

**Devon Rural Network  
Rural Voluntary and Community Sector Action Group Minutes**

**5<sup>th</sup> December 2006 Ockment Centre, Okehampton**

**Present**

Jay Talbot (Chair)	CCD	Duncan Wood	Involve Mid Devon
Geoff King	Adult & Community Services DCC	Sue Tucker	Diocese of Exeter
Lynn Thornton	Devon Rural Transport Partnership	Paul Delahoy	Devon Towns Forum
Melanie McLoughlin	Devon Community Foundation	Sarah Streeter	DRN
Debbie Williams	Devon Fire & Rescue Service	Karen Nolan	Devon Assoc of CVS
Ewan Rae	Devon Heartlands Community Partnership		

**Apologies**

Scott Jacobs-Lange	GOSW
Jane Williams	Torrige Community Transport
Jo Pickering	Devon Rural Carers

**Agenda:**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b>
	The chairman welcomed the group and thanked everyone for coming to the second meeting of this new action group.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes of the meeting held 29<sup>th</sup> September</b>
	<p>The group felt that the minutes were an accurate depiction of the last meeting. The chairman went through the actions of the last meeting:</p> <p><b>1c.</b> In the last meeting the group talked about adding representatives from other key sectors of the voluntary sector, such as Devon PCT, Youth Services and Elderly. SS will contact reps from the DRN database regarding joining the action group. The following people were identified as possible additions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devon PCT – Becky Jenkins</li> <li>• Youth Services – Mark Goodman</li> <li>• Age Concern/ Elderly – Ann Ovens</li> </ul> <p style="margin-left: 300px;">} Jay Talbot to contact</p> <p><b>1d.</b> Jay and Karen have drafted some Terms of Reference which will be discussed later in the meeting.</p> <p><b>2a.</b> SS produced the proformas as requested and sent them round to the group for dissemination. There has been a poor response back so far – but the results will be covered later in the meeting.</p> <p><b>4c.</b> JA will be discussing the possibility of the Rural VCS representative joining the DRN PSG at the Management Advisory Group on the 19<sup>th</sup> December.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Matters Arising</b>
<b>3a.</b>	<b>Draft Terms of Reference</b>
	<p>As a result of the last meeting JT and KN were tasked with producing a draft Terms of Reference for the group in line with the other DRN action groups. The draft was sent to the group before hand for comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The background info on the DRN and RVCS is fine.</li> </ul>

**1. Objectives:**

- The objectives in the original draft were felt to be more the DRN objectives rather than the action groups – therefore the group decided that these would be better placed within the background information.
- It was suggested that a preamble regarding the rurality and the issues this causes should be inserted before the priorities for the group to set the scene for the groups work. Although the DRN deals with rurality in an overall capacity, as identified in the first meeting the Voluntary sector is specifically affected and it might be helpful to set the scene.

**2. Purpose:**

- It was proposed that the Purpose in the ToFR become the objectives.
- PD suggested that in something should be added within the purpose of the group relating to community planning and the role that the VCS sector has in actively engaging communities. Therefore it was proposed that the phrase “.....and by communities working on a voluntary basis” be added to the first purpose bullet point.

**3. Name** – all agreed

**4. Aims** – all agreed

**5. Accountability** – all agreed

**6. Membership**

- All members of Action Groups have to be members of DRN – as stipulated in DRN Terms of Reference. Membership is not individual but by organisation and runs from April – March.
- In order to ensure that there is fair representation around the table at meetings a core membership was discussed. For a meeting to go ahead there must be a majority of VCS organisations present rather than statutory.

**7. Resources**

- Additional resources will be the DRN website and the newsletter

**8. Frequency of Meetings** – all agreed

***ACTION: JT AND KN to revise the ToFR in time for the next meeting.***

**3b. Information form Pro Formas**

SS collated the information received so far from the returned proformas. The proformas were designed to collate information about the VCS organisations in Devon, and to be able to look at the gaps and overlaps.

**3bi. Organisation Pro Forma**

6 organisations had returned their forms so far which was a pretty poor response. All members of the group agreed to fill in the pro forma and return to SS.

KN related to the group the Devon Community Directory database, which is an initiative from the Devon Partnership of local authorities in Devon. [www.devonline.gov.uk](http://www.devonline.gov.uk) The group discussed the possibility of having a links page as part of the website DRN page that directs people to various organisation/websites such as the Community Directory.

From this the group decided that the best way to take the information from the pro formas forwards would be add a links page to the DRN website pages and keep the rest of the information from the pro formas for the groups purposes only.

