**Minutes of the Community CVS Network Meeting**

**Thursday 25th March 2021**

**Attendees:** Donna Talbot – Community CVS, Maggie Lisa Rawcliffe – NWAA, Sheralee Turner-Birchall – Blackburn Foodbank, Andrew Brown – Newground, Gail Barton – Our Lancashire, Mimi El – Khattam - Our Lancashire, Kiran Sadiq – BwD Carers, Tracy Davies – BwD Borough Council, Hajra Sidat– Bwd Council – Social Integration team, Tayyibah Masood – Positive Smiles, Eileen Murphy – McDonalds, Zee – Zee Defence Academy, Diane Price – Indigo, Kiran Sadiq – BwD Carers

**Apologies:** Eloise Howarth – Inspira, Daniel Barry – Inspira,

**Mimi – Our Lancashire**

* Hi I have been in role for 5 weeks, Our Lancashire – is all to do with Grouping we do have our own website
* [Our Group Finder - OUR Lancashire](https://ourlancashire.org.uk/)
* People and groups register their groups and activities
* Its free to advertise on the website
* You can advertise volunteer opportunities, recruitment
* Advertise and upcoming events – in your area
* I am hoping to relaunch my newsletter in April – I am just waiting for the format to be standardised
* Please let me know if there is anything you would like me to include in the newsletter – Bwd and Hyndburn – please send it to me
* We are also supporting community Champion – parish council – volunteers – Gail

**Hajra – BwD Borough Council**

* I work for the social inclusion team – last year we launched our new website – Learn English together
* Following on from the launch we had a planned a number of roadshows with other organisations in the community – unfortunately they had to be stopped because of Covid
* We are now trying to talk to people again and promote the website – it’s a one stop shop for anyone looking for ESOL courses, we want people to find the right course at the right level all in one place.
* We work with a number of different providers – Blackburn College, BwD Adult Learning, IMO, the aim being is that any English course, any ESOL class will be advertised on this website and the benefit for that is that we have found sometimes people are looking for classes – they may only contact one provider and the course date and time may not be suitable for them – so they just leave it and get lost in the system
* So if they come to our Website I am the main point of contact and so I speak to everyone and find out where they live, what their commitments are what days are best for them – so I can then sign post them to the most suitable course with the right provider for them so they don’t give up searching for the right one
* We also monitor the progression of everyone – assessments etc – this enables us to encourage people to progress once they have completed a level,
* The benefit of a one stop shop is that we can really offer the best service for anyone wanting to learn English
* So if you know anyone who is wanting to learn English – please sign post them to the Learn English Website
* Currently we are offering online classes due to Covid – this may be something that we may carry on even after the lockdown easements as it has worked well with some clients
* The website is itself is translated in all the different languages – that’s working well with existing language barriers
* We also have a focus on integration - additional sessions which offer informal learning about the learner’s environment – it all about the learners visiting local buildings – library, post office, museums, familiarizing themselves with the health centres, doctors, dentists etc
* [Home - Learn English BwD](https://learnenglishbwd.org.uk/)

**Zee – Z’s Defence**

* We started the project in 2019
* We initially provided support for females however in 2020 because we couldn’t provide face to face services – we did a lot of evaluation especially recently with the Sara Everard Case which impacted on me because I teach women self-defence
* With that in mind we have decided that we will be possibly offering self-defence for everyone – its so important people learn how to defend and protect themselves and help someone else in certain scenario
* We have qualified female instructors – who teaches the female sessions – but we are also looking at expanding and recruiting a male instructor who will be able to specifically teach the males
* Z’s Defence is volunteer led and more linked with volunteers, we offer mainly self defence classes to the community we are currently looking at funding opportunities – so fingers crossed if we are successful we will be able to offer classes at super reduced prices ( £10 per 2 hours – cost covers admin etc )
* We are also offering Hiking and walking days out at the weekend that will possibly start at the end of June – because of Ramadan (this is a blessed month and I would lie to focus on my religion)
* Then in June we will start the walking and hiking and that will be available to everyone
* We also offer physical activities – we focus on the importance of sports, Im quite an energetic person and all my volunteers all want to get involved in physical activities
* With lockdown – this has impacted on all our mental health and physical health – I remember 6 months ago I myself suffered a breakdown due to Covid , I did manage to pull myself out – motivated myself and this is the message that we would like to send out – self development
* Its very hard to self-motivate to eat healthy, exercise and to get out walking but we as an organisation are here to help people achieve their goals
* We haven’t offered any online sessions – but we are looking at offering online sessions in April from funding from Near Neighbours
* We have sessions Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
* Tuesday – self defence zoom sessions online
* Wed – self care sessions and looking at building your confidence, wellbeing, relaxation sessions
* Thursday Session – relaxation
* So after the 6 weeks – their will be an evaluation of the project and if it is successful we will carry on if it isn’t we will then revert back to face to face – hopefully from May 12th we will be able to offer face to face sessions
* So please look at our website [ZsDefenceacademy](https://zsdefenceacademy.co.uk/)
* I will be sending more information to Donna/CVS – once everything is sorted

Q; Tayyibah – we work with a large group of women, many of them are of south east Asian descent some of them have experienced domestic violence, low self-esteem, learning difficulties and disabilities – many don’t have a lot of money is there anything can you provide for them for free?

