April had two themes come to the fore - informal volunteering in communities and the challenges facing trustees.

3 April

Meeting of VCS Health and Well-being Reference Group and Worcestershire Voices with Marcus Hart (WCC Cabinet member) and Richard Harling (Director of Adult Services and Health).

Update on role of the Health and Well Being Board as a strategic planning group – looking ahead to how things might develop in a couple of years and the role of communities.

Recognition that lessons need to be learned from Future Lives – particularly around the impact on service users and the pace of change.

Volunteering and the development of informal volunteering were featured and there was recognition that developing community volunteering will need some resourcing – ground up approaches were needed.

Joint working WCC and CCGs to encourage more joining up – reduce hospital care and support communities to help themselves.

Better Care Fund – required HWBB approval – Worcestershire is a Pioneer and will be able to move faster to success – funding for this scheme relies on making savings from acute services. Recognition of the need for risks to be shared and challenges that presents to many voluntary sector organisations which don't have the level of resilience to accept the level of risk and resulting in national providers taking contracts.

Need to realise the benefits of Early Intervention in reducing the costs of more specialist services.

Discussions taking place within WCC on future of Changing Future Fund.

4 April

Met with Lorraine Preece – YSS and WV Board

9 April

VCS Engagement Event

Looking to the future of Worcestershire Voices with key network partners to inform board discussions.

Worcestershire Partnership Executive Group

Briefings on progress of Early Help and Stronger Families; Joined Up Working Project in Redditch; Joint Property Vehicle, Discussion on the future of Worcestershire Viewpoint and agreement to reduce frequency to once a year to fit with planning cycles; briefing on the WCC Operating Model.

23 April

Met with Act Local Board of County Council and discussed volunteering. (See slides attached to this paper.) There was a wide ranging debate on aspects of volunteering and the need to develop community volunteer approaches. The board also discussed Community Transport and the Act Local Website.

25 April

Met with Jim Smith – Sight Concern and WV Board

Met with Philip Talbot of Age UK.

28 April

Met with Henry Soulsbury, Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG Engagement.

29 April

Wychavon District Council – Rural Communities Event at Inkberrow

The Council are exploring ways to encourage / support Parish Councils to have more impact in their communities.
Although 'digital' is seen as an option success with 'Parish Folders' in key places containing local information – is valuable and encourages human interaction .
Exploring different methods of connecting communities.
Village Mapping has had success in identifying what is already happening – often unknown and unseen.
Inkberrow community transport – 'satellite' of Evesham Volunteer Centre scheme been running for about 8 years – a way of extending the reach.

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Developing a Volunteering Strategy for Worcestershire

Michael Hunter

Chairman

Worcestershire Voices

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Worcestershire Voices

Supporting an independent and influential VCS

- Recognises and values the diversity of the sector and the communities in Worcestershire
  - 1800 registered groups (+ estimated similar number not registered)
- Is open and transparent
- Acts strategically, thinks creatively and takes a flexible approach
- Promotes an independent and influential sector
- Is a route through which other sectors can have an open dialogue with the sector
- Is professional and continuously improving

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Priority: Volunteering

- Success of London Olympics 'Games Makers'
- What lessons for Worcestershire
- Worcestershire 'Next Generation'
- WCC 'Act Local'
- Increasing demand for 'services' at a time of reductions in state funding

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Volunteering Research (July 2013)

Volunteering in Worcestershire

- 47% help friends, neighbours, etc (informal volunteering)
- 52% through clubs and organisations (formal volunteering)
- 69% volunteer in some way

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Volunteering Research (July 2013)

Value of volunteering

- Estimated economic value exceeds £800million
- Stronger Communities
- Improved wellbeing (of volunteers)
- Improved skills and employability

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Volunteering Research (July 2013)

Recommendations include

- Create a high-level county-wide joined up approach to volunteering linking the voluntary and community, public and business sectors

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Volunteering Workshop (January 2014)

- Workshop to shape the implementation of the key recommendation of the July 2013 Report
- Brought together a diverse group of 25 people from across Worcestershire (and beyond)
- Three strands to the discussions
  - Definitions of volunteers and volunteering
  - Vision for volunteering in Worcestershire
  - Roadmap for achieving the vision

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Draft definition of 'volunteering'

"Volunteering offers opportunities to engage in activities that are fun, enjoyable, rewarding and provide a great sense of well-being, without any financial gain for the individual. Such activities may be formal and organised or more spontaneous and informal, meeting specific needs within organisations, communities and community groups, and among neighbours."

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Draft definition of 'volunteer'

"A volunteer is an individual who gives their time freely, without personal financial gain, to meet an external need that exists within their community, among their neighbours or in charities and not-for-profit organisations and groups."

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Vision for Volunteering in Worcestershire

A vibrant, happy, colourful, exciting and richly diverse place to live where passionate people are committed to a common purpose, and play their part in creating a compassionate, generous and inclusive community that values every individual, celebrates diversity, is focused on helping those in need, and supports each person to truly fulfil their potential.

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Volunteering

- Why do people volunteer?
- What do volunteers do?
- How do you get a volunteer to help?

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Strategy Development Plan

- Establish a Project Steering Group
- Finalise the vision for volunteering and definitions of volunteer and volunteering
- Agree the strategic priorities
- Establish cross sector working groups for Formal and Informal Volunteering/Community Action
- Combine plans to form the Strategy
- Promote Volunteering Strategy at a Launch Event

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Strategic Priorities

1. Develop a volunteering infrastructure that fosters and supports a commitment to helping and supporting others.
2. Encourage and support the development of sustainable and meaningful volunteering opportunities at both a formal and informal level.
3. Build a strong and effective Voluntary and Community Sector across Worcestershire that promotes and invests in volunteering to deliver high quality services and offers unsurpassed value for money.
4. Build strong, resilient, active and positive communities where social and economic inclusion is a reality for everyone.
5. Build meaningful and purposeful partnerships across communities, businesses, public services and VCS organisations that promote active citizenship and build a vibrant, dynamic, sustainable and compassionate Worcestershire.

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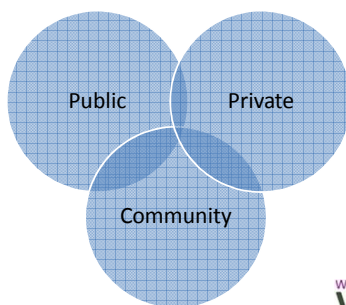Voluntary and Community Sector

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Project Steering Group

- Project steering group from public, private and VCS
- The role of the steering group will be:
  - To agree the project brief and the priorities
  - To oversee the appointment a consultant to undertake this work
  - To oversee the media campaign supporting this work
  - To oversee the commissioned contract
  - To agree the final strategy before the launch

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Changing Roles

Public   Private

Community

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Changing Roles

Top down
- Employees
- Centralisation
- Service provision
- Financial restrictions
- Prioritisation
- Commissioning

Bottom up
- Volunteers
- Community
- Localism
- Partnership
- Empowerment
- Mutuality

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Michael Hunter

Chairman
Worcestershire Voices
www.worcestershirevoices.org.uk

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