

Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network

Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network Minutes of Meeting Tuesday 20th February 2018, 9.30am, MVA Offices.

Present:

Lesley Kelly	MVA (Treasurer)
Sue Peart	Penicuik CAB (Chair)
Graeme Egan	MFIN
Lorraine Chapman	Midlothian Council (Children & Families)
Nicole Bethune	Midlothian Council (Welfare Rights)
Diane Janczyk	The Button Box
Grant Stanley	Colin Beattie MSP
Hazel Strang	Colin Beattie MSP
Kyna Reeves	CAPS
Nichola Hill	VOCAL
Jim Boyle	Bridges Project
Helen Smart	NHS Lothian
Caroline Keir	Castle Rock Edinvar
Catherine Davidson	DWP

Apologies:

Susan Bowes	Dalkeith CAB
Janice Burns	Midlothian Foodbank
Lee Coughlin	St. John's & King's Park Church
Jacquie Mather	Melville Housing
Andrew Collinge	Melville Housing
Joyce MacLean	Christians Against Poverty
Rona Duncan	Police Scotland
Marina Miller	Midlothian Council
Ben Forsyth	Midlothian Council
Heather Ritchie	Midlothian Council
Jamieson Butler	Midlothian Council
Sharon Hill	MAEDT
Jo Kirby	The Action Group

	<i>Item</i>	<i>Action</i>
1	Welcome and Apologies: Sue chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone. Everyone present introduced themselves and said where they worked. Apologies were as noted above.	
2	Minutes / Matters Arising: The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed with one minor change, Kyna Reeves works for CAPS not CAPS Edinburgh. The one action from the previous meeting was for Lesley to provide an update on the proposed council budget cuts, this was actioned.	
3	Button Box update - Diane Janczyk: The Button Box was granted charitable status at the end of 2017. To be granted charitable status a change had to be made to use a referral	Diane to provide referral form and list of drop-

<p>system for clothes distribution rather than have open public events.</p> <p>If the charity meets its obligations under the referral system there may be the opportunity to have one or two public events every year to distribute any surplus clothing.</p> <p>Feedback for the service has been excellent; there has been disappointment though among clients that the events have ceased.</p> <p>Further details of the referral system is available on the website http://thebuttonbox.org.uk/</p> <p>Diane, Nicole and Lorraine mentioned clothing donations which would meet the needs of specific client groups; these donations include clothes for camp, prom dresses, first communion dresses, maternity clothes and outfits for work placements.</p> <p>Nicole mentioned a new clothing bank in Penicuik due to launch soon, this will be specifically for 'dress' clothes so won't be in competition with The Button Box.</p> <p>The Button Box can make appeals for specific clothing types, for example they had a 'clothing for camp' appeal and turned those donations around quickly.</p> <p>The help given by Bishops Move is really appreciated but it won't last forever so that has to be planned for.</p> <p>With over 60 referrals in December and over 40 referrals in February so far the service is very popular.</p> <p>Nichola asked if there was a limit on referrals from a single organisation and Diane confirmed that there was no limit.</p> <p>Clothing boxes can be delivered directly to families or to the referrers.</p> <p>Diane mentioned how busy the charity is and how time consuming grant applications are, Lesley offered help with grant applications on behalf of MVA.</p> <p>Sue mentioned that there will be scope for the Button Box to work with other local organisations and mentioned the upcoming HIF project as being an example of a possible future collaboration.</p> <p>Nicole mentioned that the need for the services of The Button Box reflects how the increase in poverty in general and in-work poverty in particular has increased the use of food banks etc.</p> <p>It was noted by Diane and others that many families who on the surface appear to be financially stable are in fact experiencing poverty, and often they are reluctant to seek help, sometimes because they do not think they qualify.</p> <p>Diane will provide a referral form and up to date list of drop off point for donations.</p>	<p>off points.</p>
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<p>4</p>	<p>Food Poverty Alliance Update - Lorraine Chapman: A report has been produced from the event held in November 2017; the report also includes some next steps.</p> <p>With foodbanks located in Gorebridge, Penicuik and Dalkeith there is the need for something local in the Lasswade/Bonnyrigg area so that those who need help don't have to travel to another town incurring unnecessary expense. Local churches have been approached to see if any are willing to help.</p> <p>Sue mentioned that the two CABx are continuing to provide free bus tickets for clients from their own funds for journeys such as having to visit a foodbank in another town.</p> <p>The Food Poverty Alliance will enable and encourage local organisations to share advice and information.</p>	<p>MFIN to distribute report.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>IOM targets settings for 2018/19:</p> <p>Sue – New targets and priorities have been set for the next year.</p> <p>Nicole – There is an emphasis on income maximisation.</p> <p>There was then a group discussion around the information that the council want, how often they want it, and what role they expect MFIN to play.</p> <p>The consensus was that the council expecting quarterly reports is too much for organisations and six monthly reports would be better together with an annual report. Sue as chair of MFIN will suggest this to the council, Nicole will also make the same suggestion.</p> <p>The council don't appreciate that their funding to organisations is often then used in order to get match funding so council funding cuts can result in organisations losing all their funding.</p> <p>MFIN members could pass their income maximisation and financial inclusion figures to MFIN who would collate them for the council report. Sue may have an old questionnaire which could be used to gather the required information.</p> <p>There was then further discussion about how not all organisations are prepared to provide figures for their services, some local foodbanks for example do not whereas the Trussell Trust does.</p> <p>Jim said that any report should therefore make clear that it only represents those organisations which responded, others agreed that this should be the case and that the report should list the organisations who contributed.</p> <p>Lesley noted that this collaborative approach matches what the council say they will be expecting of the third sector in future.</p> <p>Some of those present (Lorraine for example) are uncomfortable having to give projections/targets for future need when the hope is that it will reduce but the reality is that it will probably increase, Helen said that</p>	<p>Sue/Nicole – suggest six monthly reporting to Council rather than quarterly reporting.</p>

