**Minutes of the networking meeting on Thursday 22nd November 2018**

Attendees: Donna Talbot – Community CVS, Tracy Davies – Community Business Partners, Dara McCann – Foodbank, Thelma Tomlinson – Shelter, Chloe Dobson – Healthwatch, Nancy Kinyanjui – Shadsworth Hub, Lisa Rawcliffe – Northwest Air Ambulance, Phil Boulding – Secret Santa, Maggie Asquith – TAHF, Dawn – East Lancashire Hospice, Ian Leadbetter – Encompass, Loraine Jones – The Mall, Kathryn Clay – The Alzheimers Society, Yaseen Patel – Inter – madrassah, Angel Spratt – Bootstrap, Sarah Newell – BwD Carers, Leah – BwD Carers, Rose Morgan – Blackburn Youth Zone, Jason Walmsley – Cumbria & Lancs CRC Sheena Cunningham – ADHD Northwest.

**Presentation from Maggie Asquith - Together a Healthier Future – The integrated Health and Care Partnership for Pennine Lancashire.**

The project I am working on is a collaboration with ELHT, LC NHS FT, BwD Council, LACVS, LVP, FHWB, BwD Healthwatch, Shelter, Advocacy Focus and Age UK

The project is a 2year project and we are already one year in

There are 8 elements to my project:

* + - 1) Volunteer Passport – this came about because of Junior Doctors passport – historically they had to complete separate training for every placement a junior doctors passport was introduced and that meant that they only had to complete one basic set of training that would be adequate for everywhere: we are looking at transferring this idea over to volunteering so for example if someone completes their basic training at Shelter they do not have to repeat the same training over and over.
    - For the training we are looking at the NHS modules:-

• Fire

• Health and Safety

• Data Security

• Safeguarding (adult)

• Safeguarding (children)

• Equality and Diversity

The pilot training is all E Learning – people can go on and the manager can check the training, we are just rolling the project out at the moment, it hasn’t been decided how to roll it out – evaluation is really important.

We are hoping that this kind of training will be useful for smaller organisations, hopefully saving them money.

2) Volunteer Manager Training

* + Health education England has 3 separate levels, Volunteer Lead Service, Volunteer Support and Volunteer Co-ordinators. Volunteering is becoming a vocation
  + We will be hosting an event for volunteer coordinators – possibly workshops we will be carrying out a training needs analysis – skills etc.

3) Actively promote volunteering in Health and social care

* Advertising through social media to make it more attractive
* In ELHT – we have found that there is 2 different approaches from staff:
* Those who welcome volunteers and make them feel welcomed and those who exclude their volunteers.
* This shouldn’t be happening: to enable volunteering will be the key to sustainably delivering health care differently in the future,

4) Developing Career Progression Pathways

* We would like to help develop the career pathways for those who have no previous experience/qualifications, lots of bank staff cannot get in to a career has they have not got experience. We are looking to introducing a scheme were volunteers who accrue 100hrs volunteering over 6 months will be guaranteed a job in ELHT
* We are talking to Blackburn College – help people access studies

The projects in green (see attached document) are now I there second year.

5) Corporate social Responsibility

* We are working with Tesco etc on joint activities, looking at sustainability and good practice.

6) Develop Digital Infrastructure (IT Technology)

LVP (Lancashire Volunteer Partnership) – volunteering opportunities for the public sector

We are creating a database to collate info on what do we know about volunteers etc – look at the way we advertise roles.

Look at smaller organisations – develop peer support models – good practice, monitor those moving from volunteering to paid work. Look at what we can do to develop roles.

7) Scope and benefit for volunteers

Rewards we are looking at rewards for volunteers – we cannot give fiscal rewards

Award ceremonies – link in with corporate social responsibility

Monetary equivalent rewards such as Tesco club points etc

Is it the right thing? Why volunteer if you need money – this needs more research.

At the end of the project need to create a paper/report and an evaluation – what recommendations – what will work, what hasn’t worked.

Q&A

Q: for those who are in volunteer management working with volunteers – what do you wish you had?

A: coaching skills? Softer skills – lot of people who are volunteer coordinators by default do not necessarily have the skills required for the role they are in. If you do not have the correct skills you may not bring out the best of your volunteers and they may end up not volunteering anymore. – Loss of resources

Please could you actually all go away and think about this – what training do you need, what skills do you think are important?

DT – any questionnaires that Maggie need’s completing – I will be more than happy to circulate.

Thelma: Shelter

If you have been given a promotion – you may not have had any experience of managing volunteers – it can be difficult recruiting and retaining volunteers.

Q: Do you know any volunteers that would be interested in getting involved in the project?

We would like to hear the volunteer’s voice – including getting involved with the project and interested in the subject. We are 80% on the way with the volunteering passport however we need help with all the other 7 work streams.

