

Minutes

Event: Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce - Ambassador's meeting

Date: 27 September 2006, 1.30pm – 3.30pm

Venue: UK Workforce Hub Offices, London

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|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Present: | Alix Craven | Lifelong Learning UK |
| | Bansari Somani | SkillsActive |
| In attendance: | Ann Stacey | Skills for Care and Development |
| | Kim Harman | SkillsActive |
| | Janet Fleming | NCVO / UK Workforce Hub |
| | Karen Hale-Robertson | NCVO / UK Workforce Hub |
| | Kate Thomas | WCVA / UK Workforce Hub |
| | Sandra Bailie | NICVA / UK Workforce Hub |
| | Shaks Ghosh | CEO of CRISIS and SSDA Board Member |
| Apologies: | Una McKernan | NICVA / UK Workforce Hub |
| | Marion Lacey | Rock Solid Social Research |
| | Emma Skipper | Skills for Health |
| | Sue Hunter | Skills for Justice |

| Item | Minute | ACTION |
|----------|--|--------------|
| 1 | Welcome and Introductions | |
| 1.1 | Welcomes and introductions were made. Apologies were given as above. | |
| 1.2 | Karen Hale-Robertson was introduced to the group. Karen has responsibility for National Occupational Standards projects and was in attendance to update the group on NOS for the voluntary sector. | |
| 1.3 | Marion Lacey of Rock Solid Social Research was introduced to the group. Rock Solid has been appointed to refresh the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the voluntary sector and the Skills for Business network. | |
| 1.4 | Shaks Ghosh was in attendance. Shaks will be leaving her post as Chief Executive of CRISIS at the end of October, but will continue as an SSDA Board member for another 18 months. | Noted |
| 2 | Notes from Last Meeting – Actions | |
| 2.1 | 2.1 AS had not yet been able to confirm the Skills for Care and Development steering group member, but this will follow shortly. | AS |
| | 2.2 Contracts have now been received and signed. | |
| | 3.2 Tender documents for a refreshed MoU: Rock Solid Social Research has now been commissioned to complete this work. | |
| | 4.3 The meeting today at Hub premises replaces the suggested date of 9 th January as an opportunity for the Hub to meet with Ambassadors. | |
| | 5.1 Contracts have now been received and signed. | |
| 2.2 | 6.2 KH noted not many communications contacts had been received and asked the group to feed these in. | All |
| | • Catherine Chan (PR and New Media Advisor, SSDA): the group could raise the profile of VCS through INvolve, the SSDA newsletter. | BS/KH |
| | • Future Ambassadors meetings could be used to note news for INvolve. | Noted |
| 2.3 | 6.4.2 AS agreed to forward LSC guidance on funding VCS organisations as training providers. | AS |

6.5.2 Lifelong Learning UK's good practice guidelines for work placements will be available in June/July 2007, and circulated to all partner websites.

- 2.4 6.7.2 Ambassador and steering group papers will continue to be shared with the Hub.
- The Hub attends the SSC nation forum in Scotland. The Hub has no remit to provide the same in other nations but would attend these.
 - It would not be appropriate to have an SSC nation forum in Northern Ireland as they already hold other voluntary groups. Different arrangements exist in the England regions.
 - The Hub is not involved with the Welsh nation forum but has set up a group for voluntary sector SSCs.
 - KHR noted that Buddying arrangements could be key – SSSDA sees this as a good way for Sector Skills Bodies to engage.
 - If Ambassadors have enough days, they could buddy with an SSB.

Noted

- 2.5 6.8 Ambassador action plans are due at the end of September. These will be made available on the project website and shared with the steering group.

All/Noted

3 The Third Sector

3.1 SG was invited to address the group about her experience as a third sector Chief Executive.

3.2 SG has been CEO of CRISIS for the last ten years. Managing change has been one of the biggest challenges, in both identifying skill needs and as a skills need itself.