***ACTION: SS to send Pro formas out again to members and all members to fill in and return by next meeting.***

	<p><b><i>ACTION: All members to disseminate pro formas to their members/partners appropriately.</i></b></p> <p><b>3bii. Individual Pro Forma</b></p> <p>The purpose of the individual pro formas was to gain information on the wider network of information dissemination in the VCS Sector in Devon. 4 People have so far returned this form. This information will be used for the purpose of the group only at this stage.</p> <p><b><i>ACTION: All members of the group to fill in the form and return to SS</i></b></p> <p><b>3biii. Best Practice Pro Formas</b></p> <p>So far only one best practice example has come forward. The group decided that this would be a useful tool to post on the DRN website page. It was agreed that at least 10 best practice examples are needed before they can go up on the website.</p> <p><b><i>ACTION: ALL members committed to get 1 best practice example for the website by the next meeting.</i></b></p>
3c.	<p><b>Website Page</b></p>
	<p>After the first meeting of the group in September a Rural VCS page has been added to the DRN website. SS had added some text to the page relating to the purpose of the group, rural issues and membership. The group were asked to comment on the text and make any suggested changes as necessary.</p> <p><b><i>ACTIONS: (SS)</i></b>  <b><i>“Government funding for rural areas is often marginalised” – Changed to:</i></b>  <b><i>“Rural Issues are not always appropriately addressed by government funding”</i></b></p> <p><b><i>Delete text relating to pro formas as we the results will no longer be posted on the website</i></b></p>
4.	<p><b>Devon Rural Network Business</b></p>
4a	<p><b>Devon Rural Strategy and Profile</b></p>
	<p>At a Policy Steering Group meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> November the final decisions on the layout of the strategy were made. The Final document will consist of 2 separate documents:</p> <p>1. The Strategy – which will be a concise document which contains the SWOT of the Rural Devon Profile, emerging key themes which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Rural Housing</li> <li>• Rural Business and Productivity</li> <li>• Environment and Climate Change</li> <li>• Community Self Confidence</li> </ul> <p>The document will also highlight the delivery partnerships and resources for these themes. Following the publication a more detailed Action Plan will be produced which will propose how work should be targeted.</p> <p>2. The State of Rural Devon (Rural Devon Profile)  This will act as a set of appendices to the strategy and as a reference document – and can be refreshed as needed.</p> <p>The PSG discussed that they felt that the word ‘Strategy’ was not an accurate depiction of the document. The document will highlight problem issues and act as a guide for rural organisations. Therefore the PSG came up with a new name:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Devon: Towards a Rural Strategy. An Agenda for 2007</b></p>

	The final document will be web based. Hard copies should be available in the New Year.
<b>4b.</b>	<b>DEFRA Rural Social and Community Programme</b>
	<p>A 6 month report was given to GOSW and The LAA board on the 30<sup>th</sup> Nov. SS met with Sue Rees from GOSW to discuss the progress of the programme. It was highlighted that 1/12 if Year 1 funding can now be rolled over into Year 2. In Year 2 the RSCP will be fully aligned into the LAA – and therefore it is important that the 2 are fully integrated.</p> <p>All projects must be on target and with their outcomes for the end of Year 1 to ensure that there is no under spend to give back to DEFRA, and to show that the programme is achieving its targets. It is proposed that any under spend for Year 1 is given to the proposed Community Planning Database.</p>
<b>5,</b>	<b>Devon Consortium –New Change Up Programmes</b>
	<p>The Devon Consortium is made up of 22 VCS organisations. New medium to short term Government funding has been announced through the Change Up programme administered through Capacity Builders. Note the fund is to build infrastructure organisations. Devon has £100,000 to April 2008, 20% of which is allocated to keeping the consortium going. The rest of the money goes on 3 other projects:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compact More codes of practise are being developed to create to complete the Devon Portfolio. Also activities to promote the Compact way of working into public sector organisations are planned. See <a href="http://www.dacvs.org.uk">www.dacvs.org.uk</a> for more details</li> <li>2. Performance Improvement Focus on Governance activity for VCS, includes diversity training which will build on previous programmes. If there is money there will also be activity on workforce development and making infrastructure organisations more able to help at the grass roots level.</li> <li>3. Representation Establishing a county level representative database and protocols for representation.</li> </ol>
<b>6.</b>	<b>AOB</b>
	<p><b>Where do we want the group to go in the future? Where do we want to go next?</b> It was proposed that the Group meet ever 6 months or so, but that work is done in smaller groups outside of meetings.</p> <p><b>Key Activities might be:</b></p> <p><b>Transport:</b> Work around funding for local transport in isolated communities. Use of volunteers for social transport use? – Addressing the gaps and linkages e.g. transport and health implications – new PCT etc. County care forum – transport issues relating to rural carers – David Johnston keen to have an event linking transport issues to carer issues in Devon. <b>(LT)</b></p> <p><b>Representation:</b> Community groups need to know where to go for representation. <b>(ER, DW &amp; PD)</b></p> <p><b>Health and Social Care:</b> Partnerships for Older People bid for funding has been successful. They are looking at working with local organisations, groups and GP practises. May be some work based on the back of this? <b>(GK)</b></p> <p><b>Issues around CIC's and Social Enterprises</b> – profit focused service delivery – rural aspect of this.</p> <p><b>Rural Funding: (DW)</b></p>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b>

	<b>Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2pm Ockment Centre, Okehampton</b>
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