

Minutes of Joint Children & Young People's Voluntary Sector Networks Meeting

At the CREATE Centre

Engaging the Voluntary and Community Sector in the development of Bristol Children and Young People's Workforce Strategy

Date: 09 December 2009

Attending:

Lyn Mitchell; Julia Hammond, Barnardos; Christine Lowe, Bridge Foundation, The; Mark Hamilton, Bristol City Council - Children And Young People; Alison Jackson, Bristol City Council - Children And Young People; Gemma Lewis, British Red Cross; John Pendlington, Children's Scrapstore; Marie Bailey, Easton Christian Family Centre; Victoria Moore, Easton Families Project; Fran Harrison, Fairbridge West; Louise Salter, Lifeskills - Learning For Living; Kaye Grant, NHS Bristol; Simon Newitt, Off The Record - Bristol; Amy Halls, PEYTU; Sandra Meadows, PEYTU; Michelle Chatham, St John Ambulance; Anne Bush, Supportive Parents; Jenny Lyus, Time 2 Share; Julie Orchard, West Of England Centre For Inclusive Living (WECIL); Jayne Hinam, West Of England Sports Trust; Kate Gough, Young Bristol; Lee Williams, Young Bristol; Grace Allen, Young Mothers Group Trust; Vanessa McLean, Young Mothers Group Trust

Apologies:

Abeje Prehaye; Dominic Wood, 1625 Independent People; Jacky Humphreys, Avon Sexual Abuse Centre; Paul Dielhenn, BAND Ltd; Jandayi Serwah, Barnardos; Sabine Okrasska, Black Carers Project; Jo Stallard, Bread Youth Project; Becky Wood, Bread Youth Project; Monica Turnbull, Bentry And Henbury Childrens Centre; Frances Fox, Bridge Foundation, The; Jackie Cutmore, Bristol Childrens Playhouse; Melanie Iddon, Brook; Sandra Lee, Connexions West Of England; Sue Burr, CSV Allies In Bristol Independent Visitor Service; Liz Fox, NHS Bristol; Lin Thatcher, Princess Royal Trust - The Carers Centre; Alan Bradley, Prison Advice And Care Trust; Michael Bennett, Relate Avon; Karen MacVean, Shelter; Jackie Williams, Time 2 Share; Sarah Howard, West Of England Centre For Inclusive Living (WECIL)

1. Welcome

Louise Hudson (LH), the Care Forum introduced herself.

This Joint Network meeting has been organised to bring together the Voscur and The Care Forum Networks to look at the issues around the Workforce Strategy. The aim of the meeting is to take forward these ideas into the refresh of Bristol's current Workforce Strategy.

LH introduced Fran Havard (FH), Service Manager, Integrated Workforce, Children and Young People's Services, Bristol City Council and **Megan Meredith (MM) from Ignite.**

After the presentations there will be a short break and then workshops which will hopefully be able to collect ideas and needs of the Voluntary Sector.

Asma Ahmad (AA) introduced herself.

2. Fran Havard (FH) – powerpoint presentation

Link to presentation: http://www.thecareforum.org/publication_uploads/9%20Dec%20-%20BristolCYPWFS%20VCS1%200.pdf

- The main point of today is to hear from the Voluntary Sector and what organisations think about the Workforce planning and diversity
- FH thanked people for coming today
- The first slide in the presentation is sometimes referred to as ‘the tangerine’ and comes from the 2020 Children’s Workforce Development Strategy
- This is a graphic that is populated with all the different roles within the workforce
- The inner circle is the people who work most closely with children and young people and includes; nursery workers, social workers, those working in health and all the other people whose jobs involve working closely with children and families.
- These roles form the core of the Children’s Workforce and includes volunteers, the private, public and voluntary Sector
- The outer circle consists of people whose work is not directly with children and young people but are in a role that affects children and young people
- FH asked for examples of roles amongst the attendees and which segments they fit into
- Bristol has been weakest on addressing the sport and leisure section and this will be addressed in the Children’s Workforce Development Strategy
- The concept of the Children & Young People’s workforce needs to be pushed up the agenda and this is one of the aims of the Workforce Strategy refresh

Objectives of the Children’s Workforce Strategy

- The original strategy was a series of aims pushed together to satisfy statutory requirements
- The objective of the Workforce Strategy is to set a clear vision of the Children’s Workforce and to deliver the priorities of the Children & Young People’s Plan
- We need to make sure the collective needs of Children & Young People in Bristol are met
- There is a highly committed workforce across Bristol that needs support
- There is a synergy in working together, could common induction be part of the solution?

FH introduced Megan Meredith, Ignite

Ignite is a consultancy firm that has created many tools to help those working with Children & Young People.

