

Southwark Forum minutes

10am – 12.30pm - Thursday 23 July - Inspire, Liverpool Grove, London, SE17 2HH.

Present

Brenda Bond	Age Concern Lewisham & Southwark
Nick Dunne (ND)	Bede House
Julie Harrison	Blackfriars Advice Centre
Dominic Pinto (DP)	Blackfriars Settlement
Clare Gilhooly (CG)	Cambridge House
Stuart Hearne	Cambridge House Law Centre
Jane Garnham (chair)	CAS
Andy Boaden (mins)	CAS
Neeraj Sharma	CAS
Seyi Madariola	CAS
Akua Dankwa	CAS
Roda Mbonde	CAS
Deborah Hayman	CAS
Celine Rotcajg	CAS
Sally Bagwell (SB)	CAS
Cathy Pharaoh (CP)	Centre for Charitable Giving and Philanthropy
Naomi Gilbert (NG)	Contact a Family
Helena Cantone	COVO
Magdelene Ubogun	Daughters of Divine Love
Barbara Scott	Dulwich Helpline
Isatu S. Kamara (IK)	Elephant Jobs
Godswill Udo (GU)	Ethnic Health Foundation
Deborah Boyd (DB)	Home-Start Southwark
Claire Jellema	KCLSU
Amparo Rendon	Latin American Multicultural Group
Carolina Vasquez	LAWRS
Ade Adebambo (AA)	Local Accountancy Project
Duncan Clelland	Peabody
Pat Strachan	Peabody
Ben Stansfield	Pecan
Les Alden	People Care Association
Bernadette Cahill	Place2be
Jean Tucker	Preschool Learning Alliance
Nathalie Francis	Princes Trust
Shazia Younis	RLSB
Pauline Nandoo	SCDAS
Sally Causer (SC)	SLAN
Christopher Green	Southwark CABx Service
Rob Danavell	Southwark Carers

Ian Brinley	Southwark Council
Annie Shepperd (AS)	Southwark Council
Sid Kalita	Southwark Council
Alan Palmer (AP)	Southwark Jobcentre Plus
Brenda Lafever	St. Matthew's Centre
Fay Hall	Stroke Care
Amanda Richards	Stroke Care
Peter Cox	The Universal Beneficent Society
Jim Wintour (JW)	United St. Saviours
Aisha Bryant	Volunteer Centre Southwark
Clive Pankhurst	Volunteer Centre Southwark
Truly Johnson (TJ)	Volunteer Centre Southwark

*Speakers during Southwark Forum have initials next to their names

1. Welcome – Jane Garnham, CAS

JG Called the meeting to order, introduced herself as the Interim CEO of CAS and welcomed everyone.

Talked members through the agenda

2. Future for the voluntary and community sector – funding, challenges and opportunities – Cathy Pharaoh, CASS Business School

Presentation slides available to download [here](#)

CP Talked members through the presentation slides. Topics covered included:

- Social, political economic pressures on the sector
- How the makeup of the sector has changed
- Current funding sources and their determinants
- Trends in public giving
- Cuts, social investment and emerging markets
- Reconfiguring the sector

AP Asked why cancer charities receive such a large share of money given to charity?

CP Stated there are a number of reasons. Cancer has a direct and visible the lives of many people. Large cancer support charities have successfully merged in recent years. This has given them the capacity to invest time and money in advertising campaigns that have captured people's imagination and allowed them to dominate

the market.

Mergers will help charities to be at the forefront of the competition.

SB Asked CP to elaborate on the concept of 'Impure Altruism' and how the voluntary sector can capitalise on this.

CP Stated that research shows that the reasons people give to charity is shaped by various social factors rather than need of the target beneficiaries. These need to be understood and targeted directly. Creating community ownership of issues is way of doing this.

BS Stated that her organisation, Dulwich Helpline, has been successful in receiving donations from the local public. However, without grant funding to support this, her organisation would be unable to survive.

CP Stated in the current political and economic context, local authorities are increasingly interested in social enterprise models. However, there needs to be support available to change to these models.

Stated that with the aging population in the area, that the organisation is well placed to garner even more donations and that it is imperative for the organisation to find ways to do this.

Stated that her work is driven by the belief that people can give more.

3. CAS update, Jane Garnham

JG Stated that the CAS Board of Trustees took the decision last month to evaluate options for the future in the light of the opportunities that arise from Chris Sanford's departure.

Referred to the Position Statement on the CAS website and stated that it is her role to work with CAS, the Board, staff, membership and stakeholders for around six months and help CAS identify the best way forward. CAS is keen to explore partnerships including merger.

Stated CAS is aiming to be a 5* CVS and as such we need to pay attention to what makes for a great CVS. We are introducing a fee structure, a course of action endorsed by NAVCA, to ensure the sustainability of the services that CAS deliver and enable CAS to tailor what we do to better meet the needs of our stakeholders.

Stated that if you are a small organisation with income of less than £20,000 or an individual member then membership is free. If your organisations income is £20,000 to £100,000 then the annual fee is £20; if your income is £100,000 to £1M the fee is £50; above £1M then £100.

