**Minutes of the Community CVS Network Meeting**

**Thursday 28th November 2019**

**Attendees:** Donna Talbot – Community CVS, Chloe Dobson – Healthwatch BwD, Yvonne Thistlethwaite – Bamboo Therapy, Liz Moxham – Thomas, Vicky O’Sullivan – CGL Step, Denise Cottam – BwD BC, Brian Holiday MBE – Whitebirk & Intack TARA, Nancy Kinyanjui – Arise, Sherri – Lee Petty- Boden – Age UK, Jay Ratcliffe – Nightsafe, Tracy Davies – CBP, Chrissie – BwD BC, Denise Hayhurst – Age UK,

**Presentation Liz Moxham – Thomas**

* Brief overview – Thomas was set up by father Jim, Father Jim is the priest for At Anne’s and sacred Heart in Blackburn. St Anne’s church is situated on King Street on its doorstep there were homeless, addicts and the red-light district.
* Father Jim initially set up the drop in – lunch time free meal – its grown and has been going for 25 years
* We now offer a number of different services
* The lunch time drop in is still going strong and is run by Bev and 4 volunteers – Mon – Fri lunch is offered between 1 -2pm and individuals can pop in between 11am – 1pm to register for support – we feed on average 50-60 people per day
* It’s a great calm environment for individuals to socialise, eat a decent meal and also possibly get support etc – if that’s what they want
* Father Jim wanted to expanded the services as he realised that there was a limited supply of services for addiction 25 years
* Witton Bank was the result a residential (all Male) where individuals come for drug & Alcohol treatment – total abstinence is expected
* The guys come in for 3-month intense therapy – 12 steps (clients are referred from a number of places – Inspire/prison/AA)
* After 6 month the clients can move into the community housing we provide for additional support or some move on
* We also have a house in Salford - which is for men and women
* We have a new house in Bolton
* We are developing a new social enterprise (Jean Thompson runs this project) – this is a work type scheme – building clients confidence etc, the scheme focuses on furniture restoration (Shabby Chic)
* We have 2 shops – One in Accrington Arndale and one in Swinton
* My Job is to recruit volunteers
* We are looking for volunteers for the Drop in to help with the cooking etc
* We also need volunteers for the workshop
* We need a driver
* We also need help with Social Media

**Presentation Jay Ratcliffe – Nightsafe**

* Nightsafe is a youth homeless charity for Blackburn with Darwen and people out of town (16 – 24)
* We have an emergency Night shelter – people can stay 5/9 nights then we help to move them on
* Anyone unfortunately not from this area we have to try and get them back to where they came from.
* The night shelter is manned by international volunteers – they come from all over the world – Columbia, Chile many are students on a gap year
* The volunteers make sure the young people have something to eat, chill and relax with them – watching films etc
* We have Platform 5-day centre – this is run by staff and volunteers
* We support individuals with diverse issues – youth homelessness, forced marriage, DV, foster care breakdown
* For our volunteers the role is never boring – always dealing with different issues – support with housing, appointments, act as an advocate – young people struggle with all the jargon etc
* At platform 5 we offer shower facilities, breakfast and Lunch – support (support with mental health, Drug & Alcohol issues, job search - CV, IAG,)
* We offer lots of different activities – football, arts & Crafts – lots and lots of different things
* We help with Benefits etc and bank accounts – the individuals have so many barriers just applying for benefits can be a major problem, we do signpost individuals onto Jubilee Credit Union, CAB have a drop in at the job centre everyday where they can help with UC applications, our volunteers will go along with the client and support them.
* Nightsafe have 3 long-term housing facilities
* Witton (Preston Old Road) set up in 1992 – has 4 beds – individuals can stay up to 2 years, they will be allocated a support worker and they will help them to become independent.
* Cornfield Cliff – in Darwen which has 6 beds

Safe @ Silas – new project (DIY SOS) It was a very emotional project – the project is aimed at 16/17- and 18-year olds it has 6 beds (in partnership with Leaving Care)

