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| **Title:** | **NORTH YORKSHIRE VCSE LEADERS GROUP MEETING** |
| **Date** | **18 November 2021** |  |  |

**MEETING NOTES - DRAFT**

**Attendees: If you were at the meeting and not listed below as attended or vice versa please advise and we can update the record.**

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| Jane Colthup - Community First Yorkshire | Helen Flynn - Nidderdale Plus Community Hub |
| Caroline O'Neill - Community First Yorkshire | Jos Holmes - YNY LEP |
| David Sharp - North Yorkshire Youth Ltd | Kate Rogata – Supporting Older People |
| David Warner - Trustee Local Trust & CAVCA | Liz Lockey - Hambleton Community Action |
| David Watson - North Yorkshire Sport Ltd | Liz Wilson - Welfare Benefits Unit |
| Diane Simcoe – Ramblers | Mark Hopley - Community First Yorkshire |
| Emma Pears - SELFA | Paul McCay - The Wilf Ward Family Trust |
| Emma Williams - Avalon Group | Paul Thompson - Raincliffe Wood Community Enterprise  |
| Simon Davidson - Darlington Mind | Phil Bramhall - Chopsticks (North Yorkshire) Ltd |
| Gemma Umpleby - North Yorkshire Hospice | Sam Alexander - Better Connect |
| Frances Elliot - Harrogate and District CA | Gemma Umpleby - St Michael’s Hospice |

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| **Item** |
| 1. **Welcome**

It is important for us to be able to get together, to hear views and share ideas. The more Community First Yorkshire and other colleagues on the call hear about observations and issues the more we can all share the messages with the public sector and other partners. Notes of the last meeting – were shared. There were no actions.Community Renewal Fund update:* One project is going forward in North Yorkshire – YNY LEP led climate change project which includes community building energy assessment
* Two other submissions which involved VCSEs were not successful:
* YNY LEP led Circular Communities project focussing on Malton (Circular Malton), Coastal Communities (CAVCA) and Richmondshire (Community First Yorkshire) was not selected
* Better Connect led an extensive collaborative project across partners, including Two Ridings Community Foundation, Community First Yorkshire and NYCC Stronger Communities and other organisations

NYCC is wanting to find out why very few projects were selected despite strong bids meeting the criteria.* Caroline thanked people who shared ideas discussed earlier in the year. They are intended as pipeline ideas for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund due to be issued 2022 or other funding available.
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| 1. **Workforce issues and pressures**
* There are a lot of changes in the pipeline as part of the NHS Integrated Care System (ICS) Transformation programme involving all the CCGs. North Yorkshire except Craven, will be part of the Humber Coast and Vale ICS area, Craven is part of the West Yorkshire integrated care system. There is a new North Yorkshire and York Strategic Partnership, which at the moment does not have any VCSC representation on it, but we are working with York CVS to ensure there is representation.
* There is a greater recognition of the role of charities and social enterprises. There are some particular pressure points in the county at the moment, primarily in Scarborough and Harrogate.
* There is a significant level of procurement and re-procurement of services at the moment. We are aware that for some organisations this means going through a number of procurement exercise as we go into 2022. We are raising this issue of added pressure.

**Discussion****Sam Alexander** advised that the main issues at the YNY LEP Skills Board are recruitment challenges impacting on all sectors and all levels. LEP programmes are increasing support for existing staff to help retention. **Emma Pears** – we are dealing with unprecedented demand and working with about 400 children every year, significantly increased from previous years. Associated with that is the amount of safeguarding issues for children and families. Increasing need to look at all kinds of hardship funding. Adding to family pressures is the high sickness levels among our health and social care colleagues at the moment on whom some families rely. VCSE colleagues are now at capacity. Some good news is that we have three new members of staff starting in the next month or two. We have made good use of the kickstart scheme. We were hit quite badly by the withdrawal of emergency COVID funding, even though it was only there for a short period of time, the demand is still there. I applied and have been selected for a West Yorkshire ICS Health Equity Fellowship. It will pay for backfill to undertake a research project looking at timely access to services for children and young people at risk of mental health in rural areas.**Kate Rogata** - demand is not slowing, both self-referrals and adult services referrals. We know loneliness and lack of confidence is a real issue for older people. We are running each of our outings twice because demand is so high. Group activities have restarted, and the first one, had 42 people signed up and it has been like that ever since, compared to the usual six. Demand has its impact on the team, at a time when funding has been challenging.**Mark** **Hopley** attends the NYCC Market Development Board, which is looking at procurement. The questions we raise are:* do you really need to put that contract out to tender?
* have you thought about the unintended consequences of it or is it possible to extend it?

