

Minutes of a meeting of the Rural West APB

Held on: Monday, 16th January 2012 @2.00pm

Venue: Neston Cricket Club

Present

Alison Armstrong – CW&C Council

Carol Berry - Chester Voluntary Action

Rob Callow – CW&C (Rural West)

Karen Cove – Connexions

Angela Davies – CW&C Council

Dr. Louise Davies – Western Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Stewart Forshaw – Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service

Elaine Grant – CW&C (Rural West)

Pat Johnson – NHS Western Cheshire

Steve Kent – CW&C Council

Alison Linfield – Link-Up

Cllr. Kay Loch – CW&C Council

Cathy McGhie - Connexions

Julia Nundy – Chester District Housing Trust

Carol Weaver – (Chair) /Rural Parishes Representative

Apologies

Keith Curbishley – Cheshire Police

1. Welcome and Introductions

Carol Weaver welcomed everyone to the meeting, introductions were made and apologies noted.

2. Tackling Rural Isolation – Severe Weather Project

At the previous Rural West APB meeting, a discussion had taken place where the partnership had agreed to collectively contribute to a project around severe weather conditions in order to respond to risks faced by vulnerable individuals and communities as a consequence of physical and social isolation in our rural areas.

The benefits of the project would be to add value to existing emergency plans by focussing on communities/people as well as place; it would increase partnership development by working together and would ultimately be a model of best practise for other villages.

As the project would eventually become a local resilience plan, it was recognised that in order to capture the detail and to provide flexibility in procurement of services that the project should start with input from within a community.

Action: Neston Town Council to be approached to run the pilot for the severe weather project. (**Cllr Loch/Rob Callow**)

3. Citizens Jury – Rural Engagement

As the Citizen Jury model has a robust proven track record in obtaining information on how organisations operate and engage with people, it had been agreed that a Citizens jury would be jointly commissioned by the Rural West APB and NHS Western Cheshire to focus on rural engagement.

The jury will consist of 25 (age 16 +) randomly recruited citizens from the rural areas who have previously had no engagement with either the council or the PCT. The recruitment process would consist of face to face engagement at various locations, postal recruitment and would include a small remuneration to residents who agreed to participate.

The jury will meet regularly over a period of eight weeks starting in April, resulting in a set of recommendations being produced on how best to ensure that community members are at the heart of the public sector decision making in rural areas. A separate Overview Panel of decision makers will also be involved from the beginning of the project.

The Rural West APB agreed that advertising in the local media, advertising material and publicising the Citizens Jury within their organisations would be important in promoting the project.

4. Community Engagement Review

It was agreed there was a need to map out existing community engagement activity from partners as this would be useful tool to highlight gaps and avoid duplication.

Action: A community engagement template to be sent to partners to complete with information about community engagement, including number of staff involved, roles and locations (**RC**)

5. Performance Measurement

Angela Davis presented a draft performance management framework which included outcome measures, key mile stones and a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) traffic light system to monitor progress.

It was agreed that this could be used to performance manage key APB projects and their outcomes.

6. APB Children and Young People Holiday Fund

Rob updated the APB on a proposed holiday fund for children and young people (5-18yrs) to be specifically run over the Easter/Summer Holidays within the Rural West area.

The grant will be available for holiday activities for children and young people up to a maximum of £800 lasting up to six weeks, subject to certain criteria. It will enable an activity, creative or sporting, to be run over the holidays which would not normally have happened and will also reflect the Rural West's APB priority of Rural Isolation. (The funding criteria will be available with the funding application).

7. Community Budgets

Alison Armstrong updated the APB on the background behind the successful proposal from Cheshire West and Chester Council for the West Cheshire Community Budget pilot.

The expression of interest (Altogether Better) incorporated five key outcomes:

Thriving Neighbourhoods

Best Start in Life

Ageing Well

Opportunity Economy

Smarter Services

Alison reported that Community Budgets were not about community or budgets but about available resources working harder e.g. buildings, people and finance with the objective being to reduce the budget deficit and £38m savings over the next three years. The emphasis will be on outcomes rather than organisations, real achievements for communities gained by working closely with residents.

This will be an exciting time and a huge culture change for everyone with a team of 6/8 Whitehall officials, based in HQ, working closely with officers/partners to deliver the pilot. A new Public Services Board had also recently been set up which will drive the agenda and will include chief officers of key public agencies, 3rd Sector, Chamber of Commerce etc.

It was agreed that a key priority for the Rural West APB was to ensure that rural issues continue have a strong voice within the pilot.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 18th April @ 2pm (Venue tbc)