



# VCS FORUM NEWS

February 2010

## **A FORUM FOR VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS THAT WORK WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

This e-bulletin has been put together to keep you up to date on the development of a county-wide forum for voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations working with children and young people.

The development of a forum forms part of the VCS Engage programme. As part of this, work is being done to improve VCS representation on the Hertfordshire Children's Trust Partnership. More details on the VCS Engage programme can be found at:

<http://connect.hertscc.gov.uk/yrccouncil/hcc/csf/childrenstrust/partnerships/vcse/engage/?view=connect>

## **Developments since the annual VCS / HCTP conference**

The annual VCS conference for organisations working with children and young people took place on 20 October. Speakers' presentations and a conference report can be found at:

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/yrccouncil/hcc/csf/childrenstrust/partnerships/vcsengage/vcsnov/>

## **Have your say!**

At the conference, endorsement was given to set up a task & finish group to develop a county-wide forum for VCS

organisations working with children & young people. The task & finish group met for the first time on 7 December and looked at membership criteria, communications and the role of Making a Positive Contribution outcome lead (more about this below). More details about the task & finish group, and papers for the meeting can be found at:

<http://www.childrenmatterseast.org.uk/News.asp?selidx=0&viewmode=ViewRecord>

It's not too late to give feedback on the papers. Please e-mail any comments and suggestions on the papers to Kevin Garrod at [kevin.garrod@childrenmatterseast.org.uk](mailto:kevin.garrod@childrenmatterseast.org.uk) or Tim Weetman at [tim.weetman@hertscc.gov.uk](mailto:tim.weetman@hertscc.gov.uk)

## **A date for your diaries**

The Forum will meet for the first time on 25 March beginning at 2.00pm. Any VCS support organisation or provider of services to children and young people can attend. The programme is currently being compiled and senior officers from Hertfordshire County Council have been invited.

### **The programme will include:**

- **How the VCS can contribute to developments in early intervention and prevention**
- **Extended Opportunities funding**



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## VCS takes up its place on the HCTP Executive

The VCS has secured a place on the HCTP Executive. John Harris, Director of Children's Services and chair of the HCTP Executive, wrote recently to the new Herts Assembly asking them to identify a lead for the Making a Positive Contribution outcome. The Herts Assembly approached Kevin Garrod, Regional Manager – Children Matter East as an interim measure. Kevin took up the role in early November and will continue until the forum is in place. A place on the HCTP Executive gives the VCS an excellent opportunity to influence overall HCTP development.

Since taking up the role Kevin has attended meetings of the HCTP Executive as well as the annual HCTP Executive study day. Those meetings have focused on:

- the longer term future, in the context of a likely reduction in public spending
- the refresh of the Children and Young People's Plan 2009/11
- the recent statutory guidance on Children's Trusts cooperation arrangements

### From a VCS perspective the key messages are:

1. **the need to work with partners to minimise the effects of dwindling resources, which might include significant change**
2. **the importance and further development of multi agency**

3. **the critical importance of workforce development and quality in implementing an integrated approach.**

The study day also gave feedback from the CAA inspection which highlighted the need to differentiate local plans from county plans, and a growing focus on local communities.

From next month, Kevin plans to provide colleagues with a short digest / summary of the implications for the VCS in Hertfordshire item by item, for comment ahead of each HCTP meeting.

Please email contributions, comments and queries on this e-bulletin to Kevin Garrod, Regional Manager – Children Matter East, at [kevin.garrod@childrenmattereast.org.uk](mailto:kevin.garrod@childrenmattereast.org.uk) or Tim Weetman, Strategic Partnerships Manager – HCTP, at [tim.weetman@hertsc.gov.uk](mailto:tim.weetman@hertsc.gov.uk)