**Minutes of the Community CVS Network Meeting**

**Thursday 23rd September 2021**

**Attendees:**

Donna Talbot – Community CVS - [donna.talbot@communitycvs.org.uk](mailto:donna.talbot@communitycvs.org.uk)

Jason Cothliff – The Mall - [Jason.Cothliff@themall.co.uk](mailto:Jason.Cothliff@themall.co.uk)

Gabrielle Aspinall – CBP - [gabrielle@cbpartners.org](mailto:gabrielle@cbpartners.org)

Kiran Sadiq – BwD Carers – [kiran.sadiq@bwdcarers.org.uk](mailto:kiran.sadiq@bwdcarers.org.uk)

Abby Dearden – BwD Carers – [studentsw1@bwdcarers.org.uk](mailto:studentsw1@bwdcarers.org.uk)

Amy Greenhalgh – BwD BC Public Health – [amy.greenhalgh@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:amy.greenhalgh@blackburn.gov.uk)

Chris Trickett – CVS – [chris.trickett@communitycvs.org.uk](mailto:chris.trickett@communitycvs.org.uk)

Dilwara Ali – BwD Healthy Living – [d.ali@bwdhl.org.uk](mailto:d.ali@bwdhl.org.uk)

Asia Malik – Blackburn College – [asia.malik@blackburn.ac.uk](mailto:asia.malik@blackburn.ac.uk)

Ian Cran – Blackburn College – [ian.cran@blackburn.ac.uk](mailto:ian.cran@blackburn.ac.uk)

Hannah Mitchell – Hope for Justice – [Hannah.mitchell@hopeforjustice.org](mailto:Hannah.mitchell@hopeforjustice.org)

Abby Carter – Albion Mill - [abby.carter@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:abby.carter@blackburn.gov.uk)

Denise Cottam – BwD BC – [denise.cottam@blackburn.gov.uk](mailto:denise.cottam@blackburn.gov.uk)

Phil Schofield – Perpetual Care – [phil.schofield@perpetualcare.co.uk](mailto:phil.schofield@perpetualcare.co.uk)

Rebecca Billington – Sightline [Rebecca.billington@sightline.org.uk](mailto:Rebecca.billington@sightline.org.uk)

**Apologies:** Shen Mulla -Humraaz, Natalie White – Princes Trust, Tracy Davies – Bwd Borough Council, Lisa Rawcliffe – NWAA, Maggie Asquith - Lancashire & South Cumbria Integrated Care System, Zoe Alimeri- ICann, Tayyibha Masood – Positive Smiles, Amanda Fletcher – Nightsafe, Chrissie Spencer – BwD, Alison Clews – Together Housing, Julie Hutton – ICANN, Gail Barton – Our Lancashire, Rachel Simm – Gamcare,

**Presentation from Ian Cran from Blackburn College**

* I am part of the work placement team @ Blackburn College we support organisations

who offer work placements to our students.

* Asia – works with Admin, Scientific, business, engineering and A levels
* I work part of the STELA project – European funded project with representatives across 5 colleges
* Supporting SME’s with work placement – if they have any issues with the students, if they need guidance as to what is entailed in offering work placements, what the process is etc
* We have a new mentoring/supervising course
* We have 2 kinds of placements one is a 30-hour placement over one week and the second is one day per week over 45 weeks (The Full Academic Year)
* Covid has put a spanner in the works were placements are concerned -some areas there are a shortage of placements and in others there is a massive demand
* Health & Social care – care homes are crying out for help but because of the students being required to have double jabs it has limited the number of students taking up these roles
* We are looking to establish connections – any organisation who is struggling and needs an extra pair of hands

Q: what placements do you have?

A: Health & Social care – every type of job – admin, social media, reception etc

* Students need some experience in the work place, it looks good on their CV, a small amount of experience is better than none and they will learn transferable skills

Q: What commitment is there? What do the organisations need to do to have students on placement?

A: Its very straight forward, risk assessments, health & Safety, Employers Liability, fire etc – just to make sure it’s a safe environment for the students

Q: what age are the students?

A: 16 – 18-year olds

Q: Is there a selection process available for the organisation – interviews etc

A: we usually ask if we can hold an open half an hour for students to go and have a look , then form the feedback we would know which students would be most suitable for that particular placement. We would also encourage the organisation to hold an interview/meeting with the student

<https://www.blackburn.ac.uk/work-placements-for-employers/>

**Presentation Rebecca Billington from Sightline**

* We are a charity based in the north-west of England offering a FREE telephone-based befriending service designed to reduce loneliness and isolation for anyone living with a visual impairment.
* Our volunteers call our service users once a week to have a chat on a secure telephone system
* The reason I have come along today is to make contact and reach out for volunteers – we have a massive shortage and currently are running a traffic light system with our Service users.
* We have 40 service users and 40 waiting to be partnered up with a volunteer
* We take self-referrals, referrals from RNIB, Galloways
* Our volunteering process is really easy – its great on your CV, it can be as little as 1 hour per week – all we ask is that you have some experience of eye loss, it doesn’t necessarily have to be you but it could be a family member

JC – The Mall -please send me info and we will get it on the Volunteer Wall

DT – Yes, we can put it on the Community Wall too

DC – It may be worth getting in contact with a sight loss group that used to be based in Mill Hill Community Centre – I will see if I can find their contact details

Q: Could we offer block volunteering for the students?