We are pushing for commissioning to be more strategic and responding at short notice cannot continue. **Paul McKay** outlined that they provide services across the region for people with learning disabilities. Have around 800 staff and probably about 80 to 120 vacancies. Hard to operate properly and safely and has a knock on effect on staff morale. Registered managers are doing frontline work, which may mean that quality dips, people are less safe and the regulator gets more interested which makes it a vicious circle. NHS is sucking people up as it pays better. Administration staff want to work from home and do not understand the benefits of having a corporate culture, systems that require meeting people and for data protection reasons some sensitive information cannot be taken home. DBS system is overloaded and checks can no longer be done at speed. We have lost a few staff because of the mandatory vaccinations. April next year is going to be hard for many of us. **Gemma Umpleby** questioned what element of security or involvement is there with the VCSEs, as part of providing more reassurance. There is a number of contracts being handed back and when asking for bids to come forward there is no focus on how we maintain that volunteer workforce. If we are constantly competing against each other for the volunteer workforce, as contracts change, then people just will not feel valued and belonging to a service.**Mark Hopley** - there is a new workforce development strategy being developed for HCV area. **Ideas:*** A regional promotion of the VCSE and what it is like to be working or volunteering in the sector.
* Identify and celebrate younger 'volunteer ambassadors'.
* It would be good if commissioners consult properly with the VCS through Community First Yorkshire, to ensure we are looking at place-based solutions embedded in our local communities
* Getting references for new staff has been extremely slow and nearly all referees only providing basic proof of employment.
* More collaboration between us all, joint funding applications are a start, and colleagues support this.
* Funding open access to some of the mental heath and wellbeing apps that are around will help with retention of existing staff.
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| 1. **North Yorkshire County Council recommissioning model for the delivery of day services – Phil Bramhall**

NYCC is reviewing the current Approved Provider List and developing new models to commission support for people based on four areas, home-based support, residential nursing, supported living and community-based support. Phase one consultation exercise has concluded. The emphasis on outcome-based evidence presents challenges to demonstrate effective outcomes. Much of the benefits are around the holistic health benefits for service users and the challenge is to distil that to what are effective outcomes.Across Hambleton and Richmondshire the APL process has brought the work of three organizations closer together, Chopsticks, Northdale horticulture and Just The Job an environmental enterprises in based in Richmond, to look at how might develop our work collaboratively and draft a joint positioning statement. It is an opportunity to demonstrate what it is that we actually provide by bringing service together and what the benefits are to the individuals involved. Caroline advised there has been challenge to the amount of paperwork that is involved, minimum viable bureaucracy and people want to see a simpler funding applications with a common areas of information asked for. |
| 1. [**Yorkshire Funding Ecology Report**](https://communitysupportny.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Yorkshire-Humber-funding-ecology-research-report-2021_FINAL.pdf) **presentation -** [**David Warner**](https://davidwarner.me.uk/)**, report author and consultant on social change**

The report was presented on behalf of the Yorkshire Funders Forum which commissioned this work with financial support from Two Ridings, Community Foundation Leads, and the National Lottery Community Funds. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting and the report is [here](https://www.yorkshirefunders.org.uk/news/yorkshire-humber-funding-ecology-report-2021-published/).key findings when you look at the national picture:* Yorkshire and Humber voluntary sector income remains one of the lowest in England
* funding per person is down to just £374 per person per year, compared with London £2,552
* Yorkshire and Humber voluntary sector income is the lowest of all the nine regions.

There are clear signs that the pandemic has led to a change in funders’ approaches towards:* more equitable funding
* greater collaboration
* increased use of digital approaches.