Jan- June/July get some good work done, if anyone would like to get involved we are desperate for volunteers to help: it is difficult to get people involved with such a project.

Presentation for Chloe Dobson from Healthwatch

We collect news/experiences form Healthcare we collect info from residents and feedback to the CCG – BwD Council, ELHT, Practice managers

There has recently been a lot of changes at Healthwatch, we have a new team

Me – Project Support and Media

Sal – is Project Officer

Linda – Project Office

Sarah – Manager

Abdul Mulla – Chief Exec

We look at different ways – healthcare in the community, we have a presence in doctor’s surgeries, health centres, town hall. The Mall and we wait for residents to come over and talk to us.

We work closely with encompass – we are only allowed in public areas in surgeries etc we are a standalone tool completely independent. Our focus is now on impact.

We look at access to healthcare for vulnerable people – potential barriers etc

GP – digital access – what about this for those who have had strokes, the individuals with disabilities, every GP should now have online booking function accessible to all as a means to ending the queuing system first thing in the morning.

Need to identify any other issues: we have been looking at

Young people and dental care

Offenders and housing

Discharge for dementia patients

Mental health and young people – commissioned to work with ACES (Adverse childhood Experiences)

We are developing a toolkit for ACE – building resilience in adults who have experienced ACEs and looking at the impact on mental and physical health

We have lots of interesting projects that are ongoing.

Volunteers – are an extension of our organisation engagement without them we would not achieve what we do, many of our volunteers have moved from volunteering into employment.

Healthwatch will hopefully be working with you all – DT happy to send out questionnaires etc.

Q; Access to healthcare – are you doing anything for adults who are homeless etc not getting their medication?

A: we are struggling to get them registered

Discussion:

Many individuals that many of the organisation present work with have found a recurring problem with many of the most chaotic individuals, many surgeries will not support the individual due to their disruptive behaviour however a number of the individuals are only chaotic because they are not receiving their medication for their mental ill health as a result many of the individuals self-medicate – alcohol and unfortunately more frequently – Spice which then leaves the individuals extremely vulnerable (Many have been attacked when under the influence)

Many surgeries fill appointments up very early on in the day when a lot of our clients are not up or awake, this then adds to their frustration. Many have sold their phones and do not have access to the internet so they are unable to book online.

This is a major problem as the individuals are blocking up hospitals, using valuable police time, begging on the streets for their money.

DT: sorry to interject in your presentation Chloe could I please just let everyone know that we are holding a consultation on Thursday 6th December at The Boulevard Centre, we have had the idea of a “common room” for the guys in chaos (homeless, mental health, drugs, recovery, ex-offenders) many of whom are out begging/drinking/taking spice and generally up to no good during the day. A large number of individuals pop into the Boulevard Centre simply wanting a brew, someone to talk to and simply to get out of the cold The idea we have had was if we could find a location central - however out of the way, where we could offer some form of common room for these guys to go to Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm, we would hopefully have staff and volunteers running the common room.

The common room would offer:-

Refreshments – tea & toast etc

Sofas – TV

Snooker table etc

We would also invite different services (drug & Alcohol, metal health, sexual health etc) to have presence to engage with the guys.

Presentation from Tracy Davies from CBP – Game changers

The project Game Changers is for over 25’s – no age limit project funded by the big lottery in the Highercroft and lower Darwen area.

It has been identified that there is a high level of mental health and isolation – Game changers hopes to address these problems by bringing people together at The Energy Zone (old community centre – lots and lots of activities going on)

Community CVS is a mixture of community projects and business; /corporate projects

We have recently launched the RE#Cafe which is based in SAMS building

The café is run on a pay as you feel system, - donations only – upto the client what they pay, its coming along very slowly – hard to reach community, however the residents are coming in to the centre and café.

We host a number of activities:

Cooking on a budget

Confidence building

Selling on EBay

Arts & Crafts

Painting

Sewing

Over the next few weeks we will be putting on French, IT, Mobile Phone Apps for the over 50’s

Everyone can access – last week we took a group out for a trip to Chorley – looking for bargains in charity shops, looking at what we could sell on – how to generate an income.

The project is aimed at the isolated part of the community with complex needs, lots of mental health needs, the project is in its second year and will end in 2020.

Part of my job is volunteer manager, I have worked with volunteers, managing them is a completely different role.

Important what Maggie said: that with additional roles – staff need upskilling, I currently support 7 volunteers and I have managed to get 4 through Food Hygiene Level 2.We want the volunteers to take over the running of the café we have had lots of help and advice from Dara – it is definitely a learning curve.

I am also as part of my role responsible of the Christmas Wishes Appeal – collecting toys and gifts that we then distribute amongst the neediest. I will be approaching businesses and next week I will be doing a presentation at The Network Forum.

The Christmas Wishes Appeal has 2 collection points in the Mall, the cut-off point is December 12th and once we have collected everything I have the daunting task of dividing it out.