A: Yes, but we do ask that they have some experience of sight loss, as most of our service users want to talk about their condition etc and its important that the person they are talking to has gone through that experience

* Its very much the chicken and egg situation – we want to advertise our project but we don’t have the capacity to do that yet, until we have new volunteers
* Some of our befrienders are currently supporting upto 5 service users and we don’t want it make it too onerous on one person, we want to share the load

Q: where are you based

A: we are originally a North West based charity but we have branched out and we now have an office in London and Scotland – so we are a national organisation now.

* Please have a look on our Facebook page and read some of the case studies – they will give you a better insight into what we do
* It really is a worthwhile volunteering role – the difference one phone call can make to a person’s life

Q: is it easy to refer someone in to your service?

A: yes absolutely – visit the website, there’s a form online or give us a ring

Q: How long does the support last?

A: however long the service user needs it – it can stop and restart or just continue whatever works for the befriender and the service user

DC- your more than welcome to come along to the Albion Mill and put up a banner and speak to people

<https://www.sightline.org.uk/organisations/>

**Presentation from Dilwara Ali from BWD Healthy Living**

* We have lots of projects at BwD Healthy Living – we all do a bit of everything
* Food Poverty – the Pandemic really hit hard for a lot of people in BwD and now with furlough coming to an end we anticipate that there will be an even greater need
* We have the Energy 360 – Fuel Poverty project which provides targeted, personalised information, advice and guidance to disadvantaged residents to increase their awareness and understanding of their domestic energy usage and how they are able to improve the energy efficiency of their homes by introducing energy saving measures.
* People who have lost their jobs throughout the pandemic will need help with heating costs – families will be impacted, when families can only heat one room – children are distracted from school work making them fall behind, Eat or Heat is a situation many families in BwD are faced with , the impacts of energy deprivation are multitude
* We work with GP’s – individuals who are constantly suffering from chest infections could be due to poor heating in the home – out of date boilers   
  (we can help people source new boilers)
* As we have seen at the moment with the gas crisis costs are going to go up and people are going to need as much support as possible, it will also impact on the ability to find anyone cheaper
* Building on previous projects completed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, The Buddies in Need project provides support to individuals and families experiencing food and fuel poverty.
* Due to job losses and reduced working hours, many of our clients are first time Universal Credit claimants who have never asked for support before and do not know where to go for help: they report struggling to navigate systems to access support and lack the confidence to ask. Also, the residents this project supports fall outside the criteria for assistance from other agencies, for example they are too young for Age UK’s befriending and food delivery offer.
* By providing food parcels, befriending support and advice on managing their utility bills, we give residents the chance to get back on their feet again and feel less socially isolated.
* Debt – we can help with debt, people are very embarrassed about debt – we work with other partners to help
* We work on the weight management project with the Council – I will let Amy talk about that
* We are working with Blackburn college on eating healthy – encouraging takeaways to have healthy options – look at recipes and the costing
* We also have Youth Ambassadors project which has been funded through Blackburn with Darwen’s Our Community, Our Future social integration programme.
* It aims to provide young people with the opportunity to become more involved in their community through social action and team building, and working with other people their age from different parts of the borough.
* We have worked in Shadsworth, Mill Hill and Whitebirk
* The Youth Ambassadors project is in its second year and is being delivered by a broad range of partners from across the borough bringing together a range of skills, knowledge and expertise. The partners are; Blackburn Youth Zone, Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, BwD Young People’s Services, BwD Healthy Living, IMO, One Voice Blackburn and Youth Action.
* We have community Gyms – one for men and one for women its £75 per year, it’s a very good facility, a lot of our gym users are shy and embarrassed, they don’t want to go to the more professionals’ gyms. You could sign up for 6 months - £45 if you want to get that bikini body for summer – Bangor Street Gym
* Big Local – work with Shadsworth area – tackle local issues, the residents lead with the project
* 8 years ago £1 million pounds was given to the most deprived areas
* A hub has been set up and we sell £6 food parcels – we work with Fair Share so there is a huge amount of food for only £6.00
* We also worked on the holiday hunger project – providing local children with a lunch during the holiday period, we delivered 1500 grab bags ( sandwich, fruit, drink)
* We also have the Health Lottery Funded – Local conversation project in Higher croft – we are setting up a hub there
* We have a Greenspaces project in the Wensley Fold area and we are working with Cllr Jackie Floyd.
* We have another project supporting those 50+ with employability skills, harder to get a job as you get older, it may not actually be a job it could be an enterprise – many ladies make things at home so we help them with their food hygiene certificates, COSH, Health & Safety – training again working with Blackburn College
* We also have the library on Fish moor Drive which is run by volunteers, we are still restricted to the number of days we can open etc
* Finally we have a project around ACE – funded by the PCC looking at the behaviour of teenagers and adults and their choices when the have been affected by ACE’s