In terms of funding proportional to population, there are cold spots in Selby, North Lincolnshire and East Riding of Yorkshire |
| 1. **Local intelligence sharing and updates**
* We have recruited people and retention has been fine.
* We have a couple of Kickstarters. The scheme is only for six months and we want to keep them, but do not have the funding.
* People's mental wellbeing and resilience is very low. Staff have to wear PPE 24/7 and are getting fatigued and mentally drained.
* People are leaving because we cannot be flexible enough, workloads are too much, feeling they are not valued
* Managers have legal duties and the Government giving contradictory messages is causing difficulty in some settings.
* We have had to change to become more agile and we have retained people resulting from flexibility.
* There are a lot of adverts that basically say it is desirable or indeed essential to have experience of working for a charity, which is restricting the pool of potential applicants. What is needed is to think more about people's skills, attitudes and abilities to be flexible, and willingness to learn how they fit with the team.
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| 1. **Safeguarding – Liz Lockey, Hambleton Community Action**
* Performance and policy development - challenges concern unregulated and informal entities - the ask is about keeping the ear to the ground, potentially offering to support those organizations and also being aware that they are there because there is a potential need but they may not understand, safeguarding or some of the complexities of the work area that they are in.
* The [Domestic Abuse Bill](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/domestic-abuse-bill), with the implementation strategy is to be published January.
* Person in Positions of Trust policy guidance is being reviewed
* Colleagues are reminded to revisit safeguarding training every two years, see [NYSAB](https://safeguardingadults.co.uk/learning-research/training-courses/) or [Children Safeguarding Partnership](https://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/training-north-yorkshire/training-courses/) sites for training
* A VCSE Safeguarding Checklist, sort of internal audit, is being produced, with links to guidance and templates, due to be completed in the New Year.

**Observations about safeguarding during COVID:*** on-line support does not give the opportunity to spot safeguarding issues in the situations people are in
* supporting children and young people can take six weeks to get an appointment
* voluntary sector capacity and waiting lists
* people with a learning disability have had their spending habits changed for the last 20 months, they have more cash and are moving into a time when people will have less cash, and there is less ability for managers and regulators and relatives to provide checks and support. This will lead to financial abuse happening, depending on how people are supported
* people with learning disabilities have very quickly adapted to using digital, tablets, computers, etc and we are seeing people being sexually targeted, being asked to send images and threatening to tell everyone on your Facebook unless you pay for it not to be done
* right wing radicalization happening, because someone with learning disability more susceptible to doing searches that are outside the norm
* with fewer staff and Covid challenges, social care providers’ staff may take short cuts and the risk is that closed cultures will grow and some practices become acceptable
* staff changes, be it volunteers and paid staff and the amount of churn is putting pressure on induction and management processes.
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| 1. **YNY LEP Roadmap to Carbon Negative – Jos Holmes, Community Climate Change, YNYLEP**

The presentation has been circulated. YNY LEP [Climate Change Newsletter](https://www.ynylep.com/newsletter-signup) can be signed up to. York and North Yorkshire has an ambitious target of becoming England’s first carbon-negative region, to reach net-zero by 2034 and carbon-negativee by 2040. This will use three pathways:1. Identify key milestones, decision points, policies and interventions that can drive the transition towards becoming carbon negative, including timeframes of actions and roles of stakeholders in delivering actions.
2. Five sectors: Transport, Buildings (domestic and non-domestic), Power, Industry and Land use, land use change, forestry and agriculture
3. 91 recommended actions concerning investment in infrastructure, policy and behaviour change.

County and district councils’ local plans have ambitions to:* Increase publicity and implement an engagement campaign to target all key stakeholders
* providing resources to enable behaviour change
* awareness raising campaigns to increase public knowledge concerning waste reduction, recycling and increased waste separation.

**Discussion*** This is important for the VCSE sector to show we care about place, as well as people.
* The sector is leading in its own way, small ways and collectively have an impact mitigating climate change.
* Chopsticks has:
* written its first climate support policy and drafted a statement about what they are currently doing, aims and aspirations
* set clear targets
* mentions in conversations with commissioners and private sector businesses, that climate change is top of their agenda alongside delivering the services to beneficiaries
* links with academia and researchers, the Bio Renewable Center, an offshoot of the University of York.
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| 1. **AOB and updates**

**Mark Hopley** outlined the idea of introducing a regular monthly VCSE ‘temperature’ survey, involving a panel of 20 or 30 organisations, chief officers. It would be a simple survey asking what are the key issues on their minds at the moment. It would give a pipeline of real time issues. We will share the findings at this meeting. Colleagues on the call indicated their interest and support for the approach. Regular questions could generate some value for the individuals in terms of being self-reflective of where they are as an organization. It is really important that you going to the right people and same people.Considerations:* we should not ignore the wider voice because they are probably not in these groups
* when you mentioned about having, a group of sort of 20 or so, for this panel, one of the things that has been in my mind is, this meeting and the NHS assembly that is being spoken about. It concerns me that if we are not careful, we are going to have too many structures that we are getting into
* the composition and the diversity of the panel is important, and as well as taking the temperature, you could test ideas out on the panel.
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| **Future Meetings 2022** Thursdays 2-4pm – 17 February, 19 May, 18 August, 17 November |