



<http://www.da21.org.uk/sustainable/forum/>

Sustainability and Environment 3rd Sector Forum Reps Meeting

5th Feb 2010 –Five Penny Farm, Wooten Fitzpaine.

1. Present:

Katy Pascoe, Paul McIntosh, Richard Toft, Jyoti Fernandez

Apologies:

Amanda Brown, Trevor Muddimer, Mike Jones

2. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting 30th June 2009 were read and agreed. Some discussion followed around how useful reps found meeting as a forum. It was agreed that as part of a DCA Networking Event the forum would try to come together twice a year.

Item 4. Communications across themes. KP raised concerns of forum with other reps and in response has developed a 'rep induction pack,' 'rep training program,' and a quarterly newsletter for 3rd sector reps, which will highlight main points that cross themes. 3SIG (3rd Sector Infrastructure Group,) has also agreed to filter information from other themes and strategic groups within the partnership and to take our collective comments to those meetings. It is hoped that a networking 'lunch' will be possible between forum reps and 3SIG members soon.

Rep induction packs will be available on the Dorset community Action website by March 2010.

3. Bug Postcards.

KP presented the Voice Project 'Bug Postcards, which are being trialled as a way of reaching 'hard to reach groups,' to collect their views/ issues/ messages to feed into the forums and DSP.

Reps agreed they would raise issues from groups that are not members of the 3rd sector s&e forum, during DSP meetings. It was also agreed that this could be a good way of canvassing for issues for the forum to take forward.

To date the only 'sustainability/ environment' related bug received is from the West Dorset Age Partnership. It outlines concerns from older peoples groups

that residents in West Dorset have to pay to compost garden waste, when it is free for collection to landfill. It was agreed that they forum would promote community based composting with statutory partners.

4. Reps Reports and Expenses.

KP proposed new system for claiming reps expenses which would link writing a short report of the meeting attended with the claim for reps backfill. Motion agreed, using new templates which PM will email with DA21 logo included. Reps were also encouraged to claim their backfill ASAP for the year, as no claims have yet been received by DCA.

During rep updates JF (Elected representative for the forum on the Affordable Housing Theme Group) informed the forum about her work in this area.

In particular she commented that the affordable housing group currently has monies available to it. PM informed that he was aware that there are additional unspent monies of approx £1.1million which may be applied for by theme groups, the allocation of which we believe is decided by a sub-group of the DSP board.

After vigorous discussion it was agreed that PM would email CB to ask for advice in what leverage the forum can exercise to bring resources online to support the development of community based solutions to affordable housing, for example funding a paid post to develop community land trusts, and co-housing developments, or at least assess these innovative methods suitability for addressing affordability in the county. A number of supporting reasons are summarised as follows as well as those so far mentioned:

Since the departure of Andy Lloyd as Rural Housing Enabler there has been no permanent resource in the 3rd sector looking at this issue.

This is despite the dramatic growth in interest for both alternative means of ownership (CLTs) and innovative types of development (co-housing for example the recent acceptance of a planning application for the Threshold Centre in an exception site outside of Gillingham which will have affordable housing provision)

The current financial climate means that private house builders are even more reluctant to cost affordable homes onto sites, leading to issues with authorities meeting their targets.

Housing associations such as Synergy are working with local groups such as Bradford Co-housing Group already - this work is very innovative and would benefit enormously from capacity building. In particular in Bradford, Oliver Letwin has taken a keen interest in the co-housing initiative and setup meetings with the WDDC executive who have been supportive.

DCA through Simon Thompson are looking to work with regional partners on setting up a network of Community Land Trusts, however the absence of resources means that work such as this will miss Dorset.

In summary feeling was so strong on this issue that it was felt this was a golden opportunity for the DSP to address this issue positively by working with the community who are creating the possible solutions.

ACTION PM. Insert DA21 Logo to rep expense and report templates and circulate.

ACTION PM, RT, JF, MJ, TM submit claim forms with invoice from organisation ASAP

ACTION PM to email Colin Brady for support.

5. Training

KP outlined a new 'Rep' training program that will be available throughout 2010. More information is available on the DCA website.

ACTION. All reps to fill in the 'Skilling up, training needs analysis' included in the induction packs and return to KP.

6. DCA Networking Event.

25th March, agreed not to participate due proximity of Transition Towns Event.

5th July – Market place, advertising own groups

Oct – Nov, agreed would be useful to meet as a forum at this event. PM suggested a theme of '3rd sector solutions to Dorset's NI's.

ACTION KP to book forum meeting and to suggest theme at DCA planning meeting.

7. AOB

MJ asked permission from forum to write to West Dorset Partnership in support of /endorsing their climate change strategy. MJ has felt under pressure by the West Dorset Partnership for some time to do this. After lengthy discussion it was agreed that RT would forward the response he had sent WDP (without acknowledgement) to MC and the forum would send a letter to the chair explaining they were unable to endorse at this point without responses to Richards points.

ACTION ??? To draft letter to WDP

Don't forget S&E Forum website

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Date of next meeting, Autumn DCA Networking Event