<http://www.healthylivingbwd.org.uk/>

**Presentation from Denise Cottam from BwD BC**

* Albion Mill Is new build – housing support scheme in Mill Hill in Blackburn, it has taken 5 years to build and we are nearly there
* The housing is one of a kind – housing is for adults over 18 yrs. with housing care needs
* There will be 70 permanent residents each with their own apartment and different care needs (mixture of low level, medium and high)
* All residents have been through Adult Social care where the panel assess the criteria and asses whether or not it will be suitable for the individual
* There will be intermediate care – 31 rehab beds for those coming out of hospital who are quite fit enough to go home
* We will have 4 apartments for anyone who has been through a major physical change – Amputation etc
* We will also have a community hub at the heart of the project
* We have 3 staff – 2 full time and one part time
* The Hub will be open 8:00am – 8:00pm – 7 days per week
* We will be organising lots of activities – workshops, we will have our own radio station, we want to offer lots of activities/Bingo/exercise/Well-being – invite other agencies in to talk to the residents – we have already linked in with AgeUK BwD and Lancashire Women
* We will have art groups, gardening – the hub has lots of outdoor space and we just want it to be a fun and friendly place
* We want to engage with residents we don’t want them to feel isolated, we want them to feel at home
* We will be offering wrap around support – BwD Carers and carers service will be there
* You can come along and run events – hire space at the Hub, come in and talk about your services etc
* We have a friends of Albion Mill who have managed to raise £12k of funding to pay for the activities
* We are moving residents in gradually – we want everyone to feel comfy and at home so we are offering them free lunch vouchers so they can come and meet everyone, have a chat about what they like etc
* Blackburn Rovers, CANW and Project 180 are coming together to produce a piece of art work with a local artist
* In the garden we will be encouraging residents to do the “Captain Tom Walk”
* We have the canal nearby and we can offer canoeing & Barge trips, local history
* We have a concierge, large reception, café offering lunch etc
* We will be offering music evenings, reading clubs
* When we open we will be sending out invitations and the offer to sign upto SLA’s
* Albion Mill Radio in the hub – residents will be encouraged to chose music, send messages over the radio, family send messge to the residents – 90’s session, advertising, Facebook, Instagram and twitter
* We will be able to link in with travel assist and bring clients into the hub

Q: Are the activities open to the wider community?

A: Yes once we are up and running, initially we will settle in the residents – we have 50 so far, they are moving in now and getting settled.

Q: will the residents be required to pay for utilities separately or are they included in the rent?

A: Electricity will have to be paid by each individual resident as will water rates

[**https://www.facebook.com/AlbionMillCommunityHub/**](https://www.facebook.com/AlbionMillCommunityHub/)

**Presentation from Amy Greenhalgh from Public Health**

* Eat Well, Shape Up, Move More 2020
* The Eat Well, Shape Up, Move More Strategy aims to encourage positive lifestyle changes that enable local people to improve their health and wellbeing by supporting an environment where physical activity and healthy eating is the easy choice for everyone throughout their lives.
* I think it needs a new title as it is a little long winded
* We have moved on to delivery focus – BwD – Healthy weights and getting people moving
* There are many health inequalities in Blackburn with Darwen
* Support the most vulnerable in our community to have access to a healthy diet
* There is some good work going on – 3 strands
* 1) Food resilience Alliance – looking at good nutrition, weight management, good food offered to all, everyone working collaboratively to ensure people who need Food parcels etc are receiving nutritional healthy food
* 2) Active BwD – increase physical activity of the residents at home and in the work place – sport England
* 3) Healthy Weight declaration – healthy weight pledges and encourage others to take the pledge
* The guiding principle is what can we do to support individuals, how do we reach them and get them involved?
* We want everyone to have a choice of health food – for example the café in Witton park lots of healthy activities, walking etc and only chips etc on offer – we want people to have the choice of healthy food and make informed choices by educating residents
* Promote healthy and sustainable food for all and reconnect people with where food is from
* Improve access to healthy, affordable food choices for all, making healthy and sustainable food the easy choice
* We do not want to be seen as the health police – everything in moderation but the healthy choices need to be there – in the high street, takeaways, Deliveroo, vending machines, let there be good nutritional food that everyone can access
* Post covid – we have a long covid hub, lots of older people aren’t getting their exercise and they have been shielding for a long time it going to take time to get these people out and about again
* One positive that remains is that during covid lots of exercise classes where available online and we linked in with AgeUK to ensure that our older residents where IT competent to be able to access these classes, ensuring that they weren’t totally isolated
* How can we support residents living in poverty? – we need to bring the right partners around the table.
* How can we influence people’s choices – by encouraging small changes we can do things better
* We are looking at collaborative approaches among the different council departments – highways, regeneration, culture & Leisure, Adult services – how can we encourage more cycling if cycle lanes are closed and by looking at the bigger picture and the barriers we can overcome them
* <https://www.blackburn.gov.uk/health/eat-well-shape-move-more>

**Next Meeting**

**Thursday 21st October**

**9:30am – 11:30am**

**The Boulevard Centre, 45 Railway Road, BB1 1EZ**

**For more info please contact Donna Talbot 01254 583957**

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