	projections/targets should be realistic and Lesley said that sometimes having a ‘red’ item on a report is positive as it is an opportunity to give additional information to the council when explaining the reasons a target was missed.	
6	<p>MFIN project work update:</p> <p>Lesley and Graeme attended a recent Midlothian Technology Steering Group meeting.</p> <p>The main item covered at the meeting was the new Centre of Excellence at Newbattle which will have facilities for community and third sector use, these facilities and some of the training provided at the centre could help to address financial exclusion.</p>	
7/8	<p>Information Exchange/Any other Business:</p> <p>Midlothian Council had submitted an ESF Poverty Social Inclusion application to work in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income Maximisation Access to Financial Services Fuel Poverty. <p>Access to Financial Services and Fuel Poverty did not attract any bidders.</p> <p>Lesley informed the group that the council are currently meeting to decide the way forward in securing bids.</p> <p>ESF bids can be problematic and unpopular although both Jim and Lesley have secured ESF funding for projects, at The Bridges Project and MVA respectively.</p> <p>Lesley, Nicole, Sue, Nichola and Lorraine all contributed to a discussion about areas of need locally that could lead to an ESF bid and as caring came up several times this is an area which could possibly merit a bid, it was agreed that there is definitely carer poverty that needs to be addressed, Nichola said that there is a new carers act expected in April.</p> <p>Lesley and Sue suggested that there may be scope for a joint-bid with several MFIN members working together.</p> <p>Sue mentioned the ‘Disconnected’ report produced by CAB which covers the issues many people have with accessing the internet.</p> <p>This led to several people mentioning possible sources of donated computers from organisations such as the Council and large local companies such as Standard Life.</p> <p>Sue told the group of a successful joint bid for HIF funding for a financial inclusion project, the organisations involved are the two CABx, Sure Start and Changeworks, Sue then gave a brief summary of the project.</p> <p>Sue said the bid was successful due to the hard work of all the parties involved and the funders were impressed with the quality of the bid. Partnership for Procurement (P4P) helped out with the final stages of putting together the bid and even with minimal input made a valuable contribution.</p> <p>It was agreed that involving P4P as early as possible in future partnership</p>	<p>MFIN – publicise GDPR training.</p> <p>MFIN – send out OSCR email on safeguarding.</p> <p>Lesley – Investigate benevolent fund.</p>

	<p>bids would be a good idea.</p> <p>Lesley told the group about GDPR training being provided by the council. MFIN will publicise this.</p> <p>Nicole mentioned that GDPR is one of the topics discussed on the Digital Partnership for Scottish Local Government (link) group on Knowledge Hub https://khub.net/. Please note that you need to be signed up to Knowledge Hub and a member of the group to see the discussion.</p> <p>Lesley suggested that third sector organisations should be able to obtain training using the learnPro online system which is currently used by Midlothian Council to train their staff, Lorraine and Helen said that the NHS use a similar online system to train their staff.</p> <p>Lesley informed the group that MVA will be submitting an Aspiring Communities Stage 2 bid for Woodburn and Central Dalkeith, Miriam from MVA told the members about the Stage 1 work at the November MFIN meeting.</p> <p>Lesley mentioned that all charities should have received an email from OSCR about ‘<i>Keeping vulnerable beneficiaries, volunteers and staff safe</i>’. MFIN will pass on the email in case any members haven’t seen it, it may have been sent to a board member.</p> <p>Nichola asked about the National Standards and possible training for MFIN members and also sources of information.</p> <p>Caroline mentioned Money Advice Scotland and Nicole mentioned the Scottish Legal Aid Board as sources of information and training.</p> <p>Nichola mentioned that there has been a change in short breaks funding for volunteers and gave a brief description of the changes.</p> <p>POST MEETING NOTE – Someone from VOCAL will give a more detailed update on the changes at the next MFIN meeting.</p> <p>Nicole asked about the Council’s benevolent fund which prompted some discussion as to whether there is anything left in the fund, many people weren’t even aware that such a fund existed. Lesley will do a search to investigate.</p>	
9	<p>Dates of next meetings:</p> <p>The next meeting will be on Tuesday 3rd April.</p> <p>The meeting after that will be in the week beginning Monday 14th May.</p>	