

## Voluntary Sector Forum

5 December 2023, 10:00 – 12:00

The Salon, York House, Twickenham

### Notes of the meeting

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#### 1. Welcome

Cllr Nancy Baldwin (Cabinet Member for Equality, Communities and the Voluntary Sector) welcomed attendees to the Voluntary Sector Forum.

Tributes were paid to Cll Ellengorn and Cllr Samuels.

Cllr Baldwin highlighted the following events and initiatives:

- **Community Conversations** are an ongoing opportunity for residents, local businesses, and community organisations to come together and discuss ideas, concerns, and initiatives that can help enhance our vibrant neighbourhoods. More information can be found on the Council website: [www.richmond.gov.uk/community\\_conversation](http://www.richmond.gov.uk/community_conversation)
- **Community Heroes Awards 2024** nomination period launches on 12 January and will run until 26 February. We would like to get as many nominations as possible and are working on the webpages and print materials. We will share the web link in due course as well as our stakeholder toolkit with digital assets. If you would like the digital toolkit or printed materials to promote the nominations process, please contact [events@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:events@richmond.gov.uk)

#### 2. Driving equality with and for our communities

Jamie Fisher (Policy and Review Manager, Richmond Council) introduced Richmond Council's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and discussed how the Council and the VCS can work more effectively together to achieve better input, scrutiny and challenge on Council policies, strategies and service provision. As well as the cores nine protected characteristics, Richmond Council has also recently adopted Socio-economic status.

Richard Wiles (Commissioning and Procurement, Richmond Council) highlighted that equality needs analyses are two-way processes, giving the example of the Carers Hub where needs analysis resulted in an increase in the number of men taking up the service.

Julie Gavin (Interim Director, RCVS) talked about how Richmond CVS is supporting the sector in the area, including training and events (including LGBT+101 awareness session, unconscious bias, creating more diverse board), one-to-one support, and online resources.

*See slides for details*

Following a round table discussion, participants were encouraged to think about and challenge the Council on the topic and invited to contact Jamie Fisher with any further feedback.

### 3. Richmond Parish Lands Charity new strategy for funding approach

Phil Barron (CEO) and Sarah Wilkins (Grants Director, Richmond Parish Lands Charity) introduced Richmond Parish Lands Charity's new grant funding strategy.

Grants are open to application: [Grant Making | Richmond Parish Lands Charity | Richmond upon Thames, London \(rplc.org.uk\)](#)

*See slides for details*

### 4. Richmond Furniture Scheme's Local Offer

Simon Westgarth (CEO) introduced the Richmond Furniture Scheme and invited VCS organisations to let service users know about the support and discount people in need could access.

*See slides for details*

### 5. Open Forum and Q&A

- **VisitRichmond Advent Calendar** - to celebrate the festive season, VisitRichmond has launched a Christmas advent calendar giveaway, where you can enter each day in December for a chance to win one of 24 fantastic local prizes. Prizes range from Panto tickets to dinner and bottle of wine for two, afternoon tea, overnight accommodation and breakfast, brewery tours and much more. The competition is now live and is open to everyone on the website: <https://visitrichmondadventcalendar.wpcomstaging.com/>
- The **VisitRichmond What's On guide** is out monthly with things to see and do in the borough. To secure a page to advertise your charity for free, contact Angela Ivey on [Angela.Ivey@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:Angela.Ivey@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk) . If you would like to advertise your community event for free, visit: <https://www.visitrichmond.co.uk/information/submit-your-event>

**Date of the next meeting** is 28 February 2024