Community Link Forum
LAA Workshop Feedback Report

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1.0   Introduction

During Round Three of Local Area Agreement development in the borough, local voluntary and community organisations that have an interest in health, social care and wellbeing issues were able to engage with statutory partners regarding the development and selection of priority indicators and targets in this area via a half-day workshop which was jointly facilitated by Haringey's Association of Voluntary and Community Organisations (HAVCO) and the Council.

Through the half-day workshop Haringey's voluntary and community organisations were able to influence the LAA process by ensuring that mental health, which had 'fallen off' the LAA priority list, was put back onto Haringey's LAA agenda. It was also recognised that the LAA process needed to be widened for the voluntary and community sector to engage effectively regarding the other policy areas.

It was anticipated that this gap would be addressed during the current LAA refresh, however, there has been little involvement from the *wider* voluntary and community organisations. This concern has been raised by voluntary and community sector representatives at Haringey's Strategic Partnership in November 2007.

In July 2007 the HSP endorsed the development of a new community engagement mechanism for the borough called the Community Link Forum (CLF). The accountable body for the Forum is HAVCO, the Council for Voluntary Service in Haringey. The Launch for the CLF took place in January 2008, and in recognition of widening the LAA process for voluntary and community sector input and engagement, workshops were held as part of Launch. The workshops enabled voluntary and community organisations to discuss the current LAA indicators. Due to demand by participants the workshops were facilitated a second time during February with the London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC). The feedback following the workshops is contained in this report.

It was agreed with the HSP's executive - the Performance Management Group (PMG) - that this report would be available at the Thematic Partnership Workshops facilitated during March 2008. To enable members of the Thematic Partnership Boards to have an understanding of the issues that voluntary and community organisations considered key, to address critical concerns for the area and local people.

2.0   Methodology

Haringey's voluntary and community sector is a 'broad church,' with a range of expertise and competencies; some groups having detailed knowledge about LAA with others having little or no detailed knowledge of the agreement. Therefore the LAA was introduced in relation to the six priorities outlined in Haringey's Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2016, which sets down the vision and aspirations for the borough. Discussions were encouraged around what participants felt were important to them and residents under each of the priority headings.

Workshop 1
1. Healthier People with a better quality of life
2. Be safer for all

Workshop 2
3. People at the Heart of Change
4. An environmentally Sustainable Future

Workshop 3
5. Economic Vitality & Prosperity Shared by all
6. People and customer focused

The workshop facilitators introduced the key issues under each priority, outlining the priorities objectives and aims. Participants were invited to consider the following:

1. main/overarching priority for each heading

2. detail a list of key priorities for each heading

3. consider the type of services that could be introduced or that already exist to address the priorities

4. general conclusions

Some of workshops had more than one main priority and some of them did not reach final conclusions. However in general there were key themes and concerns related to the Local Area Agreement that came out of the workshops. These are outlined below.

3.0   Outcomes and Recommendations of VCS LAA Workshops:
a. LAA development and planning
- Participants raised concerns that they rarely have access to results of consultations; therefore they are unable to evaluate the effectiveness of VCS' engagement in consultation processes/consider what difference and influence their views had on statutory-led initiatives
- Voluntary and Community organisations want to be an effective voice and *know* that their voices have been listened to and heard
- Empowering VCS is critical in relation to policy/service initiatives that are cross-cutting and overarching e.g. very few participants knew the purpose of the LAA
- Early engagement of the VCS is necessary regarding service development. The first step is a clear action plan to engage the VCS in commissioning processes.
- Concerns rose regarding lack of information regarding transitional arrangements for existing services delivered via LAA by voluntary and community organisations under Neighbourhood Renewal Funding. Participants were keen to learn whether this had been considered during current LAA refresh.
- Participants proposed that Council officers undertake risk assessment, as proposed Council cuts contradict the outcomes of some of the LAA targets.
- Failure of working in a joined up way, e.g. LAA development should be implemented utilising Compact working to:

- ➢ Scrutinise and challenge processes – where necessary
- ➢ Compact assess processes
- ➢ Avoid marginalisation of third sector (i.e. around consultations, contract relationships)
- ➢ Recognise Compact as the overarching document for doing business (between and across sectors)

b. VCS LAA Priorities:
- ▪ NI 7   -   Environment for a thriving third sector
- ▪ NI 6   -   Participation in Regular Volunteering
- ▪ NI 140-   Fair Treatment by local services
- ▪ NI 4-   % of People who feel that they can influence decisions in their locality.