Being a member brings a host of benefits including :

- News and e-bulletins
- Cascade

- Organisational support and advice
- Training
- Southwark Sign post
- Representation and networking opportunities

Encouraged members to sign up today.

Stated that as well as keeping services focussed, we must be keenly aware of the environment in which the sector is currently operating. The recession and the impact on local authority budgets means that Southwark needs to make savings of £34 million and £18 million over the next two years alone.

Southwark Council to an extent shapes the framework within which we work and we are particularly aware that there are a number of areas where we must lead the way and demonstrate how the sector, which has a history of being creative, innovative and responsive to change, can meet the challenges ahead.

These areas are:

1. Developing ways to share back office functions
2. Looking at the premises issue
3. Facilitating partnership working
4. Ensuring the structure that CAS has developed are effective and engaging

1. Back office

Stated CAS has already launched an exciting new initiative for local charities and voluntary groups that offers you a fully serviced back office function at a cost lower than if you provided this in house.

CAS's offer is that you can buy a package based around the following functions according to your needs:

- Finance
- Human Resources
- Communications / IT
- Funding

The benefits of sharing services is not only in reduced costs but freeing up staff to focus on frontline services.

2. Premises

Stated that premises are essential to what we do and sometimes what our beneficiaries need and what we want may not be the same thing. Our beneficiaries need safe, accessible, secure buildings that are pleasant and offer good facilities. They are likely to want the space to be familiar and they will want to know that once

they get inside they can access the services they need. End beneficiaries may not be too worried about the identity of the building, who it belongs to or who runs it. Organisations on the other hand commonly see their identity tied up with their location. A sense of place can help build an organisation's identity. There may however be times when that identity has to be challenged.

Proposed that this may be one of those times that requires the sector to look critically and rigorously at its premises. Such an approach will also allow us to identify gains by improving premises and by delivering greater efficiencies.

The vision to date

Explained CAS is committed to developing infrastructure services for the sector across the borough and you will be aware that hub services are already available at Cambridge House and at Peckham Settlement. Members may have heard about the Lattice model a vision previously outlined by the previous CEO Chris Sanford. This vision is one which Southwark Council is keen to see CAS develop.

This of course is not going to happen overnight but it is something we need to tackle. For those of you who have been involved in the consultation with the Council about the open access premises for day centre and lunch services you will be aware that there has been a recognition that the Hub & Lattice model is not yet developed as to be available to the sector

Stated she was not planning to talk in detail about the Hub and Lattice model but she did want to explore how we can demonstrate our creativity and innovation and respond to the challenge of the premises issue.

Stated if members were asked if you could improve aspects of your premises, facilities, location, accessibility – the response would be positive. If asked whether you are prepared to move the location of your service, office, project or whether you are happy to share the space you use - less hands would go up. I would like to question this.

Stated that we know that some of our premises are in need of improvement and upgrade, some are also not DDA compliant – this itself is a key issue given that many organisations work with people who need us to make reasonable adjustments.

- We know that some of your space is under-used
- We know that we need to get better at linking the space with the needs of the user, in effect to understand supply and demand better
- We know we need to work to improve some of our facilities and that we will need help from our funders

So what are we going to do?

Stated that CAS is developing its current on line service, Venue Southwark. At the moment this enables you to search for a venue or premises by a series of features,

e.g. size, location. CAS is now working with the Council to explore how the Council's current map of VCS premises can be linked to the Venue Southwark resource. The aim is that CAS will have an online resource available to the sector that will allow supply and demand to be better managed and to make best use of premises.

Alongside this initiative CAS is also looking to identify a project where we can demonstrate the sectors ability to work in partnership, gain some efficiencies and improve facilities.

3. Partnerships

Explained that CAS has a number of resources to help organisations collaborate on an informal basis or more formally.

Collaboration toolkits are available to members on the CAS website.

CAS can also actively help broker partnerships and facilitate collaboration talks.

4. Voice & Representation

Explained that CAS is paying close attention to the functioning of the structures that we have set up to ensure the sector has a strong voice. Today's Forum is a key part of the structure along with Southwark Voice and the four themed sub groups. Over the coming months CAS is going to be looking at electing new chairs and ensuring that the agendas we devise are engaging and involve the most pressing issues.

SC Stated that she had contributed to the CAS Premises Survey and asked if the report or summary of the findings had been made available?

JG Stated it had not been made public but has shaped much of the recent work CAS has undertaken.

ACTION POINT: CAS to develop and send a summary of the Premises Report to Sally Causer and the wider membership

BB Asked if CAS's would they challenge Southwark Council on what she deems 'anti-competitive practice' regarding the move to personal budgets (under the personalisation agenda)?

JG Asked BB to elaborate.

BB Stated that Southwark Council has recently transferred Fair Access to Care Services eligible residents onto personal budgets. In doing this, people were asked whether they wished to have their budget managed by the Council or take control of it themselves. The majority have opted to continue having their budget spent by the Council on services funded by the Council. For organisations such as Age Concern Lewisham and Southwark who will no longer be directly funded by the Council as of August and who had planned to generate income through personal

budgets, this represents a significant problem.

