

Minute of Meeting

Forum for Empowering Communities Group

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 09 June 2020	14:00	remotely by Teams,

PRESENT

S McDonald, Active Communities; M Mathieson, Barnados; J Gonani, DEAR; A McNiven, Engage Renfrewshire; J Wilby, Paisley West & Central Community Council; S McLellan, RAMH; S Cruickshank, Renfrewshire Access Panel; K Taylor, Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau; N Hanssen, ROAR; and L Devine, Save the Children.

CHAIR

A McNiven, Chief Executive, Engage Renfrewshire, presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

R Robertson, Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership; S Murdoch, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; K McIntyre, A McBride and C Joe Adigwe, all Engage Renfrewshire; S Graham, S Kraft and C MacDonald, all Renfrewshire Council.

APOLOGIES

I McLean, Bridgewater Housing Association; N Hanssen, ROAR; and M Hill, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest intimated prior to commencement of the meeting.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair intimated that he proposed to alter the order of business to facilitate the conduct of the meeting by considering item 5 – Mutual Support in Third Sector Management before Item 4 on the agenda.

The Chair welcomed S McDonald, Active Communities and J Gonani, DEAR as new members to the Group.

1 MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Renfrewshire Forum for Empowering Communities Group held on 5 March 2020.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 ROLLING ACTION LOG

The Rolling Action Log was submitted for approval.

DECIDED:

- (a) That the updates be noted; and
- (b) That the Rolling Action Log be approved.

3 OVERVIEW OF COVID-19 RESPONSE AND OPERATIONS

A discussion was led by the Chair relative to the Covid-19 crises. Members were asked to update the Group on the implications of COVID-19 specific to their own organisation; sharing expertise; the obstacles faced; and the common impacts.

A McBride, Volunteer Development Officer, Engage Renfrewshire, updated the Group on the status of the volunteering opportunities.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

4 MUTUAL SUPPORT IN THIRD SECTOR MANAGEMENT

S McLellan gave a verbal report relative to third sector organisations and mutual support.

He intimated that small organisations did not have the same depth of resources and information as larger companies and would not have the resources to employ specialist expertise or gather extensive information. Additionally, if staff were absent then the organisation was be open to risk.

He asked the Forum if they would be willing to offer their support and help to organisations by providing policy/procedures/guidance or mentoring/listening assistance.

After discussion it was agreed that A McNiven and K McIntyre would set up a digital platform to enable the sharing of skills, knowledge and expertise between organisations and report back to a future meeting of the Group.

DECIDED:

- (a) That it be agreed that A McNiven and K McIntyre set up a platform to enable the sharing of skills, knowledge and expertise and report back to a future meeting of the Group;
- (b) That the verbal report be noted.

5 OVERVIEW FROM DEAR

The Chair welcomed the DEAR (Diversity and Equality Alliance in Renfrewshire) representative to the Forum and intimated that it was anticipated that by having a member of DEAR on the Forum it would assist with the flow of information between the two groups.

J Gonani gave a brief overview of the work of DEAR and advised that the group membership consisted of statutory and third sector organisations set up to advise and contribute to the development and promotion of the current, emerging and evolving equalities agenda within Renfrewshire. The Group's aim was to tackle inequality issues in constructive ways in order to positively change perspectives and they promoted more inclusive attitudes in Renfrewshire by working closely with Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership and equality led community groups.

C Adigwe gave a verbal report relative to her post as the New Buddies Network Officer. She advised that her newly created post was funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and had been developed following a consultation with new and existing ethnic minority communities in Renfrewshire. The objective of her role was to establish an understanding of experiences of ethnic minorities living in Renfrewshire, particularly around health, employment, education and learning, and social and community cohesion.

It was noted that 90% of her work at present related to support for groups on Covid-19; working with faith-based groups involving food drops; dealing with families in isolation. Poverty was a focus and digital connectiveness was a key element. She had noticed that there was a marked increase in poverty amongst the Asian and South African communities and was looking for statistics relating to the poverty rate. After further discussion it was agreed that K Taylor would assist with obtaining the key data.

Discussion took place on the focus/priorities and strategic goal setting for the DEAR and REEM Groups. The Chair advised that the Forum would be pleased offer support and have input in the key activities of both groups.

DECIDED:

(a) After further discussion it was agreed that K Taylor would assist with obtaining key data relating to the poverty rate in the Asian and South African communities.

(b) That the updates be noted.