

## Voluntary Sector Forum

18 May 2021, 10:00 – 11:30

Microsoft Teams

### *Notes of the meeting*

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#### Welcome

Cllr Michael Wilson (Spokesperson for Communities, Equalities and the Voluntary Sector) welcomed attendees to the Voluntary Sector Forum.

- Cllr Wilson introduced the meeting and the agenda for the Voluntary Sector Forum.

#### 1. Covid-19 key messages and updates

Dr Nike Arowobusoye (Senior Public Health Consultant, Richmond Council) provided an update on the current Covid-19 situation in Richmond and on addressing health inequalities in the borough.

- The rate of cases of Covid-19 are falling in Richmond and the borough is following the roadmap to reopening. Updates on changes in cases or variants will be provided when required.
- Further information on local Covid-19 data can be found on [DataRich – COVID – Local Data](#).
- The latest Covid-19 updates from the Council can be found here: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#)
- Information on the latest Covid-19 updates from the Government can be found on the website: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

#### Addressing Health Inequalities:

- Health inequalities should be addressed across the whole spectrum including protected characteristics, gender, age group and deprivation etc.
- A place-based approach is being used to tackle health inequalities. Three main components are: Strengthen Community Action, Civic Service Integration and Service Engagement with Communities.
- There is a focus on developing a refreshed Prevention Framework that can become a model for the Voluntary Sector to use for embedding prevention.
- Diabetes is an example of health inequalities locally, with 1 in 5 Covid-19 death certificates recorded that the individual had diabetes. 6,000 people in the borough have undiagnosed type II diabetes.
- Public Health want to work with the Voluntary Sector to tackle health inequalities to find different ways of working, share information and create referral pathways.

*See slides for details.*

#### 2. Council Overview and Update

Mark Maidment (Chief Executive, Richmond Council) provided an overview of the key work areas for the Council.

- The Voluntary Sector has been key in the pandemic response and the Council is keen to solidify links that came out of setting up the hub and identifying/accessing people who need to shield or who are vulnerable.
- The Council is still engaged in London level response meetings for Covid-19.
- The focus is now moving to recovery and business as usual and the Council is looking at how we can build the borough to have a vibrant economy.
- The Council's work includes working with educational partners, developing green credentials, as well as supporting the two biggest areas of work for the Council, adults and children's services. There are also growing pressures around mental health and interventions crisis. The Council is developing its work in these areas to ensure the community is healthy and well.
- The Council is looking to capture the better ways of working that have come out as a result of the pandemic, starting from the position of what residents require.
- The Council has come out of the pandemic in a reasonably stable position financially and has kept services going sustainably.

### **3. Climate Week 2021**

Andrew Hagger (Policy and Review Manager, Richmond Council) outlined the coming Richmond Climate Week 2021 taking place during the first week of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), 1-7 November 2021.

- COP26 is the international conference of climate experts, campaigners and governments meeting to tackle climate change. The meeting will be looking at setting climate change emissions targets.
- The Council are hoping to run an in-person event throughout the week. The Voluntary Sector is welcome to share their ideas and input to shape the programme. Please contact Andrew to share your ideas: [Andrew.Hagger@RichmondandWandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Hagger@RichmondandWandsworth.gov.uk)
- Council Climate Emergency information: [https://www.richmond.gov.uk/climate\\_emergency](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/climate_emergency)

### **4. Dementia Friendly Communities Richmond**

Sara Wilcox (Dementia Friendly Communities Coordinator, Age UK Richmond) talked about the Dementia Friendly programme funded by Richmond Council.

- The programme is looking to develop a Dementia Friendly community, encouraging shops, cafés, bars and charities to sign up to the initiative.
- Groups can sign up to [Dementia Friendly Communities](#) and receive support in developing an action plan as well as Dementia Friendly Awareness sessions.

### **5. Digital Inclusion Programme**

Wendy Jones (Digital Project Manager, Richmond Council) talked about Richmond Council's digital inclusion work.

- Analogue lines are now being phased out and there is a move towards digital.

- There is a focus on offering a modern digital offer for mainstream services to keep people as independent as possible, whilst ensuring care is enhanced and not taken away.
- So far, the Council has carried out service user and staff surveys to identify and learn about local needs. They have also provided access to the [video carephone](#) in response to the pandemic (Samsung tablet: simplified touch device that is accessible and uses a sim card to connect to the internet).
- There are no eligibility criteria for a video carephone and there are 80 devices available for people who may need one and referrals are currently being accepted. There is training available to use these devices.
- Louis Osman (Project Officer, Richmond Council) provided an update on the digital strategy to incorporate digital technology in Adult Social Care for everyday tasks and incorporating robotics (lifting machines etc.). The Council wants to get the views of partners and the Voluntary Sector on these issues. For questions about the strategy please contact Louis: [Louis.Osman@RichmondandWandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Louis.Osman@RichmondandWandsworth.gov.uk)

*See slides for details.*

## **6. Open Forum and Q&A**

- Simon Lawson (Citizens Advice Richmond) informed that they have received £18,000 from the DWP to support families in need with food and essential items (one child up to £500 and more than one child up to £600). This funding needs to be awarded by the 20 June so please do refer people. Find out more: <https://www.citizensadvicerrichmond.org/>
- Andrew Harland (Richmond Work Match) introduced the [Work Match](#) programme which is a low-cost recruitment portal for job opportunities in the borough aimed at local residents. There is no cost to the business or to residents, the aim is to have local sustainable jobs for local people. This does not include volunteering opportunities. A [volunteer brokerage](#) service is provided by Richmond CVS.
- Kathryn Williamson (Richmond CVS) highlighted that they have recently launched their 'state of the sector survey' to help identify the challenges and opportunities to shape their work. It takes 15-20 minutes to fill out. Richmond CVS State of the sector survey: <https://wh1.snapsurveys.com/s.asp?k=162132871644>
- Eleanor Rees (Richmond Parish Lands Charity) stated they have funding available for Voluntary Sector groups to apply for Covid-19 recovery grants. Website: [www.rplc.org.uk](http://www.rplc.org.uk)

## **Closing Remarks**

Cllr Wilson thanked participants for attending and asked attendees to share any feedback or suggestions for future meetings.