JG Stated that it would be good to have a conversation about this outside of this meeting.

ACTION POINT: CAS to meet with Brenda Bond re: personal budgets

4. My Learning Source, Deborah Hayman, CAS

DH Introduced herself and explained her role as CAS's Training coordinator.

Explained that [My Learning Source](#) is an online directory of all of the Council's training. Adult and Children's Social Care courses are free to the voluntary and community sector.

The benefits include that it is simple to use, it keeps track of your development and in the future, voluntary and community organisations will be able to add their training.

Explained how to create a user account and talked members through how to use the website.

For support or more information, contact Deborah Hayman on Deborah@casouthwark.org.uk or call 020 7358 7020 ext. 220

DB Emphasised that many of the courses are free and that she had found them very useful.

5. Building mutual trust between sectors – Annie Shepperd, Southwark Council

AS Stated that the election of the Coalition Government in May 2010 has had a profound effect on all sectors and citizens. Their primary focus is to cut Britain's national debt and this is driving the changes being made to public services and welfare provision.

To work effectively in this new environment it is ever more important to build relationships of mutual trust and understanding between the voluntary sector, statutory agencies and private companies.

As the cuts take effect over the next five years, existing mechanisms will become more and more dysfunctional. We must work together to build independence and resilience. The voluntary sector will increasingly be competing with mutuals and social enterprises for contracts and will need to remodel itself to do so effectively.

Southwark have identified a number of priorities to manage the transition period:

- Southwark Transition Fund
- Streamlined commissioning

Southwark aims to simplify the commissioning process, become more transparent and consistent across Council departments and reduce transactional costs.

- Regular Liaison meetings
- Sharing premises, reducing costs

Indicated that capital returned from sharing premises can be reinvested in the sector. There needs to be a conversation about how assets of the Council and the assets of the VCS can be used for mutual benefit.

- Self-sustaining business models e.g. Southwark Circle

CAS is well placed to provide leadership and support to collaborate around premises and service delivery

- NG** Stated that trust is built on the giving and receiving of accurate information. Would it be possible to have structure charts of the current staffing arrangements?
- AS** Explained that in order to find the necessary savings of 28% over the next 3 years, Southwark Council is undertaking a significant restructure. To avoid compulsory redundancies, the Council are asking people to take voluntary redundancy. To have people who are safe in their posts working alongside those who have to leave creates a dysfunctional atmosphere. As a result, when people take redundancy packages – they are allowed to leave the organisation quickly. To undertake such a process in an organisation of 1,500 people has a devastating effect on staff and will take at least 18 months to settle. It is impossible to achieve these changes in a linear way and as a result, internal and external communication has suffered.
- JW** Welcomed the Joint Commissioning Task Group and stated that United St Saviours have met with other local grant giving trusts to streamline their processes across the borough.
- Drew members' attention to the Work Programme as an opportunity for voluntary and community organisations in Southwark, stating that United St Saviours were offering loans for organisations to remodel their organisation to deliver the Work Programme.
- AS** Echoed JW's views that the Work Programme is an opportunity for the voluntary sector. However, the scheme is payment on results which may prove challenging for some providers.
- AP** Offered to get in touch with the Prime Contractors to enable partnerships to be formed between the Prime contractors and Southwark's voluntary and community sector.
- JG** **ACTION POINT: CAS would speak with Alan Palmer to enable this.**
- CG** Proposed that it is important to celebrate the achievements of the sector.
- Stated that the Southwark Alliance seem to have dwindled – could AS provide any

clarity over what is happening?

AS Stated the need for strategic partnerships but unfortunately the Southwark Alliance has withered on the vine.

Stated she would take this away and discuss it at the Council.

Suggested that given the pace of change and the impact of the government's approach, the VCS needs to consider how to have a voice.

BB Asked whether Southwark Circle was on track to meet its target of being self-sustaining by next year.

AS Confirmed that this was the case.

AA Stated that his organisation has been in receipt of London Councils funding. However, this is due to come to an end shortly, with the money returning to participating Council. What will happen with this money?

AS Stated that they are taking legal advice on how to use the money and that she would get Steven Douglas to communicate with members in due course. This will be done through CAS.

IK Stated the need to diversify funding.

DP Stated the need for recognition of the sector as an equal partner.

AS Stated that in terms of power and influence, the local voluntary sector were not an equal partner of Southwark Council. However, the focus should not be on hierarchy but mutualism; how both sectors can work together and complement each for the benefit of Southwark's residents.

6. AOB

TJ Stated that Volunteer Centre Southwark will be hosting their Volunteering Forum on Tuesday 12th July at Time and Talents.

The Volunteer Centre has moved office from 8th Hannibal House to in the Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre.

JW Stated that United St Saviours have just posted new guidance for their Large Grants Programme, these are available here: <http://www.ustsc.org.uk/>

CG Stated that Cambridge House will be beginning their new Community Organisers programme and will be looking for partnerships across the borough to deliver this.

DH Stated that the CAS Trustee Conference will be held on the 2nd-3rd November at Cambridge House and encouraged members to book a place. More details can be found here: <http://casouthwark.org.uk/event/cas-trustee-conference/>