- When she joined, street homelessness was the focus and the social exclusion unit had rough sleeping as one of its three priorities. However, this was already beginning to become a less urgent task and the new focus of the organisation emerged, with the need for more shelters and hostels.
- The focus of work changed from one of survival to the rebuilding of lives and after five years in post, several programmes were closed down and new projects set up, when it became clear that there was a need to upskill staff.
- Change management as a skill is challenging, and the needs of your clients and staff must be assessed before you make changes. Leadership and management also emerged as a skill need at this time.
- CRISIS is now tackling the skills needs of its staff, and has embraced learning and skills as the way forward for both staff and clients, as a way to include and empower people.
- SG felt that the time for the third sector had come, with government focus on the voluntary sector as a way of delivering public services.
- If sector size is an influencing factor, then the growth of the voluntary sector will mean that this group has a responsibility to the VS community, as skills are driven by SSCs and employers.
- SG felt that the productivity agenda was not everything as it is not measurable for the voluntary sector in the same way as for business.
- When asked to provide a quote, SG had answered that the single most important factor for VCS skills is "UK community is as important as UK Plc".

3.3 SG noted three areas where the sector could promote and make itself heard:

- Volunteers are not a government resource. For example, every year an army of 5000 volunteers make Christmas happen at Crisis for a large number of homeless people. These volunteers receive no training or payment. If these volunteers were qualified, imagine the impact and influence they could have.
- The London 2012 Olympic games and Paralympic games legacy – if volunteers can grow and strengthen from that event then they will become a government legacy for the voluntary sector and for skills as well as for the Games
- Through the Leitch Review, and highlighting of the increasing importance of skills
- SG now sits on the Leadership and Management Advisory Panel. The Panel

chairman, Ian Smith, feels the greatest leaders are to be found in the voluntary sector – they have ambition and passion, are not money focused individuals and they really want to change the world.

- 3.4 An open discussion followed.
The 2012 Games:
A draft legacy plan is out for consultation. SfCD proposed a paralympic related project for volunteers to cover basic awareness training for volunteers on disability, and to upskill those volunteers.
- Sandra Scott at SSDA is the 2012 Games coordinator with remit for legacy planning.
- 3.4.1
- BS agreed to ask Jackie Hayhoe to attend the next meeting. **BS**
 - Jackie (SkillsActive) is working on the development of a training programme based on NOS for volunteers for the Games, and also the skills needed for managing volunteers. Work on this area is moving very fast.
- 3.4.2
- LLUK are responding to the educational strand of the 2012 Games. AC agreed to ask Lyn Bruce (LLUK London and South East regional manager) to contact Jackie. **AC**
- 3.5 AS had concerns that the VCS do not recognise the need for NOS.
- Staff and volunteers are not getting the qualifications they could due to a lack of recognition of the routes available.
 - VCS organisations might not see themselves as voluntary but may place themselves in a different sector, eg care or health. **Noted**
- 3.6 Memorandum of Understanding:
- 3.6.1 ML gave an update.
- The project will consider the SSC structures and the UK Hub structures and see how these can be more embedded.
 - Details will be needed from SSCs on partnership working
 - Teresa Lavery is working with ML. Teresa has experience of NOS and is completing desk research. **KH**
- 3.6.2
- KH agreed to send the first draft of desk research to the group.
 - Teresa will complete direction papers and a background statement building on political agendas and structures.
- 3.7 ML will complete a number of telephone interviews and will need a series of questions to ask SSCs.
- Identify where there are opportunities to link together.
 - Who does the VCS report to and what work is the sector undertaking to justify its funding?
 - Sector Qualification Strategy reform will impact on NOS and frameworks.
 - Rock Solid will produce a proposal in December, with a number of options, one of which will be agreed on and supported by the steering group and sector. **Noted**
 - It has to be a useful arrangement for SSCs as a formally approved partnership.
- 4 National Occupational Standards**
- 4.1 KHR gave a presentation on NOS (**Appendix I**).
- 4.2 Discussion included the following:
- Over 13,000 copies of the pocket-sized NOS for Trustees have been circulated to date. The Volunteer Mangers NOS is only available as a full sized book
- 4.2.1
- AC/KH agreed to circulate the document '115 uses of NOS' **AC / KH**
 - AC suggested that KHR contact Maureen O'Mara at LLUK for Youth Work Standards, who is currently developing level free NOS
- 4.2.2
- KHR offered to attend any groups or meetings to conduct training sessions or provide updates on NOS for the voluntary sector **KHR/Noted**
- 4.2.3
- KHR noted she would like to access the group for feedback and comments on