* We contributed to the national good practice guide 3 years ago – homeless needs support etc
* We are now looking at the next step – Housing
* Q: where do the kids go if they are not from Blackburn with Darwen?
* A: This is a massive problem – the local connection, if the individual has no local connection we cannot house them and we have to refer them on – we can refer to private rented
* There are a number of other services in Pendle etc we also have a number of other services in Blackburn with Darwen – James Street Project, Together Housing, Social Services, Leaving care team
* We have individuals turning up with a number of different issues who we cannot help for example the police dropped off a young French girl who was a victim of domestic violence – her partner had been sent to prison and she had no recourse to public funds. We also have more cases of clients with mental health issues, Asperger’s, Autism.
* The DIY SOS ran from August/September/October
* Gary Aspden who is from Darwen and is a designer for Adidas has become one of Nightsafe’s ambassadors
* Gary organised the trainer exhibition and designed a special trainer for Nightsafe – 180 were produced and they had the Nightsafe logo put on them
* There have been a number of events – the Adidas exhibition – people came form all over the world to see the exhibition
* Other famous people involved with events – Dynamo, Ian Brown, Tez Ilyas, Primal Scream and Goldie – Which was far too loud!!
* I do all the social media for Nightsafe so I got to go along to everything
* We cannot thank Gary enough for everything that he has done with the exhibition etc bit also for putting us on the map
* Next year will be Nightsafe’s 30-year anniversary – Jan has promised that it will be bigger and better – so watch this space
* We have our sleep out next week up at St Silas church – it’s not in a graveyard has some people have said – its just in the church grounds
* People will be given cardboard boxes etc to sleep on – there is still time to sign up if you would like to take part or sponsor the event (Friday 6th Dec)
* Last year we raised £20,000 so hopefully we will do better this year
* We have a new all singing website – I’m desperate for social media training (DT to look at)

**Presentation Tracy Davies – CBP Game Changers**

* Game changers is a 3-year lottery funded project that’s has been running for 2 and we have one year left.
* The project is postcode specific and is aimed at those over 25 yrs. + in the Higher croft area
* The project is unique funding and offers free activities to the most poverty-stricken areas in England – enabling clients to break down barriers – low confidence/challenging lifestyles
* We are working in partnership with Youth Zone and Nightsafe – upskilling and combatting isolation – offering IT, Arts & Crafts, building confidence. We also offer help with debt and money management – we work with Jubilee Credit Union
* In the new year we will be offering cake decoration courses, Job Clubs, Walking groups
* We have taken clients on an evening trip to Blackpool Lights – that was an experience – felt more like a hen do!!
* We will be doing more outreach work
* We are always looking for volunteers for the Community Café – we can offer Food hygiene Level 2 for anyone wanting to volunteer
* Its not a super busy café but volunteers will get some experience
* We offer It digital courses
* We work with Tomas – lots of the lads in stage 1 come up to the centre for different groups
* We can work with anyone so please send them my way

Q: What happens when someone is over 25?

A: Work with positive integration etc – back out and not to be dependant – we will signpost if necessary

* Energy Zone is donated food every week – anyone can access this service – just some and get the food
* The project ends next October – its been very successful with some of our clients moving on to setting up their own groups, one lady has set up a crochet group.
* We can work with groups in other areas – please contact me directly for details

**Presentation from Chloe Dobson – Healthwatch BwD**

* In the new year we will be holding Volunteer Management Development sessions
* We will be holding 4 forums in 2020 and they will be on the same day as Donna’s network meeting from 11am – 12pm – preliminary dates Jan, May, July and August (TBC)
* We will be looking at issues faced by Volunteer managers – staff/ vols – general – recruitment – best practice
* Everyone is welcome

Next Networking Meeting

 Thursday 23rd Jan 2020

@ Boulevard Centre 9.00 to 11.00am