

Hammersmith & Fulham Third Sector Director’s Forum

Date: 9 July 2009

Venue: The Lyric, Hammersmith

Organisations Present: Play Association, CAB, Groundwork, H&F BME, Nubian Life, The Lyric, H&F Mind, Mencap, CaVSA, HFVC, UPG, Victim Support, H&F Age Concern, PSLA, Albert & Friends, Foundations,

Apologies: H&F Refugee Forum, FGNS, Third Age, BCH, River House Trust, Advance Advocacy Project, HAFAD, Hammersmith Community Gardens, H&F Community Transport, Urban Studies, Carers’ Centre

Meeting notes – building 3rd Sector influence

1.0 Overview of H&F decision making and partnership structures – distributed at the meeting (available electronically)

2.0 Relationship mapping

Rough but confidential mapping exercise with all present using red, amber and green flags to map funding received, relationships and involvement in networks against the different LBHF business groups. General trends:

- mostly green flags, even though thinly represented across some business groups, suggesting that funding and relationships with LBHF are generally good
- as would be expected most funding support comes from Children and Health/Adult Social Care services
- overall good contacts with officers and involvement in networks at operational levels across all service areas
- contacts and involvement at a strategic much more varied and on individual level with some frustration that strategic partnership bodies can be simply ‘rubber stamping’ decisions
- projects not receiving funding generally had poorer contacts and involvement in partnership bodies
- some projects funded by one business group receive no support and have no engagement with other relevant business groups e.g. leisure/sport services
- some areas missing e.g. transport, equalities, volunteering and advocacy

Service area	Funding	Operational Contacts	Operational Networks	Strategic Networks
Resident Services	Small number of funded projects	Generally good (all green)	Much more patchy with some red	Some good contacts with individuals
Children Services	Large number of funded projects with	Mostly green flag relationships with	Lots of green flag networking and	Some involvement in networking but

	2 or 3 unfunded projects	individuals	partnerships	experiences are patchy
Corporate Services	Very small number of funded projects	Good individual contacts	Good operational networking	Green and amber strategic partnership experiences
Environment Services	Funding for a small number of projects but more projects in this area not funded	Good contacts with individuals	None	None really at officer level although some links with Councillors
Regeneration and community services	Some funded projects	Mix of green and orange for contacts with individuals	Networking opportunities but could be more effective!	Positive green flag relationships with individuals but little impact strategically
Health and wellbeing	Large number of funded projects but also a good number of unfunded projects	Really patchy mix of green and red contacts with poor links to PCT particularly highlighted	Generally positive networking opportunities with the odd red flag e.g. personalisation agenda	Some very positive experiences of partnership and strategy review bodies – disabilities and mental health

3.0 Group discussion – key points

- Concerns re lack of transparency/clarity regarding structures and lines of communication
- The need for the voluntary sector to be pro-active and not reliant on LBHF initiative before responding to legislation developments and central government initiatives/funding programmes
- What is the key-level to deal with among council officers? Assistant directors because they are approachable but have access to funds. Relations with people at a higher level too, of course.
- The way local authorities structure themselves is difficult if you don't fit neatly into that structure (or process). This point was linked both to a perceived lack of innovation in local authorities and the lack of clarity mentioned above.
- Commissioning. What's on offer?
- Important not to lose the strength of the directors' forum – balance between coming together for support and to influence on issues of shared interest against a more formal programme of activities that are difficult to sustain

4.0 Actions and future meeting agendas

Next meeting – agreed to invite LBHF Chief Executive, Geoff Alltimes re LBHF longer term strategic commissioning plans and also merger with PCT

Other issues: premises; events to raise profile of the sector e.g. conference, tour; Comprehensive Area Assessments; and impact of elections next year

5.0 Information sharing and support – Afternoon

9 people stayed behind for the two Action Learning sets in the afternoon. Generally these were well received.

Follow up action – feedback is that it would be good to build into the forum meetings a space for information sharing and support, not necessarily extending the meetings to a whole day event.

Dates of Future meetings

Thursday 17 September H&F	8.30am to 11.00am	Guest: Geoff Alltimes - Chief Executive, LBHF/NHS
Wednesday 16 December	8.30am to 11.00am CAAs	Guest: Annette Furley – Audit Commission lead on
Thursday 25 February 2010	8.30am to 11.00am	Speaker/theme to be decided