

Notes from Interface Meeting held on 4th February 2009
at Scottish Borders Enterprise Chamber. St Boswells

Present: BAVS - Eileen Wilkie, Convenor (EW)
 - Tony Fowler, Executive Officer (TF)
 Bridge - Margaret Hindmarsh, Vice Chair (MH)
 - Morag Walker, Executive Officer (MW),
 SEC - Margaret Simpson, Executive Officer (MS)
 VCB - Tom Sellar, Chair (TS)
 - Jocelyn Naylor, Executive Director (JN)

Apologies: Bruce Neil, Chair, Bridge

Purpose of Meeting

To review the proposal submitted by the Lead Officers Group in response to the remit agreed at the joint meeting with CPP on 19th November 2008.

Points Agreed and Outcomes.

1. The proposal to form an interface comprising a new management committee composed of equal representation from the 4 organisations was not endorsed by the Chairs/Vice Chairs at this meeting for the following reasons:
 - the problems experienced in the recent past by SBVDA which had a similar structure but a much simpler remit
 - the difficulties that such an organisation would have in setting and agreeing priorities within the SOA for the whole of the Third Sector
 - the difficulties in allocating central funding according to these priorities within the whole of the Borders, particularly if overall funding was to be reduced
 - the fact that there was no statement to show whether the group had considered a new single organisation as being a possible or desirable long term interface/infrastructure.
2. The Lead Officers Group confirmed that they had considered a new single organisation at their meetings and had agreed among themselves that this would be the best long term solution, but had pulled back from recommending it as they felt there would not be sufficient support for such a radical proposal.
3. It was agreed that the Lead Officers Group would now meet, discuss and set out what type of single organisation would in their view best deliver the core services of the 4 organisations in the future and what would be the steps along the way to achieve that and to submit their proposals to the Chairs/Convenors ahead of the next meeting on Friday 13th March.

Action – lead officers
4. The recent letter of 2nd February 2009 from Geoff Pearson requesting a statement by 31st March 2009 on which interface model we wanted to set up was noted and it

was felt that a report on further progress along the above lines at that time should suffice.

5. It was proposed and agreed by VCB, the Bridge, and SEC that an independent facilitator would be beneficial to this process to act as scribe, catalyst and report writer and that Carolyn Stenhouse of Avanti should be contacted to find out availability and costs and if not available to ask her for a recommendation. MS said that Pat Bowie might fit the bill if above approach was unsuccessful.

Action – MW

6. BAVS expressed their reservation about the need for such an appointment and said they would be discussing it with their colleagues on the Management Committee on 5th February.

[At their postponed meeting on 16th February BAVS agreed to attend the session arranged with Carolyn Stenhouse for 26th February and to take a full part in the negotiations for a new interface]

7. TS said that VCB would be prepared to meet the cost of this consultancy and then seek equal contributions from the other 3 organisations so there would be no delay in making this arrangement.

8. It was agreed that it might be beneficial to set up local social enterprise companies (CICs) in the future to manage the trading activities of the shops and the wheels projects in order to safeguard their independence and to prevent the possibility of core funding being reduced due to surpluses from the success of these activities and that this would be considered by the lead officers.

Action – lead officers

9. It was agreed that TS would draft the short report requested in the recent Geoff Pearson letter and circulate it to those attending for comment before it is issued to Scottish Government and CPP.

Action TS

Next meeting of Chairs/Convenors/ Lead Officers – Friday 13th March 2009