

WORCESTERSHIRE VOICES

Supporting an independent and influential
Voluntary and Community Sector

Chairman's Diary
March 2014

March was a month for meeting colleagues and promoting Worcestershire Voices as a route for communication – either through the website or through discussions in the forum.

4 March

Meeting with WLEP team to help each other understand the landscape that we (WV and WLEP) are working in. WLEP timescales (set by government) are tight and don't allow much opportunity for consultation. WV is the conduit for communication with the sector – recognising the time constraints. The current pressure in the WLEP is about producing the SEP for 31 March – after that there will be an opportunity to communicate more and to start to refine the plan.

5 March

Older Peoples Voluntary Sector Forum

Around 15 from VCS orgs, 2 of the CCGs and Health and care Trust.

There were presentations from NHS on Well Connected Programme, Acute Services Review, Plans for Urgent Care in Worcestershire and I provided an update on Worcestershire Voices. Issues raised included Transport around Worcestershire.

There was also some significant concerns around the commissioning arrangements – the continuing uncertainty was causing problems in many organisations.

10 March

Meeting with RQ of Community First.

12 March

Met with Andy White regarding the report on the Volunteering Workshop.

Worcestershire Voices Board meeting.

13 March

One to One with Lorna.

14 March

Met with Scrutiny Task Group of three Redditch Councillors (and officers) regarding the voluntary sector. Provided an overview of the Voices project and our plans to engage the sector as a whole moving forward.

Tweet from Cllr. Andrew Brazier @AndrewBrazier1 "Excellent scrutiny meeting with Michael Hunter @WorcsVoices today."

24 March

Follow up to Recruitment Working Group which I mentioned last month – WCC, District Council, NHS all willing to share links to each other's jobs pages and link to Worcestershire Voices website as the 'portal' to the sector.

Keen to promote Worcestershire to potential job applicants and their families as a good place to live and work. Working up a simple page of links (hosted on the WCC website) to suitable webpages. The Thinking is: if you don't know about Worcestershire you can use the links to build up a picture.

Once the page has been produced plan to link to the promotion work the LEP is doing – Gary Woodman says he'll have more time once March is over.

Plan to review in six months.

25 March

One to One with Lorna

Meet with Jonathan Sutton of St Pauls Hostel in Worcester.

26 March

Briefing session to Wychavon LSP on the work of Voices. About 12 from District Council, Market Towns, VCS, Health, WCC, S Worcs College, Children's Centres and Police. Particular Interest in the model as a method of linking Parish Councils and community organisations.

Briefing from organisations on the effect of funding on their operations – mostly downward trend.

Early help just in transition in Wychavon – further update in autumn.

Announcement from Inspector due on the number of houses to be built in South Worcestershire.

Meeting to discuss SLA with Community First

27 March

Meeting with Philip Talbot of AgeUk.

28 March

Meeting with partners from University Health Institute, WCC JCU Substance Misuse, St Pauls Hostel and Worcester Community Trust. This started with a discussion around the difficulty of engaging with some client groups to provide them with support but extended to a much wider agenda about how voluntary organisations would work with statutory partners in delivering services.

Suggestion to develop an online discussion in the WV Forum to bring more people's thinking to bear on the challenge.