

Minutes of VCSE Strategic Partnership Meeting

Held on Friday 17th March 10am – 12pm

Sanger House, Gloucester

In Attendance:
Tom Beasley (TB) – Active Gloucestershire
Chris Brown (CB) – Forest Voluntary Action Forum
Sally Byng (SB) – Barnwood Trust
Kobe Francis (KF) – The Music Works (via Teams)
Matt Lennard (ML) – Gloucestershire VCS Alliance
Vicci Livingstone-Thompson (VL-T) – Inclusion Gloucestershire
William North (WN) – The Long Table
Indigo Redfern (IR) – GL11

Apologies:
Pippa Jones (PJ) – Create Gloucestershire
Nicola Simpson (NS) – Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust

Guests:
Jill Parker (JP, Chair) – Gloucestershire VCS Alliance

Minutes by:
Karen Matthews – Gloucestershire VCS Alliance

The meeting commenced at 10:06am

46. Welcome, introductions and apologies	ACTION
<p>Apologies had been received from PJ, who was unwell, and from NS, who had a prior commitment.</p> <p>Apologies were accepted.</p>	
44. Declarations of Interest	
<p>There were three new interests to declare:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - V L-T had been appointed as an Associate Non-Executive Director at Gloucester Health & Care NHS Foundation Trust. - ML had been appointed as a director of the LEP. - KF had been appointed to a steering group working on a project with the Guildhall. <p>10:09 SB joined the meeting.</p>	
45. Reflections on the ICE workshop	
<p>JP and ML had gathered some feedback from the group after the difficult session with ICE.</p> <p>JP reflected that the aim of the session had been to shape leadership development within the sector to create capacity to engage with the ICS, help to develop effective reps, and to aid succession planning for membership of the group.</p> <p>It was felt that the purposes of the group as set out in the Terms of Reference were a good reflection of the role of the group.</p>	

	<p>The group made the following suggestions:</p> <p>To add “empower and encourage the VCS to use collaborative working approaches” to the “Promoting a culture of collaboration” responsibility,</p> <p>Under the “Setting strategic priorities” responsibility, to add two further items to the “What we will do” section as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Have space in meetings to raise and triage the issues and themes that we’re hearing from the VCS. 2) Trial themed meetings and inviting VCS reps who have experience around a particular theme to raise their experiences. <p>ACTION: JP to update the plan to reflect the amendments suggested by the group (as described above).</p> <p>It was agreed that communication from the group needed to be independent and transparent, and that the group should have its own website where minutes from meetings and news could be shared.</p> <p>JP reported that, at a recent meeting of VCSE ILP Reps, the Reps had felt that an annual meeting with the group wasn’t adequate. The group agreed there was no capacity for more than one joint meeting per year. It was hoped that introducing regular communications from the group would improve the relationship between the group and Reps.</p> <p>Subject to the aforementioned amendments, the plan was approved.</p>	JP
47.	Glos Health and Wellbeing Partnership Strategy	
	<p>In the absence of TB and PJ, the item was deferred to the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: JP to add “Glos Health & Wellbeing Partnership strategy” to April agenda.</p>	JP
48.	Community Interest Companies	
	<p>CB had requested the agenda item as there was significant concern within the sector around the increase in numbers of CIC registrations.</p> <p>CB reflected that becoming a CIC was often seen as a quick route to obtaining charitable status and was being used as a model by non-trading organisations. CIC registrations were growing at three times the rate of charity registrations.</p> <p>This growth had brought competition to the sector; particularly in the mental health, physical activity and arts and culture subsectors.</p> <p>It was noted that there were some advantages to CICs, namely their agility and autonomy, but that this was checked by the lack of security, mission, and expertise provided by trustees. Many sole director CICs had recently obtained Levelling Up funding.</p> <p>CB suggested a piece of research into CICs to enable the group to better understand the sector. Within the group, a piece of work on “what good governance looks like” could be carried out to provide guidance to CICs and funders.</p> <p>WN offered to support the research, using The Long Table as a case study.</p>	

	<p>It was agreed that there should be a longer discussion on the topic at the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION: JP to add “Community Interest Companies” to the next meeting agenda.</p> <p>ACTION: SB to discuss the research project with other funders.</p>	<p>JP</p> <p>SB</p>
49.	Minutes of the last meeting	
	<p>The minutes of the 9th January 2023 and 6th February 2023 were agreed as true records of the meetings.</p> <p>Due to time constraints, JP would send an update on the actions from the meetings by e-mail.</p> <p>ACTION: JP to circulate progress update on actions from previous meetings.</p>	<p>JP</p>
50.	Any other business	
	a) Printing of meeting papers	
	<p>Hardcopies of meeting papers had been supplied for meetings to date, and the group was asked whether these were required, or if they would be happy to have content displayed electronically.</p> <p>The group agreed that hardcopies were not required.</p>	
51.	Time and date of next meeting	
	<p>The meeting concluded at 11:58.</p> <p>The date of the next meeting is 3rd April 2023.</p>	