Other things happening at Energy Zone – SAMS (Scrap Art Material Store) recycle waste into art materials which is a fantastic project.

Waste not Want not Project – link in with Fare share, Lidl and Tesco Monday – Thursday came and access food for a small donation. We have another scheme were you pay £5 in advance and you receive a basket full of food, sometimes overflowing – dependant on what we collect from Fare share.

We link in with Paulin Lau from Lower Darwen.

We are hosting a Christmas Fair – mini market stalls in the community centre linking in with other agencies, Santa Claus, school uniforms etc – should be great on Monday 10th December 3pm – 7pm.

Q: Community Business Partners – there are two sides to the organisation Community – Me and Business side which is composed of Business angels: Mentors who go out to advise small businesses etc – contact Amanda and Jaydee and we also have BBO – Gaby is the person who deals with this project.

Presentation from Tracy Davies and Dara McCann from the Foodbank

In my spare time I am trustee for the Foodbank in Blackburn and Dara is the manager of the centre

The Foodbank is for individuals at crisis point and is open Mon, Wed and Friday 11am – 2pm

We are currently running the Revers Advent Calendar scheme we have already collected lots of selection boxes but we are in need of all the other items on the poster. We are asking people to donate lots of other items: rice, cereals, coffee, jam, cooking sauces and lots of other things. If you could get involved with this it would be great.

Lots of people have the misconception that The Foodbank operates very much like Morrisons where you just go in with your basket and take what you need, this just isn’t the case. There is lots of work that goes on behind the scenes we are heavily reliant on food collections.

We have a lot of individuals accessing the project and many can be very challenging

We all send people to The Foodbank but many of us don’t know how they would cope without Dara, who is not just a manger but a support worker etc and with Universal Credit this has created a whole host of new problems.

It really is worth a visit – Blackburn Foodbank is vastly different we have 10 computers so that individuals can access internet – we also run basic workshops in a Monday.

We have a clothes bank and a shower facility and the whole thing is run by volunteers.

Q: Do you give out energy vouchers?

A; No Shelter and Jubilee Credit Union are responsible for issuing this in BwD, we did look at starting an energy project something similar to what happens down South – unfortunately it was far too complicated.

We have a very strict assessment process – individuals are assessed by other agencies and referred to the Foodbank. We then ask their questions that people may not think of – do you have a tin opener? Do you have an oven? We have recently been out shopping for clean underwear as many individuals have presented needing clean underwear.

When the individual is at crisis point they do expand on what has brought them to this point we do look at an agreement and ask them to sign it as a level of commitment then we will sign post them to Shelter/ Jubilee Credit Union. We also link our clients in with debt advisors and we now have one onsite.

Q: How many times can you use it?

A; historically you could access the foodbank 3 times in a 6 month period, however with the implementation of Universal Credit we have had to revise this as we are not about limiting peoples access to food, we now have individual arrangements dependant on the individuals needs and circumstances.

We have been open 51/2 years this year we have been at crisis point – there has been a 13% increase in demand over the last 6 months and the previous 6 months to that we had a 10% increase in demand.

We are now relying on our cash donations that we have historically held in reverse.

Q: Where do your donations come from?

A; Baskets in supermarkets, Clitheroe foodbank donate a substantial amount to us lots of different places.

We do need more toiletries, we also have seen an increase in the demand for nappies and baby milk – in the last week we have had 3 mums needing milk.

We also need sanitary products – Phil Boulding – from Secret Santa we have linked in with Femcura who we donated a huge amount of sanitary products – maybe we could work together going forward? We are looking into a project called the Redbox.

Many individuals have a point of realisation when they come along to the foodbank, they actually realise that they are at crisis, we have trained staff and volunteers who are there to talk to the individual but also equipped to deal with the more challenging behaviour. Every day is a different day and you have no idea what you will be facing or what will come through the door.

Even though it is a drop in service we do stay in contact – even though we do see on average 22 people per day.

People like that support – that’s why we do cooking on a budget etc, we have found that because we have maintained this link many who have come through the service end up becoming a volunteer, once they are volunteering they build up their confidence.

Many individuals experience great pain and stigma going to the Foodbank and it takes a lot of courage to come in, it’s almost the same as receiving benefits and going to the the job centre, we feel like a failure because we have allowed ourselves to get to this point.

Going back to the Hamper scheme last year we gave out 91 hampers – Christmas is an important time for families to spend time together and eat and be happy this year we have already received 150 requests for hampers. The need for hampers is steadily growing when we started the hamper scheme we needed 17, the following year 38 last year 91.

Q: do you receive the donations from Aldi on Christmas Eve

A; No unfortunately it really is too late

It really is worth a visit so please get in touch and come along and see what we do.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to everyone.

**Next networking event will be held on Thursday 24th January 2019 9am – 11am @ The Boulevard centre**

**Breakfast will be provided**