c. General Concerns:
- ▪ Many comments were made regarding widening the process at an early stage to gauge the views of others including VCS (these are outlined in 'a.' above)
- ▪ Concerns raised that mental health, as a key issue within the borough may not be adequately addressed with the current priorities selected.
- ▪ Lack of clear service to address support needed for young people with learning difficulties. NI 54 – *Services for disabled children*, is a survey for users in respect of evaluating service quality etc. Service Providers in this field are concerned that a survey will not address some of the key concerns for these users and their families.
- ▪ Lack of understanding of the sector – research required to provide quantitative information of true value that the sector brings to the borough – e.g. faith sector work in respect of community cohesion, employment, providing skills via volunteering, specialist knowledge in environmental issues, etc

4.0   Workshop Outcomes

"Healthier People with a Better Quality of Life"

> **Main Priority:**
> *This is a cross-cutting priority therefore importance of exerting influence over LAA indicators is critical, however, wider VCS participation is about playing 'catch up' in respect of the LAA process*

Key Issues:
- Reducing social isolation – more opportunities should be available to achieve this
- Performance indicators should be defined by people at a local level
- Making sure local people are consulted about impact of changes
- Haringey's residents should be free from disease
- Good support available for people to manage long-term illness
- Better housing
- Reducing stress
- Accessible support services – local
- Valuing individuals/community
- Community cohesion
- Tackling discrimination – equal + fair services
- Health impact assessing for policies and activities
- Non means-tested provision
- Proactive instead of reactive services
- Removing barriers to access of health and well-being provision
- Responsive services – need based [User involvement]
- Prevention + self care support
- Mapping community need + anti-poverty strategy and implementation - plan funding independent advice services.

Self Help/ Self Worth;
- Recognition of positive contribution (e.g. careers)
- Empowerment/advocacy/ knowledge + skills
- Invest in education/awareness raising

Mental Health
- Happiness – good mental health
- Increase social networks/promote opportunity
- Awareness + preventative support;
   - Collaborative services
   - Links between support provision
   - Continuity of good services
- Maintaining local/effective service provision

"Be Safer for all"

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Main Priority:
• Reduce the incidence and fear of crime   • Address anti-social behaviour   • Create safe and secure homes, tackling domestic violence   • Safer roads   • A positive future for our children and young people

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<u>Key Priorities:</u>

- Apart from agreement that our streets need traffic calming, the discussion focused almost exclusively on concerns about serious anti-social behaviour, and particularly discouraging young people's involvement in it

- Fear of crime is a serious concern and could be reduced (i.e. be proportional) if people had accurate statistics... the media scaremongers too much

- Raise awareness of positive initiatives, alternatives and opportunities for people, especially youth, to pursue rather than crime - e.g. employment, youth facilities, creative things, education

- Need positive images of youth, rather than demonising them. Value and recognition of their achievements, e.g. via youth volunteering programme and training: positive contributions / positive opportunities for youth

- Need to engage with young people, and to listen to their views and their 'voice' - need effective practical action targeting those involved in gun and knife crime... and to prevent negative re-enforcement of such activity (e.g. glorification)

- Parents and carers of those involved in serious crimes (whether perpetrators or victims) need systematic support

- The best way to 'crowd out crime' is to ensure strong local communities with a good, positive atmosphere and people talking to each other and supporting each other

- visible crime prevention;
    - more police
    - more street wardens
- community structures;
    - neighbourhood support/responsibility - pride in our communities
- cross boundaries/multi/agency involvement
- inter-generational support/education, e.g. Inter-agency training on safeguarding adults across all VCs organisations and highlighting reporting mechanisms and available information/advice/advocacy agencies
- reducing knife/gun crime
- zero tolerance for discrimination and hate crime
- alcohol/drug dependency support

"People at the Heart of Change"

Main Priority
• Opportunity to influence • Empowering VCS • Meaningful engagement • Adhering to consultation policies • Making sure local people are consulted about impact of changes • Adequate resource to fulfil community needs

