**INVERLEITH & FORTH VOLUNTARY SECTOR FORUM**

**North Edinburgh Arts Centre**

**21st January 2015**

**10-12am**

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| **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**Morag Wilson – Stepping Stones - <http://steppingstonesnorthedinburgh.co.uk/> **(MW)**Kate Wimpress – North Edinburgh Arts Centre <http://www.northedinburgharts.co.uk/> **(KW)** Steph Guerin – Freshstart <http://www.freshstartweb.org.uk/>(**SG)**June Dickson – EVOC - <http://www.evoc.org.uk/>**(JD)**Barbara Robertson **(BR)**Willy Black **(WB)**Janet - <https://plus.google.com/114007670241203446240/about?gl=uk&hl=en>Julie Smith – North Edinburgh Timebank - <http://www.timebanking.org/location/north-edinburgh-time-bank/> **Chair** **APOLOGIES**Helen Tait – Pilton Equalities Project Kevin Ross - Granton Youth Centre **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING** The minutes were approved. **MATTERS ARISING** **Chair** JD informed the meeting that Jen Richards – Pilton Community Health Project - <http://www.pchp.org.uk/> had expressed an interest in becoming the Chair. All Forum members approved the nomination. **Action Point:** **JD to contact Jen Richards to inform** **Local Community Plan**Various members of the Forum expressed some disappointment with the priorities that had been identified, feeling they were very broad with no real focus on anything. There also seems to be a lack of any focus on the BME members of community, Mental Health and Older people. WB explained that there are 4 priorities that the NP are tackling and which will remain on the NP Agenda. Going forward these priorities should be drilled down and Action Plans created JD raised concerns that the Subgroups were suspended during consultation. Subgroups have been an effective vehicle for Third Sector engagement and contribution. Therefore if there are no subgroups this may result in difficulties for Third Sector to contribute. WB & JD will raise the question at the next Forth & Inverleith NP meetings on the 25th February and 29th January 2015. An email will also be composed and sent (with approval from other Forum members) to Scott Donkin asking what mechanism will be put in place for the Third Sector to engage. At the moment it appears there is no real focus on anything and anyone could state that their work contributes in some way with the priorities stated. The Forum welcomed the priority: Improve the way we engage with and support our communities. However, members feel there is too much emphasis on Social Media and Billboards which people feel is not true engagement, these options have their place but better lines of communication must be constructed for true engagement to take place. An exercise was carried out by the NP team around safety which resulted in the team speaking with 400 people, a report is expected at the next Forth NP meeting. Operation Quarter light resulted in greater police presence however, what else is being put forward to tackle issues in the long term. **Action Points:** **WB & JD to raise the question on what mechanism will be put in place through the NPs to assure strong communication and engagement with Third Sector Agencies in moving forward identified priorities.** **If required, JD to compose an email addressed to Scott Donkin with regards to abovementioned mechanisms.** **CEC BUDGET** Forum members felt it would be good to invite Councillors along to explain the cuts in more detail. Some mentioned that the overwhelming feeling was Older People were the ones causing the strain on systems and budgets. Councillor Day attended an event in the area, this was very useful and gave people the opportunity to speak with him directly. WB asked where the collective voice is for the Third Sector in the Forth and Inverleith area. People felt at the moment there was none. JD suggested that the Forum should be the vehicle used as a platform for the collective voice of the Sector. We need a vehicle to bring people together to discuss issues we face and ways forward. Appears the CEC have took the easy option by using the salami slicing approach to cutting budgets with no Impact Assessment showing the possible results of such cuts. The Third Sector has absorbed and taken the brunt reductions in funding for many years and this time seem to be taking the brunt of cuts yet again with cuts being even bigger. The resounding sense was the Third Sector have been cut to the bone and can no longer sustain any further reductions in funding, it must also be noted that Third Sector are facing cuts from other funders, not only CEC funding. Concerns were also raised with regards to BOLD, worrying that Council want even more efficiency whilst cutting budgets, therefore reducing resources. Unemployment is being created. Some members felt that the Third Sector voice has been diminished as many people receiving funding from Scottish Government and Local Authority, therefore there is a reluctance to “put their head above parapet”, understandably many Third Sector Managers are focussing on the survival of their organisations and trying to mitigate the damage being done through cuts from every front. Strong sense that a Collective Voice is required. WB informed the meeting that Unions are planning a protest on the 12th February at the Budget meeting. More organisations are being encouraged to put forward deputations. There is a meeting tonight at the West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre with regards to the Community Centre, Rab Byfield shall be in attendance. Objections must be put forward as there are implications for Janitors and CLD workers. Again, members expressed the need for all workers to come together as a collective from all sectors to challenge this and also put forward alternatives. E.g., Tourist Tax, lifting freeze on Council Tax, and other options that seem to have been dismissed or not considered at all. It was agreed by the members of the Forum that the event on the 12th needs to be publicised and ensure all organisations have a copy of the TSI response to the budget [The Year of Reckoning](https://twitter.com/ComboComboBandX?refsrc=email) The meeting discussed the possibility of local voluntary/community organisations (and statutory organisations) organise a volunteer recruitment/publicity fair in the local area. JD and JS will contact organisations and gauge if there is interest in this going forward. **Action Point****JD to investigate organising a separate meeting for all Forum members to discuss the way forward, with a view to inviting Councillors along to an additional meeting to focus on the Budget and what cuts will mean**. **CHILDCARE** Many organisations find it difficult to work with people who have children if there is no proper crèche provision. At the moment that only dedicated crèche is within the Pilton Community Health Project. MW highlighted the changes to access to Nursery/Early Years places, more information can be found [here](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/People/Young-People/early-years/parenting-early-learning/childcare). These changes are welcome, however, there are a lack of spaces available, and at the moment parents are not always using additional hours. This provision creates a wider window of opportunity to work with parents 1:1 in the knowledge the children are being looked after. There is a need to ensure this also encompasses delivery of services by Third Sector organisations in the area. There is a Working Group focusing on the new Granton Early Years Centre new build, who are looking at the size, purpose and function of building. BR also highlighted the piece Martin Hannah published in the Evening News with regard to Mikaeel Kular which seemed to highlight the lack of liaison Regionally with regards to GIRFEC and asked if any steps were being taken to address this. JD felt this should be addressed through the CSMG. MW explained that she gives updates on Marilyn Keilloh’s behalf at the Total Craigroyston meetings and will be happy to report back to the Forum also. All acknowledged that this would be helpful. **Action points:****MW will report back to the Forum any updates from the CSMG given to Total Craigroyston.** **INFORMATION EXCHANGE****Freshstart -** [**http://www.freshstartweb.org.uk/**](http://www.freshstartweb.org.uk/)SG was pleased to inform the meeting that Freshstart had received their Investing In Volunteers accreditation. Referrals are also welcomed and needed for the Cooker and Carpet project. Through the Elizabeth Finn Trust Freshstart can offer up to £250 for carpets, washing machines and 2nd hand cookers are also available. This service is not restricted to those who have experienced homelessness but also for people who are in need and who have savings of less than £10,000**. Referrals are encouraged and can be made every Thursday morning from 9am on 0131 476 7741** and referrers can check there if there are spaces. If so they can put a referral in. If not, they can try the week after. **North Edinburgh Timebank -**  <http://www.timebanking.org/location/north-edinburgh-time-bank/>JS informed the meeting that Timebank is being recommended for funding. The greatest benefit people have found is the opportunity for people to come together, get to know one another, build trust and relationships. It has become apparent that many Polish women are fantastic knitters, and a Knit and Natter session has been arranged for the 11th February in the NE Arts Centre Café. JS is focussing on funding applications at the moment. **Stepping Stones** **-** [**http://steppingstonesnorthedinburgh.co.uk**](http://steppingstonesnorthedinburgh.co.uk)MW informed the meeting that Stepping Stones consulted parents who identified there was a real lack of Summer provision. Organisations will be approached to donate some time to contribute to a series of activities throughout the summer. Also involved in the working group for the new Granton Early Years Centre and a Peer Education Training programme will be starting soon. **North Edinburgh Arts**- [**http://www.northedinburgharts.co.uk/**](http://www.northedinburgharts.co.uk/)KW informed the meeting a SURF award had been received for the garden. Currently working through the next few financial years, increasing partnership working which is good but challenging times ahead for everyone. The regeneration of the area is seeming a bit disjointed for local residents and organisations, real issues with lighting in certain areas which is causing safety issues and in some cases preventing people from getting out due to fear for safety at night, with the street lighting on Pennywell Road near the shops out for a number of nights, perhaps due to the new builds? ***NB: following the meeting liaison with the Improving Muirhouse & Pennywell group has made a marked difference with the lighting in the shopping centre and surrounding areas back to an acceptable level.*** **Prentice Centre -**JC informed the meeting that the Playgroup was back up and running – there is already a waiting list. There have been a number of clean ups in the area, local residents have stepped in. West Pilton Community Council are having more meetings to give a greater voice and a way of passing around information. **Willy Black – Pilton Central Association -** [**http://piltoncentral.org.uk/**](http://piltoncentral.org.uk/)WB informed the meeting that a Gala Day is being proposed through the Community Council which will encompass all local groups. Great opportunity to get the community together, with an eclectic mix of all cultural groups within the area. West Pilton Park friends Group are looking for more community members to get involved. The sense is that a Gala is crucial and if funding available could be a very positive event for the community. **A.O.B.** There is an Active Citizenship event on the 3rd February. JS also informed the meeting that a Volunteer Fair event is planned for the Spring at the West Pilton Neighbourhood Centre. JD informed the meeting that EVOC plan to do ThinkSpace events around localities between March and April this year. **MEETING DATES FOR 2015****VOLUNTARY SECTOR FORUM**