- MM spoke a little about her background, working in health services before coming into consultancy

Project process

- MM first met Kate Oliver (KO) from the Care Forum in her role as consultant and they discussed how to get the wider Children & Young People's organisations involved in the consultation process
- After collecting the input of attendees at today's meeting, the plan is that MM will come up with the first draft of the Strategy with which to begin the refresh process

Priority themes raised so far

- MM has grouped together issues into five areas where people clearly need to see action
- The idea is to make sure these priorities appear in the integrated Children's Workforce Strategy
- The five areas are
 - (i) Partnership processes, these need to be stronger to support the workforce and more connected to the outcomes of the Strategy
 - (ii) Recruitment – the right skills and values need to be in place to deliver effective services
 - (iii) Retention – particularly in areas in the workforce that are national issues
 - (iv) Performance management – a focus on management and leadership around the needs of children
 - (v) Deploy – integrated working is needed to increase the total impact of workforce development

Questions invited:

Is there a Voluntary Sector input at the Children's Workforce Partnership Forum?

Kate Oliver has been attending and Louise Hudson (both from The Care Forum) will be taking over shortly

Question from attendee

Is there any way in involving parents in this process, so that they too have a voice?

One of the issues that has come up is the need to engage children and this will involve parents as well.

KO

In the last three years money from the Children's Workforce Development Council has gone on:

- (i) training delivered by Voscur on outcomes led commissioning and other training
- (ii) Training on Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- (iii) Participation payments, elected reps are given £50 as an 'acknowledgement' for attending high level strategic meetings

- (iv) Local networks – the voluntary sector has been empowered to participate in debates on locality partnerships and neighbourhood partnerships
- (v) Improving communications

There will be reduced money in the future so it is important to check if these are the priorities to keep spending the money on or whether something different is needed.

3. Discussion Groups.

Summary of points from discussion groups

1) Identity

- Like tangerine – do Bristol version to cover wider area including those eg transport sitting outside the circles
- Better, improved shared vision – embedded workforce strategy within all strategies
- Schools are part of this
- Need champion for CYP workforce at Council level

2) Understanding of roles

- who does what, how they complement each other
- Improve – by 2014 a workforce that knows and trusts each other, who is doing what and working together

3) Common and accessible language

- No jargon
- Don't use word 'customer ' instead of CYP&F

4) Workforce development coordination

- Ensure VCS has voice at right levels

5) Funding issues

- pay what worth and value FCR
- How to fund small groups to attend training/common induction?

6) Flexible and fluid workforce

- Eg secondments to other areas

7) Recruitment

- One 'front door ' for recruitment to Bristol CYPWF
- Understand barriers that stop Bristol being a diverse workforce before deciding action eg. why do men not join childcare, issues for disabled workers? Set realistic targets
- Be less conservative/risk averse in our recruitment culture –get radical people in who will be change agents

8) Communication

- Improve communication of support available to VCS
- BCC website with clear signposts to training opportunities,
- Better communication/PR for the sector – BCC could help by promoting it better on the website
- Clear mapping of training opportunities
- Properly resource and commit to good communication of this area and others by Children's Trust

9) Common Induction

- have aimed at different levels, eg condensed sessions for managers
- have register of people who have completed this (and for MA training)
- need to be clear what it includes

10) Participation of C YP and F

- Listen to and value parents – they are part of the workforce
- Embed ongoing participation of CYP – this should be driver of all of this work

11) Outcomes focus

- - keep asking why are we doing this?
- What are our shared goals?

12) Multi-agency training

- - access through one clear accessible point
- Cascaded down to relevant people
- More info to VCS re what available

13) Commissioning process

- Fears for effect on funding
- Must include funding for succession planning

14) Retention

- FCR
- longer commissioning
- Succession planning
- Time for building relationships

Discussion Group 1: Upper Floor

Key Learning points for participants from the presentation which emerged during the discussions

- Do not understand each others jobs/worlds. It would be good not to feel like we are working in isolation.
- To develop we need to share understanding.
- At the moment integration is bottom up, it needs to be top-down.
- The play sector feels like the forgotten workforce. At a strategic level needs to link in with the workforce strategy.
- Too much around CYP in isolation. Joined up working in parent's group + working with families. Broader outlook needed to encompass families.
- Schools have to show they are working with parents to Ofsted (parent participation).
- Schools need more funding for services.
- Appear to be moving away from play.