- NOS
- 4.2.4 • AC noted a Community Learning and Development Panel who meet twice a year with focus groups, and added that she would like to invite KHR to address them
 - Institute of Leadership and Management have NVQs at levels 3 to 5 – the group was asked to signpost to that if it is of interest to their sector. **All**
- 4.3 Further discussion noted:
- Lifelong Learning UK has a subsidiary organisation, Standards Verification UK, which endorses initial teacher training qualifications for the further education sector. From September 2007 anyone delivering LSC funded learning provision will have to be accredited to a certain level and this will have a huge impact on the workforce.
 - KT noted that the VCS in Wales have a new arrangement with the Welsh Assembly Government. County voluntary councils are responsible for delivering a level of training provision in their area. At present this is all non-accredited training - how can this be quality assured and aligned to NOS?
- 4.3.1 • The launch of the Third Sector Leadership Centre will be held on the 31st October, hosted by the Work Foundation – KHR agreed to invite the group to that event. The Sector Skills Development Agency has been engaged with the Centre (www.thirdsectorleadership.org.uk)
 - KHR noted resource signposting mapped to NOS – three good practice case studies for NOS are being developed. A consultant will conduct a 20 minute discussion and then complete a case study. **KHR**
- 4.3.2 • AC will be asking for advice from the group if LLUK decide to host a UK wide conference for volunteers in their footprint. This would be in partnership with the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and Creative and Cultural Skills. **Noted**
- ## 5 Future Opportunities
- 5.1 Ambassador Development Days:
Suggestions for potential development sessions were given:
- JF suggested a session with feedback on the workforce LMI project
 - Induction to learning Loops and Volunteering England works areas
 - Nigel Crouch (DTI) delivers a good Leadership workshop that Ambassadors could benefit from.
- 5.2 Potential Case Studies:
- BS suggested that Ambassadors might like to consider a case study on the Ambassador role and how they fulfil that, and the group agreed this would be a useful resource.
- 5.2.1 • BS and the Ambassadors to agree a template by email, and each Ambassador to complete a case study. **BS / AMBS**
- 5.3 Website:
- 5.3.1 BS asked if Ambassadors had images from the voluntary sector that could be used to populate the website. **AMBS**
 - AC noted they had funding to develop an image library but agreed to see what was currently available.
 - A calendar is now available on the website to share meetings and events with all members and visitors to the site.
- 5.3.2 • The group were asked to forward any known dates and events to KH. **All / KH**
- ## 6 Hub Update
- 6.1 The Hub felt that the majority of news and updates had been captured in other parts of the discussion today.

7 News Share

7.1 Skills for Care and Development:

- The 2012 Paralympic Games are a big development for them at the moment.
- How to work through the regional forums better
- The SfCD national conference will be held in November
- Work on developing social work placements around the country in the voluntary sector has been granted funding.

7.2 Lifelong Learning UK:

- 7.2.1 • LLUK are developing best practice guidelines for employers that offer work placement – AC agreed to circulate the guidelines when available **AC**

- 7.2.2 • There is the potential for case studies to be completed for pilot organisations **JF**
- 7.2.2 • JF noted that a similar resource had been identified elsewhere and agreed to share this
- The LSC Agenda for Change roadshow is being held on the 18 October at Westminster, reporting progress on the Agenda for Change and next steps. There will be implications for the voluntary sector.

7.3 SkillsActive:

- 7.3.1 • BS is looking at links within SSCs to the voluntary and community sector and plans to map links across SkillsActive nations and regions
- Bansari has joined the Volunteering Management and Leadership Advisory Group led by Volunteering England
- Positive Futures are expanding their volunteer training programme and working with SkillsActive in doing so. More than 50% of those engaged with the project go on to become volunteers
- SkillsActive are working on the pre volunteer training programme for London 2012 volunteers

7.3.2 Learning Loops (Volunteering England) has been circulated as a matter of interest to Management and Leadership groups, as it ties in with action learning projects that are taking place.

- David Black is the project lead for Action Learning for Leaders. ALfL will also looking to facilitate and build capacity for action learning.

- 7.3.3 • KH agreed to ask David Black to contact the Hub. **KH**

- 7.3.4 • The Hub expressed interest in being engaged with the M&L work that SkillsActive are undertaking. KH agreed to share with Sue Hook and John Thorpe. **KH**

7.4 Other:

KT noted Welsh research that looks at the impact of the sector on learning and how we support service users.

- 7.4.1 • KT agreed to circulate a link to the research published by the Welsh Assembly. **KT**

8 Any Other Business

8.1 There was no further business to discuss.

9 Date of Next Meeting

9.1 The next meeting date will be agreed and circulated by email.

9.2 Update: The next Ambassador meeting has now been agreed as Friday 1st December from 10.30am at SkillsActive offices. **All**

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