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Key Priorities

- Involve users and members (access wider community)
- Use VCS as a greater means of collecting data/knowledge
- Cost to enable this to happen – pay for engaging in consultation
- Social capital:
  - ✓ involve wider sector
  - ✓ incentives VCS to link
- Impact on homelessness:
  - ✓ strategy
  - ✓ process
- Impact assessment:
  - ✓ to be conducted wider then meeting targets/money
  - ✓ what does it mean for communities/dynamics/meeting needs/ negative effects?
- Strong processes/involvement
- Increasing accessibility, accountability
- Feedback – honest in processes
- Joining up agendas
- Treatment of VCS is inconsistent
- Honouring commitment to borough
- Contradictory targets (e.g. council proposed cuts will affect LAA priorities)
- Valuing borough – consistent plus continuous improvement
- Valuing VCS – independence/campaigning
- How do we prove how good we are? – more than a paper exercise overly bureaucratic
- Consider needs of BME communities
- Genuine community cohesion
- Community perception (understanding between partners)
- Relationship with health practitioners
- Services access
- What are the priorities within the communities?
- Too many changing agendas
- Health and safety
- Quality of provision

"An Environmentally Sustainable Future"

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Main Priorities

●*Tackle climate change*   ● *Manage our environmental resources more effectively* ●
Create sustainable and energy efficient homes and buildings ● *Increase recycling
and reduce waste* ● *Promote sustainable transport* ● *Encourage our future citizens
to be our first 'green generation'* ●*Protect the natural environment Haringey*

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K ey Priorities:

- Need for a comprehensive and well-financed insulation programme for all homes, not just new ones
- Housing v. maintaining green space - will be a issue for Haringey
- Need to develop alternative energy sources, e.g. solar panels on all buildings
- A 'green' lifestyle is part of a positive approach e.g. to diet (healthy eating) and fitness (cycling and walking rather than car use)
- Recycling should be made easy to understand and do, be as comprehensive as possible, and be the same throughout all neighbourhoods in Haringey
- Waste reduction and recycling should apply equally to businesses as they have a huge impact
- Necessary lifestyle changes need to be viewed positively and backed by effective incentives. Such incentives should be accessible, rather than means tested or hard to apply for.
- All reports by Council and HSP boards should include a brief 'environmental impact assessment' in the same way that they include an 'equalities assessment'.
- Community access – all aspects i.e. young people
- Influence over facilities and maintaining community space
- Economics over environment
- There's a need to continually raise public awareness on these issues

"Economic Vitality & Prosperity Shared by All"

Main Priority
Involvement of VCS and people at all levels strategically plus right through the process at all stages of the [development/ decision-making] systems.

Key Issues:

- Tackling 'worklessness' effectively means working from the bottom - up
- Local Business to get involved in this debate and workless to be involved
- Promotion of volunteering
- Training payments for unemployed
- Safety net (cost effect) transition from unemployment to jobs
- training – information workshop for unemployed
- Need to be qualified from the early stages.
- More young leaders and involvement of all ages groups (as opposed to middle-aged/ near middle-aged leaders)
- Ward level involvement from communities
- Homelessness impacts upon communities being prosperous – e.g. inadequate consultation with VCS regarding LBH Housing Strategy
- Community cohesion
- Need organised debate with all stakeholders leading to consensus on economic sustainability
- Audit of local people's views on this issue to be conducted across the borough
- Education and opportunity ;

  - Day release for training workshop
  - Hands on training
  - Open up apprenticeship and target what people really need
  - Improve employment opportunities

"People and Customer Focused"

Main Priority
• High quality, needs based and customer focused services that offer value for money   • Increased resident satisfaction with services and the area they live in   • Greater opportunity for civic engagement and participation   • Transparent and accountable local leadership   • Drawing on the strength of the voluntary and community sector   • Make our children and young people active citizens

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Key Priorities:

- Need more funding for a wide range of local services
  local services and amenities need to be accessible for everyone to use without barriers, e.g. affordable, no 'means testing' or bureaucracy, well advertised, and a system of community transport for those needing mobility support

- Need constant and sustainable youth provision e.g... facilities in local communities, mentoring programs etc

- Improve services for the elderly and those with disabilities

- Support for parents and carers (e.g. those caring for housebound relatives etc)
  Recognise and support the huge numbers of volunteers and volunteering, formal and informal, that goes on throughout Haringey

- Communication – active + two way of communication e.g. Delivery plan – local people on scrutiny panels

- Accountabilities of service provides/transparency two-way feedback evidence and monitoring

- Client specific complaint officer to process complaints (Compact mediation for VCS service providers)

- Language support necessary for services

Some overall conclusions from the workshop:

- The CLF mission to 'increase the level, accessibility and quality of services, with greater community engagement and influence' was felt to be a good summary of the issues at hand
- Key overarching themes from the contributions were: we must have adequate resources to fulfil community needs, work towards strong communities, support engagement of young people
- There's a great deal of connection and overlap between all the issues discussed

5.0   Acknowledgements

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Faiza Rivzi	-	BME Carers
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