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| 22 April 2015 | Wednesday 10-12  | TBC  | June.Dickson@evoc.org.uk |
| 22 July 2015 | Wednesday 10-12  | TBC  | June.Dickson@evoc.org.uk |
| 21 October 2015 | Wednesday 10-12  | TBC  | June.Dickson@evoc.org.uk |
| 20 January 2016 | Wednesday 10-12  | TBC  | June.Dickson@evoc.org.uk |

**NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIPS**

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| Forth NP Meeting | 04 March 2015 | Wed - 1pm  | NELO | NP Board Members  | Jim.Conner@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Forth NP Meeting | 27 May 2015 | Wed - 1pm  | TBC  | NP Board Members  | Jim.Conner@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Forth NP Meeting | 26 August 2015 | Wed - 1pm  | TBC  | NP Board Members  | Jim.Conner@edinburgh.gov.uk |

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| Inverleith NP Business Meeting  | 28 January 2015 |   | Roseberry Hall, South QueensferryElaine.Lennon@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Inverleith NP Business Meeting  | 24 June 2015 |   | Roseberry Hall, South QueensferryElaine.Lennon@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Inverleith NP Meeting  | 23 February 2015 | Monday 10-12  | TBC Elaine.Lennon@edinburgh.gov.uk |
| Inverleith NP Public Meeting  | 29 April 2015 |   | Roseberry Hall, South QueensferryElaine.Lennon@edinburgh.gov.uk |