

WAVOCC CHAIR'S REPORT 1 / 04 / 2009 – 31 /03 / 2010

In many ways this has been quite a difficult, even frustrating year, with the continuing 'gloom' about the economy which has had a 'knock-on' effect for many organisations in the voluntary sector. This has meant that many groups have had to think seriously about their role and their activity and adjust this to the funding available. WAVOCC has not escaped these issues both directly for ourselves and indirectly for our members. There's no doubt that the next few years will be very difficult for both the VCS and our statutory partners. I'm sure our Treasurer will have more to say on that subject during his report!!

Before I move on to discuss the work of WAVOCC during 2009 / 2010, there are a couple of Thanks I'd like to pass on. The first is to *Jim (Smith)* our very dedicated development worker who has worked tirelessly to increase both the perception and the role of WAVOCC. Although Jim's role is also linked to the work of WIC, Jim has worked to make sure that WAVOCC is still a vital organisation within Health & Social Care – more about some of his work later. I'd also like to take this opportunity to Thank *Kate* – our amazing Membership Development worker for her role where she has revamped the newsletter, the email communications she has co-ordinated, the website development and very ably supported Jim in all aspects of his work. A short aside – Congratulations to Kate who got married recently and is now Kate Robson!!

So on with a quick review of our activity during 2009 / 2010:

Firstly the Executive have continued with their programme of 4 meetings per year and have maintained a 'watching brief' on many aspects of the Health & Social Care agenda. The Business Plan developed last year has continued to one of our 'drivers' and we have carefully monitored the activity. My Thanks to *Philip Talbot* who has worked closely with Jim to move this process forward.

In addition there have been regular Members Newsletters and very regular email bulletins which have provided members with up to date information on a wide range of Health & Social Care issues.

These have included funding opportunities (including the Health Improvement Fund and the County Council Grants programme), training, COMPACT development, Consultation updates – an area which is growing as our partners see WAVOCC as an essential ‘vehicle’ for finding out the views of members - as well as news and information from and about members. For additional information, there is also the WAVOCC website which we are developing as a resource for a range of information items / surveys etc - so if you haven’t had a look recently, do go to www.wavocc.org.uk and see the work being developed. This also has a web-members area giving members the opportunity to raise points of concern and share knowledge. Also if you have any ideas about items for our website, do have a chat with Jim as he’d be delighted to look at areas of potential development.

As I mentioned last year, WAVOCC is an active member of the Worcestershire Infrastructure Consortium (WIC) particularly in relation to the work of both the Voices Hub and the Marketing, Accountability & Communication (MAC) group. This has been the second year of activity relating to the Worcestershire County Council Strategic Grant and inevitably all organisations within WIC have had to adapt their work in one way or another. I’d wish to record my Thanks to *Suzy James* (the Voluntary Sector Support Unit Co-ordinator at Worcestershire County Council) for her support and keen interest in the work of all WIC members as we’ve moved into this slightly different way of working.

WAVOCC has continued to take the lead, through the work of Jim, in promoting Engagement and Representation for the sector. We have developed an Induction programme for representatives, we provide training and support to representatives and we are working to encourage representatives to provide feedback from the meetings they attend. We have WAVOCC representatives on numerous Boards / Partnerships / Consultative groups and are increasingly being asked for additional representatives for new and different opportunities. Clear processes for electing / nominating VCS reps. have now been developed and on-going training and support can be offered to individuals who are VCS reps.

My Thanks to everyone who takes on the role of VCS Rep / Voice – not necessarily an onerous task but nonetheless vital and one that we will continue to promote in the coming year.

I'd like to take this opportunity to promote the importance of having a wide cross section of VCS reps involved in this work, as WAVOCC / WIC is increasingly being asked to find / source VCS reps for a huge range of Panels / Boards / Theme / Task groups etc. It is therefore vital that we have an ever growing number of organisations / individuals willing to become involved in this work. Anyone interested, or considering getting involved, is very welcome to have a chat with Jim or me, as we'd be delighted to assist in getting more people involved. In addition, we have developed a 'Short Term Representative' Bank for anyone who would be interested in undertaking a representative role but, at first, can only take on a short term commitment. This has been very successful and we have been very fortunate in the range of people who have come forward to join the 'Bank'

So where have WAVOCC reps. been busy? Well there are 2 main areas of work – Health & Social Care for Adults and Children & Young People. WAVOCC has 2 places on the Health & Social Care Partnership Board as well as representatives on the 5 Consultation groups (whose role is to bring forward proposals for service development), a place on the Health & Well Being LAA Steering group and 1 seat on the Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership – the second seat on this Partnership is allocated to WCVYS who I'd wish to Thank for the enormous amount of work they undertake in promoting and supporting representation within Children's Services. I don't propose to go into any detail about the topics discussed at these meetings as we try to ensure, through our feedback forms, that this information is circulated in our newsletters and placed on our website.

