statutory partners, businesses and sustainable varied income streams.

This included the development of an online resource which would act as a single access point for any Voluntary and community group in Cheshire East. There would also be a significant amount of work in streamlining the delivery of services with organisations in the partnership working more closely together with the aim of delivery a better service more efficiently.

The Partnership included:

CVS Cheshire East – Lead Partner
Cheshire and Warrington Social Enterprise Partnership
Cheshire Community Action
Cheshire Halton and Warrington Race and Equality Centre
Learning Together Cheshire and Warrington
Network For Europe
The Disability Information Bureau
The Youth Federation

Specialist Partners

The Lesbian and Gay Foundation
The Social Enterprise Loan Fund
The Pre-school Learning Alliance
Disability Resource Exchange

3.4. Approval of Accounts

The Chief Officer presented the accounts

It was noted that the summary of accounts provided in the annual report provided a clear and understandable picture of the finances for the year. It was recommended this should be carried out each year.

The accounts were approved.

3.5. Re-election of Trustees

The Chairman handed over proceedings to Robert Owen.

CVS Cheshire East Board of Trustees recommended that following nominees were suitable for election for the 3 vacant Trustee positions

- * David Priaulx Current Trustee standing for re-election
- * Flora Yvonne Baker Current Trustee standing for re-election
- * David Hunter Current Trustee standing for re-election

There were no other nominations received from the membership

It was noted that Co-opted vacancies would be filled by individuals recruited for their specialist skills, knowledge and experience.

The members voted and approved the above list of nominated Trustees

Robert Owen passed proceedings back over to David Priaulx.

The chairman paid tribute to John Taylor a long standing Trustee of CVS Cheshire East and Crewe and Nantwich District Voluntary Action who had passed away in January.

Peter Kolker who resigned from the Board at the meeting was thanked and recognised for his time and hard work on the CVS Cheshire East Board.

3.6. Question & Answers

Questions raised by the members were answered by the Chairman and Chief Officer and Edward Timpson MP

4. Showcase - The YMCA

Richard Holmes, Foyer Manager, Crewe YMCA presented an overview of the YMCA and the services that they provide from the Venue.

5. Event Close

The Chairman thanked the speakers and everyone for attending and the AGM was closed.

Chairman's Report

Last year, I reported on the setting up and embedding of the newly merged organisation and indicated that we would be seeking increased internal efficiencies and working hard to develop new services. I am pleased to say that much progress has been made and I will briefly cover some of these areas.

But firstly, we strongly believe that an effective Board or management committee is essential for every organisation in our sector and we have worked hard to be a role model in this respect. I wish to pay tribute to our trustees who have prepared for and then attended our meetings regularly, and to our Chief Officer and staff who provided excellent briefings for us. We have established and routinely reviewed our annual business plan and performance measures to ensure we have been focused on delivery of our targets. We have created 'Board champions' so that we are well informed on external developments in our key strategic areas. We now have a clear marketing strategy, and more recently, engaged senior leaders from the Public and Business Sector in an advisory meeting at Crewe Hall where we were grateful to receive both considerable challenge and support for our work. We held events in 'Trustee Week' last year to encourage some of your Board members/trustees with success stories and best practice from member organisations.

Before I move on I wish to pay tribute to one of our trustees, John Taylor, who died so suddenly earlier this year. John was Chair of Crewe Voluntary Action for around 6 years, He was a core member of the task group that worked to form the new CVS and had supported us so reliably since merger. His ability to overcome difficulties and to remain so optimistic has been an inspiration to us all. He will be sadly missed.

Like many of our member organisations, our Chief Officer and key staff have put much effort into preparing grant applications and bids, chasing ever decreasing pots of money. This has been essential as funds are needed to sustain our work supporting you, our members. In parallel to this we have increased our own use of volunteers.

A highly successful celebration of volunteering was held in 2011, sponsored by the PCT. We will ALL have to ensure that the image of volunteering continues to be raised as we work to encourage more and more individuals from our community to give of their valuable time. Having a positive and satisfying experience is critical improving this image.

Last year I reported that the CVS had a new role in developing and facilitating the 3rd Sector network (which is known in Cheshire East as the Congress). Much progress has been made. Representatives from

our sector have been appointed and trained, many of you have been engaged in consultations with Health authorities, Cheshire East Council etc. and we have ensured that your voice has been heard where it matters.

Our communication processes have been much improved with regular e-mailings, an up to date website and the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter. We are still working hard to update and extend our membership database. This is an uphill task as officials, contacts and even names of groups change so frequently!

I could report on so many areas that you as members see as the CVS's essential services such as helping new groups establish themselves, training events, governance guidance, grant advice, and sometimes providing advice on just about anything. But you know much of this already and can find more details in the Look Back report provided today. Just 2 requests from me.... please keep letting us know what you need to help your group deliver its mission and secondly.... keep recommending us to other Community and Voluntary groups in Cheshire East.

In summary, we have consolidated our internal processes, maintained good governance and extended our services in the second year of the new CVS. The merger has proved itself a success as indicated from the considerable feedback we have received. Increased efficiencies are apparent in the accounts that you can find on our website, new services are being developed by Caroline and her enthusiastic team and we have every confidence that we can support you and all the other groups throughout Cheshire East so that together, we will be a more vibrant voluntary & community sector able to cope with what will clearly is now and will continue to be a very challenging time for us all.

Finally, our heartfelt thanks from the Board to all staff, volunteers, funders, and yourselves, the members, in supporting us through the last, very successful, year.

Thank you
David Priaulx
Chairman of CVS Cheshire East

