

THE LINKS OPERATIONAL TASK GROUP

Thursday 5th June '08 – Notes of meeting

Present:

Ian Mason	Resident
Harold Stookes	Resident
Dorothy Henley	Resident
Andi Parker	Involvement Worker, Gateshead Council - Minutes
Esther Ward	Older People's Assembly
Gev Pringle	GVOC/Host
Jane White	Resident - Chair
Dave Wallace	Voluntary Worker
Caroline Airs	GAIN
Colin Roberts	GVOC

Apologies:

Lyn Boyle	Planning and Development Manager, Gateshead Council
Janice Todd	Carer
Kay Parker	Resident
Vicky Parsons	Older People's Assembly
Bill Llewellyn	Resident
Annie Murphy	GVOC
Christine Squires	Resident

1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

2. Chair's Opening Remarks

- Chair – JW noted that the meeting had not been informed of fire evacuation procedures. She had checked with Security who informed her that everyone should leave by closest departure point – identified by Green exit markers. People should walk around outside of the building – on the footpath – to the School playground opposite the car park entrance to the Civic.
- No-one can collect cars during a fire drill.

3. Minutes & Matters Arising of last meeting (22.05)

- EW asks that she is recorded as attending as a resident and not as a member of an organisation.
- EW advised that the display boards were on loan to the LINK, not gifted!
- DH asked that the minutes also reflect the discussion that was agreed that the LINK is about representing collective issues and not individual complaints. The LINK will signpost as appropriate.
- Minutes agreed.

3. Report from sub-group (met 03.06.08)

Aims – CR circulated new Aims that are now broken down into bullet points. These can be added to in future. This group recommends they go to the Steering Group for agreement and adoption at next meeting on 26th June. AM to send out to database with accompanying LINKs information.

Structure/Models – Sub group looked at models used by some of the pilot sites. County Durham and Medway models circulated and discussed further. Sub group recommend Durham model as they liked its broadness, the Partnership with the

Host etc and felt it was a useful 'staging post' towards a de-centralised structure. They felt themed groups could be set up, reflecting identified priorities or areas of Gateshead. The Chair and/or Vice Chair of each of these themed groups would then be "Steering Group". This would bring change to Steering Group as some groups did their task, diminished and were replaced by new ones. Each themed group could have its own devolved budget in longer term.

Agreed: CR will prepare a paper to take to the Steering Group on 26th June outlining each model, pros and cons and recommendations. Sub-group will meet on 17th June to work with Colin on this and agree the paper.

It was also suggested that this might form part of a wider consultation during a larger 'launch' of the LINK with more Stakeholders. This was discussed further, it was agreed that not everyone has opportunity or time to attend every meeting at moment but that does not mean they are not interested. The LINK has a duty to ensure local residents are kept informed and have opportunity to comment/disagree on proposals.

The sub group also wanted to thank Colin for his support during this process.

4. Any other Business

- GP asked if there were any concerns about the Host or if anyone wanted to discuss how the Host was performing?
 - Want update, particularly how membership is growing
 - Registration form was not finalised by the Steering Group and some people want opportunity to comment on it
 - If missed a meeting it does not mean you have dropped out or not interested. Any papers circulated at a meeting, including the minutes, should be sent out to people who normally attend to keep them up to date
 - Where possible minutes and other info should be sent out in advance (currently meetings extremely close together so bear with us). Agreed as a principle.
 - Thanks to AP and AM for fitting this into their full-time jobs, realise lot of work been generated by the Task Groups so far & more coming!
- GP said a member of this Group had spoken with AM about how she presented herself at meetings. This had not been a mandated discussion on behalf of others. As Director of GVOC and manager of the staff in that organisation he reiterated that there are proper processes if people are unhappy with his staff and that he was not happy for them to be singled out, as had happened during this discussion.

GP and AM will draw up a draft protocol about what is expected of the Host by the Local Authority and also working relations between the Host and LINK members.

CA also reminded the meeting of the Ground Rules we had all agreed which state that if people disagree with something to discuss it during the meeting or at the next meeting and not to argue about it outside the meeting.

DH said that we need to consider relations between the Chair (LINK member) of the meetings and Secretary (GVOC) when setting agenda. It may be better to have a Chair for 2 months at a time to help with continuity. Agreed.

- Dates – AP apologised for putting information out at last meeting that was inaccurate. It was dates for Task Groups that were wrong. Dates now revised, venues booked, please amend diaries.
- New bulletin released by National Centre for Involvement – copies available
- Newsletter from LGA also released this week – copies available
- JW now attending OSC on 10th June as IM cannot make the date.
- Place available at the Department of Health event on 9th June as DH cannot attend. GP circulated information about the event.
- JW will chair the next meeting.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 19th June. 10am-12. Bridges Room.
Apologies from DW

Notes – Andi Parker
Involvement Officer
Gateshead Council