A: We do offer free one-hour taster courses and if successful with the funding applications this is something that we could offer for free or reduced charge of £1 - £2, unfortunately during 2020 funding was directed to those working with the vulnerable during pandemic. It would be great to link up and see how we can work together

* Zee’s Defence would like going forward to work with all agencies and see how we can offer self-defence to everyone – even if it is just the basics, once you have learnt it it’s a skill that you don’t forget
* Eileen it would be great to work with you guys as we have previously offered courses to businesses and their staff, in 2019 we ran 20 successful projects and we had big plans for 2020 but unfortunately due to the pandemic we couldn’t do that – however this enable me to take a step back and look at the bigger picture and all these events that have been happening – it has given me confidence in the services we are providing – it would be great to work with all you guys

DT – Could I just add small groups could potentially apply for the Community Fund to pay for Zee’s courses

[Community Fund – Community CVS](http://www.communitycvs.org.uk/community-fund/)

**AOB**

Hajra – ask is there any support for small groups to get their groups Covid safe and ready for lockdown – Lisa NWAA– we have actually done a lot of work around being Covid ready so please contact me

**Hajra – BwD Borough Council**

Social Integration team – we have some funding that community groups can apply for – focus on social integration at the moment – minimum details at the moment but it is something to watch out for – coming out in the next couple of weeks

DT – you will send that to me so I can Share?

H- yes definitely

**Sheralee – Foodbank**

* We are just as busy as ever doing the normal day to day foodbank things
* One of the things we are launching – next week (soft launch) we are setting up a growing project, working with a horticulture consultant and working with experienced people who run allotments
* We will be promoting to those who use the Foodbank but we may be offering to people further afield – dependant on numbers

**Donna Talbot - Green Alliance**

Just on the back of that I met with Cllr Jackie Floyd we had a chat about bringing together all green projects so we can go for the Lottery Climate project funding

I have been tasked to bring everyone together – if you know of anyone working on a green project/climate change please get in touch with me

Initially we need to find out what everyone is doing - little bit of a mapping exercise – identify gaps green project and then we can all work together to put a good strong bid – going for hopefully for the £2 million bid

Its all about us working together to have a stronger bid – I think that the way forward

Q: is the green project just about food?

A: No its about anyone who is trying to tackle climate change/environment – Reuse. Reduce, Recycle, growing, litter picking all projects around the climate change agenda – we picked Green as its in the early stages of a group

Mimi – I do know a guy from Hyndburn prospects and he is trying to get funding would he be able to be involved? The focus initially would be BwD however who knows where it will take us, however there is always the Hyndburn CVS so if we cannot help I would be more than happy to sign post him elsewhere – if I can help I will

**Diane – Indigo**

Everyone is on the chat asking for ach others details - if everyone agrees and everyone is happy for Donna to share their email would that be ok?

DT – if everyone would like me to share their emails that’s not a problem – I have to send out emails BCC because of GDPR however if you all consent to me sharing your emails Im more than happy to do so

Group – Yes that’s fine

**Mimi – Our Lancashire**

I had a chat with Water sports chairman and he was asking for the wellbeing team in BwD contact. Basically they are starting to retrain their staff and volunteers to use the water equipment having been out of the water for almost 18 months now and well they have manged to get some funding to work with kids who run the risk of getting into trouble and he would like to get in touch with BwD Well being so they could put him in touch with the kids who need this project – would you know who I need to contact ?

DT – Leave it with me and I will find out for you

**Gail – Our Lancashire**

I run monthly zoom sessions for local groups where we talk about a topic I know I have already emailed you about its Donna next week is about Gift Aid and it would be great to have a local organisation who has really go their head around the Gift Aid system and benefitted from it, more than they realised they could to come and talk to people just for 10 minutes I wonder if any of you fit that bill?

DT – I don’t and I did ask Our CEO but he is swamped at the moment so I apologise that I didn’t get back to you – however I can send it out today and see if anyone on my mailing list can help and I promise I will do that today

**Donna - Community Awards 2021**

We do now have a date for the Community Volunteer Awards 2021 – Wednesday 3rd November the event will be held at King Georges Hall

We will be officially launching at the end of April – nominations will close in August so I will be emailing you all asking you to nominate your wonderful volunteers, neighbours, friends and relatives.

If you know of anyone who has gone above and beyond during the lockdown – it would be great to nominate them

It would be great this year if we could have more businesses nominated, if anyone knows anyone who again has gone above and beyond – restaurants volunteering to help out with food – any business doing wonderful things we would love to hear about them.

 The Next Meeting will be via Zoom on Thursday 22nd April 2021 9:30am – 10:30am