Can the group agree key observations in terms of approaching children and young people's workforce recruitment, training, deployment and retention differently:

- Need to agree an induction to integrated working.
- Senior managers could spend time in voluntary sector.
- Messages from previous work not picked up. Lesson to be had from common induction. Hang onto specialisms each area has because it will benefit children.
- Joint funding – can see value
- Skills gap with practitioners. Danger that quality of work will suffer and assumption that skills exist already.
- Good practice needs to be shared.
- Bristol has rich tapestry of organisations but can be a barrier.
- Need to share services.
- VCS management costs low compared to the private sector.
- Need to be better at engaging. Will not be able to survive if don't change way of working.

- Greater understanding of the cost of delivering services eg interpretation.
- Specialised services can be undercut.

Think of ideas around how the Bristol Children and Young People's workforce might have changed in 5 years time to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.

- Services are more about outcomes not cost. Need to balance qualitative/quantitative outcomes.
- A formula is agreed that shows social return on investment.
- Good practice is shared.
- The city council is better at engaging with the VCS.
- Broader outlook to encompass families and CYP.

Discussion Group 2: Foyer

Facilitators: Louise Hudson, Asma Ahmad

Key Learning points for participants from the presentation which emerged during the discussions

Integrated working:

- We are struggling with Common Assessment Framework (CAF). A lot of training went into CAF. It's an interesting question how much the voluntary sector was involved in that. The council recently sent out more dates for free CAF multi agency training. The details are on the council's website and will be publicised in our next bulletins.

The common induction pilot for selected organisations involved four days out of the office. What does it include?

- Probably around the common core. There are 6 elements including: multi-agency working; sharing information; safeguarding; effective communication with children and young people and their families; development of children and young people; equalities.

Is it just for people who are new to the service?

- The council recently ran a pilot for new people in post (up to 6 months in post). Voscur to find out how the pilot has gone.
- There might be a need for a refresh for people already in post.
- I'm a manager, but I send other people on it – how can I find out what people learn?
- As managers we have a lot of information to process on a daily basis. With UWE level 1 and 2, managers do practice learning in a shorter course for one day, maybe something similar could be trialled with induction.
- For us there's a time factor as we're only entitled to 3 days training a year – 4 days training is too much.

Different approaches could be used employing and retraining staff. Is the commissioning process helping or hindering?

- Commissions are short, so there is not time to develop the service, relationships, training for sustainable service delivery or the exit strategy.
- We have neighbourhood renewal funding for two years. We need longer term funding to deliver longer term services and to make an investment in the workforce.
- We're commissioned, but if the commission is up for renewal, it is like having a grant. There is a lot of monitoring which takes up a lot of time and takes away from the service.
- Outcomes still have numbers attached.
- One of the aims of the commissioning process is to move to three year commissions. The voluntary sector can influence the commissioning process.
- We are government led and work to several agendas. It would help if we could work to one agenda.
- With a full cost recovery bid, you could specify the number of days training required for the workforce. It's about getting commissioners to recognise that need.

Can the group agree key observations in terms of approaching children and young people's workforce recruitment, training, deployment and retention differently:

- Common induction register of people who have completed the training and something similar for other multi-agency training. If a worker moves to another organisation in Bristol, they shouldn't have to do the common induction again.
- BCC to do a mapping exercise on who else does the training that would feed into the common induction.

Training

- We have done some multi agency training on child protection and learnt a lot from people from other areas.
- Safe recruitment multi-agency training in Swindon was very good and free. Swindon is better at publicising the courses.
- The voluntary sector has a number of trainers that can do this training and offer it free to the voluntary sector.
- It would help if this strategy was integrated with other strategies so that the money was there.
- The answers to some questions are not in the workforce, but in the funding.
- There needs to be more effective communication between the leaders, and strategies connected.
- Swindon has a good development officer who networks well.

Is there a training coordinating department?

- Children and young people training sits in safeguarding. We need one place to go for information and clearer access to the information on the council's website.
- Voscur had limited funding from CWDC for child protection training on 23 Nov and 2 Feb. The last course was well attended. There is a gap in training for organisations working with young people. There will be no funding for this after March.
- Succession planning funding in the commissioning process.
- Workforce better informed about what training is available.
- Infrastructure organisations improve channels of communication.

Think of ideas around how the Bristol Children and Young People's workforce might have changed in 5 years time to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.

- Communication of training with a central point on BCC website. Everyone feeds information into there, with a key word search.
- Pooled budgets to provide common induction and ongoing practice learning. Government rhetoric backed up with government resources.
- Introduction of common induction sessions for managers. Condensed overview.
- Commissioning: recognition of full cost recovery and how full cost recovery budget includes elements of improving skills. Succession planning recognised by commissioners. The time required for communicating with each other needs to be accounted for.
- Joint vision. Workforce strategy embedded in other strategies.

