

TVCSF May 2008 Forum Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

- Steve welcomed members and supporters to the Marlowe Academy and introduced the first keynote speaker Brendan Ryan, from Thanet District Council.

Brendan Ryan - Choice Based Lettings

- The new initiative is being launched and will be going online at TDC in July 2008.
- The initiative is an attempt to improve and diversify housing opportunities in Thanet.
- Thanet District Council has a limited supply of affordable housing through its own stock and through registered social landlords.
- From July TDC housing options team will provide housing advice and will circulate a fortnightly bulletin publicising all the available housing stock.
- Those already on the housing register are free to register their interest in any accommodation in the bulletin.
- TDC have been consulting with local voluntary and community groups.
- Groups who work with vulnerable members of the local community who are also on the housing register are invited to contact the housing options team to discuss how the new system can work for their clients

Steve Ward - Data Protection Act

Steve listed the eight Data Protection Principles that data controllers must comply with even if they are exempt from notification.

1. fairly and lawfully processed
2. processed for limited purposes
3. adequate, relevant and not excessive
4. accurate
5. not kept longer than necessary
6. processed in accordance with the data subjects' rights
7. secure
8. not transferred to countries outside the EEA without adequate protection.

He also talked about the ways in which voluntary and community organisations can apply for exemptions.

TVCSF Extraordinary General Meeting

Steve Ward as chairman explained that the Thanet Voluntary and Community Sector Forum had been active since 1996 and that to enable the organisation to meet its obligations, and to continue to develop its services to members, it was necessary to change its governing documents from that of an unincorporated association to a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Bernadette Whitlock as treasurer explained that the TVCSF also wished to open a new Charities Aid Foundation bank account and apply for indemnity insurance, and would not be able to pursue either courses of action until it had full charity registration.

In response to a question from the membership, Lisa-Maria Browning as TVCSF Secretary explained the process of seeking registration as a company limited by guarantee, charity registration and the transfer of assets from the old unincorporated association to the new organisation. Lisa-Maria also drew the membership's attention to the need for existing members to reapply for membership of the newly formed organisation.

The formal proposal and vote

All those members present who were eligible to vote were invited to vote on the motion that

the TVCSF would change its governing documents from that of an unincorporated association to a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. This was unanimously agreed by all those present who were eligible to vote. There were 5 non-members present who abstained from voting.

Steve welcomed and introduced the second keynote speaker Daniel Nicholls from Kent County Council External Funding Unit.

Daniel Nicholls - KCC External Funding Unit

The External Funding Unit offer a range of support to voluntary and community groups.

- 'Inside Track', a monthly magazine which features a wide range of funding sources.
- 'Kent4Communities,' a website which enables groups to do their own funding searches.
- The External Funding Unit has limited staff resources but is happy to offer some feedback on draft funding applications to KCC funding programmes
- The External Funding Unit is launching a partnership scheme whereby voluntary and community organisations seeking other organisations to work with on joint funding applications can advertise their interest free of charge
- The External Funding Unit publishes a small range of fact sheets which are available free of charge.

For further information either contact TVCSF on 01843 843 222 or the External Funding Unit direct on externalfunding@kent.gov.uk

Steve welcomed and introduced the third speaker, Paul Lawes from Thanet District Council.

Paul Lawes - Thanet District Council Thanet Community Portal

The scheme was originally launched as part of the 'Kent Connects' initiative but now stands alone as a resource for the Voluntary and Community Sector in Thanet.

- The service is completely free and currently over 400 organisations in Thanet have already signed up.
- All voluntary and community groups are invited to apply to have a web page giving details of their organisation. This will be added to the Thanet Community Portal.
- Once registered and online, groups can access their own web page and update it at any time.
- The web pages can be used to recruit paid staff and volunteers as well as notifying other users of forthcoming events.
- The web pages can also be used for networking and sharing information about group activity and joint working.
- Service Users and Voluntary and Community Groups can access the portal at any time.
- For further information contact Paul Lawes at TDC on 01843 577 000.

Updates

Steve invited updates from the membership.

- Jane Brooke from Mencap invited eligible members to look at a new funding opportunity available through Eastern and Coastal Kent NHS Thanet Health and Wellbeing Partnership Fund. Applications must be submitted by the beginning of July 2008; further information can be obtained from Dawn Williams at EK NHS Health Trust.
- Gill Essex, the acting CEO for CASE Kent announced that the organisation had opened an office in the Foresters Hall in Ramsgate.
- Sue Brown from the Options Pregnancy Advice Centre informed the meeting that their premises had suffered a fire and that they had temporarily relocated to the New Life Church and could be contacted on their usual telephone number.
- Maria Lynn introduced herself as Citizens Advice Bureau's new caseworker with specific responsibilities for ensuring improved benefits take up.

Steve Ward informed the meeting that the Forum had a new telephone number and could now be contacted on 01843 843 222