Our work with the Intergenerational Steering group has continued to develop and was part of a successful funding bid with WCC / WP to Government through the Generations Together initiative. After an in-depth interview, we were delighted that the bid was successful (one of only 12 in the country – Thanks greatly to Peter McKenzie – Shaw). This was very significant as 50% of the funding has to be allocated to the voluntary sector!! So since October there has been

a huge development of Intergenerational activity in the county with 7 'major' projects and numerous smaller, holiday initiatives. We also organised the WAVOCC Networking event in February around Intergenerational activity, Community Cohesion & Health & well being and were delighted with the way the event went and the way everyone who attended joined in the interactive workshops.

WAVOCC reps. also attend VCS Forum meetings where, we have the opportunity to discuss some of the over-arching issues affecting the sector with the Director of ACS.

During this year we have also sought to re-develop our links with the PCT. We have worked closely with NHS Worcestershire in ensuring that their consultation documents are circulated to the sector and have had articles from them in our newsletter. I think it is as part of this ever increasing recognition by NHS Worcs. of the role that WAVOCC can play in supporting / promoting / consulting the sector, that has helped us to have such excellent representation here to-day.

Continuing on a health 'theme', my Thanks to *Mark Jackson* who is the WAVOCC representative on the Worcestershire PCT Patient & Public Involvement Committee – Mark's reports are always informative and a useful resource and again are included in our newsletters and on our website. Mark also gave an excellent presentation on the role of being a representative at the WIC Listening event held earlier this year.

The Personalisation agenda has, I believe, moved forward at a slower pace that many of us anticipated or were led to believe. However WAVOCC has continued to recognise the importance of this work and has taken a lead in ensuring that the sector is kept as up to date as is possible in a changing environment. Our website has a specific Choice & Control (WCC's name for the delivery of the Personalisation agenda) area, and our Newsletters also try to provide further information. We have also continued to work with the Shared Knowledge activity (now called Care Wise) and will maintain a 'watching brief' over this work on behalf of WAVOCC members. It is important that members have the opportunity to question, influence and comment as the programme develops.

In my report last year, I mentioned a number of areas of work which I felt we would need to address during 2009 / 2010. Briefly these were:

- a) Funding
- b) Engagement & Representation processes
- c) Membership and communication
- d) Links to the PCT
- e) Choice and Control

Whilst from the above report, members can see that we have tried to address all of the above, not surprisingly all remain as on-going issues for 2010 / 2011. As we move into the third and final year of the WCC Strategic Infrastructure Grant, we will need to look very seriously for funding for WAVOCC to enable it to continue its work. We also hope that 2010 / 2011 will see an ever increasing relationship with NHS Worcestershire – to the benefit of both organisations.

In addition for 2010 / 2011, I think we need to look again at the following:

- a) Links to other groups / networks such as OPVSSN, Older People's Forums / LINKS
- b) Links to the Joint Commissioning Unit
- c) WAVOCC'S Business Plan / Strategic Development
- d) WIC and the future

So I hope this shows that much has been achieved during this year but there's still lots more to do – a recurring theme for the VCS I feel!!

I'd like to end by Thanking my fellow Trustees for their support and commitment during this year – we are a small band but I believe we have worked extremely well together and achieved some significant results for both WAVOCC and for the sector. So my Thanks to *Keith, Philip T, Philip G, Fred, Jenny, Liz, Peter & to Sylvia (who we co-opted after last years AGM)* We were sorry that Magda felt unable to continue as a Trustee and we were very grateful for the many years of support she had given to WAVOCC. I'd also want to Thank *John Taylor* for his continued support and commitment as an advisor to the Trustees. We would welcome more members as

Trustees – the role isn't onerous but is very important if WAVOCC is to continue to develop its role as a voice for the Health and Social Care aspect of the VCS. In actual fact, our meetings are very informative and provide an excellent opportunity for information sharing, for networking and for looking at joint working opportunities so we'd be delighted to discuss co-option opportunities with any member either to-day or in the future.

I'd just like to close by saying Thank you to everyone / every organisation who is a member of WAVOCC – your support is much appreciated and vital in helping WAVOCC achieve its aims. It has been really good to see the increase in membership again this year, including our associate members, and to know that nearly every organisation has renewed its membership for this year. However if there is anyone here today whose organisation is not yet a member of WAVOCC, then please don't hesitate to see Jim, *Kate* or me at lunch time – we'd be more than happy to answer any questions you may have and to provide you with the relevant paperwork to become a member.

Thank you all for listening – I'm sure that I have missed out some of the many things that WAVOCC has been involved with during the year and I'll happily take any questions either now, at the end of the session or even at lunch to fill any gaps that there might be!!