Discussion Group 3 - Auditorium

Facilitator: Megan Meredith

Key Learning points for participants from the presentation which emerged during the discussions:

- When developing and retaining, ideally would have common purpose approach bringing together new people into CYP workforce at different levels. There would be an induction into the core offer for individuals up-to-strategic level in organisations, which would develop networks for workers and enable them to share challenges around outcomes.
- Increased awareness of support available to VCS: Lots of organisations are isolated and don't know how to get involved. CYP network meetings are good if you are on the list. There needs to be more publicity to small organisations. Need to emphasise to small groups that membership is free for Voscur and The Care Forum's networks. Voscur provides a bursary if organisations cannot afford training or attendance at events. But if organisations don't know this needs more marketing.

- If there is going to be less funding, how can we maintain funding to engage the VCS? If the core funding is not there how can the VCS engage properly? CWDC funding is reducing as is the city council's in 2010-11. Will need to use less money more effectively and do things differently. Must dos are:

Common induction which will need to be done at low cost. VCS is already doing more for less. Action, not just words, is needed.

- "Customer" is not appropriate term. Use CYP, families, parents, carers, workers and managers.

Can the group agree key observations in terms of approaching children and young people's workforce recruitment, training, deployment and retention differently

Recruitment:

- Radical leaders needed but culture of conservatism in senior officers and corporate development involved in recruitment. They are very risk averse. If someone appears challenging they are not brought in so there is a fear of stepping outside the box. Need more innovative solutions.
- Need champion on the council (cldr) for workforce strategy. Why is it not viewed positively in Bristol, where as it is else where? Is it because we don't have a strong, high-level champion?

Training:

- Development is piecemeal, patchy. Core multi-agency training is needed.
- Is this the same as induction? Depends what is included in induction. Cost for VSOs is a great barrier. Need more funding to achieve set standards right across the workforce. Quality e-learning could be useful. Hopefully commissioning will mean less centralised services and best placed organisations will be delivering rather than funding going on bureaucracy. Recruitment and training may then be different and may not need as many staff.
- How BCC deals with commissioning will be interesting to see if it gives up power to providers. But if performance management is commissioned then the subcontractor will have to use funding on performance management rather than on front line services.
- Keep CYP as the focus. Why are we doing it? Everyone is in it for the same reasons needs to be made very clear.
- Currently different sectors of the workforce are training on different things separately, why not together.
- It would be better if more schools were involved in multi-agency training.
- Workforce strategy will start in 2010 and end in 2014. The CYP Plan will start in 2011 and end in 2014 and the two strategies will be aligned.
- CYPs voices must be at the centre. VCS is championing this at every Trust Board meeting.
- Involving CYP in training to enter the workforce.
- Common purpose articulated and everyone knows about it and what outcomes sought. Having shared goals.
- That workers trusted workers in other sectors, more general source of working together.

Retention and deployment:

- Not a huge problem in Bristol except for health visitors and social workers, as for the rest of the country. People don't want to leave Bristol once arrived but this means new ideas generated through turnover of staff are not available.
- Acknowledgement of need for real resources to be directed towards communications. Communications must be a central focus with real resource if integrated workforce and common purpose is to be achieved. In all local authority areas where they are succeeding they have a brilliant website and coordinated communications. Stability in the council is needed, so that there is continuity in relationships.

Think of ideas around how the Bristol Children and Young People's workforce might have changed in 5 years time to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people.

- Better communications eg know who is doing what, a directory of organisations – there is already Room 102 (health and social care organisations) and One Big D (CYP organisations).
- Whichever sector people worked in they knew and trusted people in other sectors.
- People are working together for a common purpose. Multi-agency training cascaded so people know about the common purpose and shared outcomes.
- Parents are listened to and valued by professionals in every sector and supported. A lot of parenting is about “improving” parents – should be about valuing parents whose parenting may need to improve. Parents of disabled CYP struggle to get any support, get fobbed off, treated as if they are not valued. Parents are part of the workforce, they need to be treated equally with paid workers. Problem about parents being informed and skilled up and knowledge made available to them. Makes a difference when parents are involved in planning. It is the same for parents and carers finding their way through health and social care systems and challenging it.
- More inclusion and participation of young people in planning, not yet well done in Bristol and much more scope to include very young, excluded older young people in ways that will engage, excite and inform them in discussions.
- More involvement of schools. Schools have been involved in the refresh. Not seeing schools forum formally but meeting the Chair.

4. Plenary

Feedback from workshops followed by questions.

The queries were about next steps for the strategy. FH said it would need to be taken to the Childrens Workforce Partnership Forum and BCC management meetings and would need to be agreed by the Children’s Trust Board.

LH thanked the speakers and all for attending, and Voscur for hosting the event.

5. Close