



Voluntary Sector Forum

Wednesday 12 December 2018, 10:00 – 12:00

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

Notes of the meeting

1. Welcome

Cllr Michael Wilson (Cabinet Member for Equality, Communities and the Voluntary Sector) welcomed attendees to the Forum.

2. Richmond Council Update

Rob Henderson has left Achieving for Children (AfC) to go to Croydon Council. Ian Dodds is now the Managing Director of AfC and James Thomas is the new Director for Children's Services.

Twickenham Riverside development proposals will be revisited in the new year.

The [Community Heroes' Awards](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/community_heroes) took place and many local people and groups gained recognition. It is likely that the awards will be held in late summer next year and information about how to nominate will be circulated via the forum.

(https://www.richmond.gov.uk/community_heroes)

3. Community Independent Living Services (CILS) Update

Richard Wiles (Head of Commissioning – Public Health, Wellbeing & Service Development, LBRuT) gave an update on the CILS commissioning. He noted that he would be unable to answer some questions as the Council is in the middle of a procurement phase. An overview of the programme and its key policy drivers was provided (*see slides for details*). It was also noted that the CILS scheme will move away from a geographic focus to a more thematic focus:

- Lot One: Information Navigation,
- Lot Two: Health and Wellbeing Services

CILS is currently in the pre-qualification stage. Any organisations who are interested in being a lead provider for either theme is asked to submit an overview of experience. The deadline for expression of interest is Monday 17 December 2018.

See slides for details

Questions:

- *Is there recognition of network opportunities outside of the borough within the procurement phase of the CILS scheme?* – We will take on board the point and will look at it in the tendering process.
- *Clarification on indicative days* – It was confirmed that the upcoming December deadline shown on the slides is fixed and will not change.
- *Highlights – what has gone well in the previous contract?* – Valuable relationships have been established and there has been a high level of engagement with services.

4. Neglect strategy and safeguarding

Heather Matthew (Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Strategic Lead Manager, RCVS) introduced the new neglect strategy, noting its relevance to groups who work with both children and adults. Attendees were reminded that safeguarding should be a governing priority for charities and they should refer to the checklist provided for tips on how to move forward. Policies concerning the safeguarding of vulnerable adults should be separate from those relating to children.

See slides for details

Tracey Welding (Coordinator, Local Safeguarding Children Board) provided an overview of the new LSCB Neglect Strategy which was launch in June 2018 and provides a framework for voluntary sector groups and professionals. A further Neglect Conference will take place on 14 March at Kingston University. Any groups that work with children and families are encouraged to attend.

See slides for details

Questions:

- *What age group will the strategy apply to?* – Individuals up to the age of 18.
- *Does the strategy contain guidance on helping individuals with issues pertaining to sexual orientation and gender identity?* – Yes, the strategy does, but the LSCB welcome a conversation on keeping the support networks contained within the strategy up-to-date.

WHY NEGLECT MATTERS Conference FREE / HALF DAY, 14 March 2019, 1pm-4.30pm, Book here:

<http://training.kingstonandrichmondscb.org.uk/Course/CourseDescriptive.aspx?id=214>

LSCB film about Neglect (<https://www.powtoon.com/online-presentation/ckEYEHgbxBW/neglect/?mode=movie>)

5. Protecting the elderly and vulnerable against scams: What to look for and how to support your clients

Les Jackson (Retired Police Officer) gave a short talk on what to look out for and how to support your clients to protect everyone against scams. He is happy to come and talk to any groups who might benefit from this information.

See video for details

(<https://m.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLzOzgCpsAClICePfsnQZGXArx3m6McrX4>)

6. SWELN Home Energy Visits

Susan Chappell (Project Co-ordinator, South West London Environment Network) introduced Home Energy Visits. The South West London Environment Network (SWELN) are offering residents of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames free home energy visits to look at ways to save money. The visits are arranged to suit your preferred times and are undertaken by two energy advisors. More information can be found at <https://swlen.org.uk/our-work/sustainability/energy-visits/> and if you would like to book an energy visit please email energyvisit@swlen.org.uk.

Questions:

- *How can Citizens Advice Richmond support and promote the service? – SWELN are happy to come and talk to organisations.*
- *Are the visits suitable for people who rent? – Yes, particularly interested in reaching those who are vulnerable or experiencing fuel poverty.*

7. Men in Sheds

Steven Mindel (Chairman, Barnes Community Association) gave a short talk introducing Men in Sheds – it is inspired by a similar charity in Australia. It is a shed where men can go and establish their social networks. Their aim is to help combat loneliness and social isolation. Within the shed, men can help craft bridges, bird boxes, benches etc. There will also be a mess room for men to meet if they want to get involved in other ways. The aim is to get the shed up and running by April 2019.

Questions:

- *How much money are you looking to raise? – We are looking to raise a further £20,000.*
- *Do you have ambitions for there to be sheds in other parts of the borough? – Personally no, but other groups are setting them up in the borough e.g. Roehampton/Putney.*
- *How will you promote the shed? – via Council channels/partner organisations e.g. FISH/Wetlands Centre.*
- *Are there any age limits? – No, we welcome any men over the age of 16.*

8. Open Forum

Questions / points raised:

- Simon Lawson (Citizens Advice Richmond) noted that they will be delivering talks to people who are in fuel poverty and would welcome invitations from interested groups. [Contact Citizens Advice Richmond via their website.](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/richmond/) (<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/richmond/>)
- Cllr Wilson was asked to provide an outline of the Council's policy for the voluntary sector and any anticipated budget changes going forwards. Cllr Wilson stated that the Council will be moving away from the cabinet structure to a committee structure. Community conversations events have also been introduced as well as an outreach programme in order to engage people who the Council does not normally hear from. Moving forwards, these events will become issue-based conversations. The Council will also be working on a new strategy on how to make the best of community buildings and assets and the relationship with the voluntary sector groups who manage them. Cllr Wilson also noted that the Council wanted to empower the sector to do those things that they are capable of, particularly in light of budget cuts. He commented that, with regards to budgets, he would be unable to provide detail, but that council tax will likely increase in the next financial year. Groups can feed into budget processes through scrutiny committees.
- *What is the Council's plan to tackle rough sleeping?* Cllr Wilson stated that Councillors would be briefed on this issue by local organisations. SPEAR and Glass Door were already doing great work supporting rough sleepers in the borough and the Council works closely with them.
- *Is the Council distinguishing between rough sleepers and beggars?* Cllr Wilson responded that both the Council and SPEAR were aware of these issues and that they had been raised at the local police board.
- SWLEN are helping the Friends of Heathfield Rec to recruit committee members. For more information see www.swlen.org.uk