

Voluntary Sector Forum

Wednesday 7 March 2018, 10.00am – 12.00pm

The Salon, York House, Richmond Road, Twickenham, TW1 3AA

Notes of the meeting

1. Welcome

Cllr David Linnette (Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport and the Voluntary Sector) welcomed attendees to the Forum.

2. Richmond Council update

Matt Maher ('MM', Head of Communities and Partnership, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames) provided a presentation on the council's recent work. This covered the [Village Planning Fund](#), Commissioning update, purdah, [digital strategy](#), [Teddington Community Hub](#), Health and Care Plan, Adult Social Care Market Position Statement and [Safeguarding Training](#).

See slides for details.

Questions:

- Denise Carr, Mencap: commented that the 16-30 age group people with learning disabilities often do not have digital access.
- The health and care plan timetable has been extended so that they can join up with more local partners. They are very keen on a local focus.
- Cllr Linnette mentioned that you can now download library books for free from the libraries. There is more information on the [libraries webpages](#).

3. Social Prescribing

Lucy Byrne (Chief Executive, Richmond Aid) provided an update on the Social Prescribing pilot that they have been running for the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) in the Barnes area of the borough. There have been 60 referrals, mainly from GPs. Approximately half are under 65 years old and half are in social housing. She is awaiting confirmation from the CCG the arrangements for when the pilot ends, but confirmed that a basic service would continue at the end of the pilot.

4. Volunteering and Work space survey

Kathryn Williamson, Director and Caroline Thorogood, Volunteer Services Coordinator at Richmond CVS provided an update on some of the challenges facing voluntary sector groups now e.g. finding volunteers, funding and sourcing accommodation and workspaces. A survey will be sent out in early May to seek views on groups' experience of sourcing accommodation and workspaces in the borough.

Richmond CVS provides ongoing support to organisations with recruitment of volunteers and trustees as well as one-to-one capacity building support, peer support and a training programme. They are particularly interested in hearing from groups who have opportunities for employee volunteering or micro-volunteering and flexible roles. St Mary's University have students interested in a variety of work placements and longer-term volunteering roles. Please contact Caroline if this is something that is of interest. More information can be found on the slide and [RCVS website](#).

5. Introduction to new Advocacy Services

Max Puzey, Interim Advocacy Services Manager, Cambridge House provided an update on the single point of access (SPA) advocacy services that they offer. Support they can offer includes help with NHS complaints, appropriate adult service for those taken into custody, relevant persons representative to visit someone in a care home, general advocacy in relation to health and social care for those not able to advocate and get support. More than 300 people have been supported by the service so far and they are keen for feedback. For further queries about the services offered, please see the [website](#) or call 020 7358 7007 from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. A qualified advocate will answer any queries you have.

6. Implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act

Dave Worth, Assistant Director, Housing Services, LBRuT provided an update on the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) which comes into effect on 3 April 2018. The duties around homeless people have been largely unchanged since 1977.

From 3 April 2018 those who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless in the next 56 days in the borough are covered by the act. The Council are responsible and need to provide a written housing plan for the individual. If they cannot do this they are given another 56 days to provide a housing option. 28 new frontline posts have been created across Richmond and Wandsworth starting in April to manage this provision. Statutory organisations have a duty to refer e.g. DWP, Job Centre etc. and an active referral tool will be launched shortly.

7. ETNA's Journey and future plans

Sue Howes, Chair of Trustees, ETNA gave an insight into how the organisation and building have developed.

See slides for details.