

**Minutes of the Sunderland Volunteering Forum**  
**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011**  
**Sunderland Mind, 14 Norfolk Street, Sunderland, SR**  
**10.30am - 12.00 noon**

Marilyn Newman (MN)	Turning Point
Angela Robson (AR)	SNCBC
Liz White (LW)	Age UK Sunderland
Jane Lertas (JL)	Gentoo
Rebecca Braid (RB)	Sunderland Children's Centre (North Area).
Dorothy Gardener (DG)	Sunderland Mind
Mark Roberts (MR)	Lifeline Sunderland
David Curtis (DC)	Volunteer Centre Sunderland (Chair)
Anna Gillingham (AG)	Volunteer Centre Sunderland
Sharon Charlton	Volunteer Centre Sunderland
Jeff Coates (JC)	Volunteer Centre Sunderland (Minutes)

**Apologies:**

Annabel Young (CSV Employee Volunteering). Steven Rowntree (Washington Mind). Jay Arnott (All Points North). Dean Heward (CEED). Sharon Rutherford (Sunderland Children's Centre's). Dionne Smith (Volunteer Centre).

**Welcome and Introductions:**

David welcomed everyone to the meeting and a round of introductions was made.

**Minutes of the previous meeting:**

The minutes from the previous meeting (14<sup>th</sup> July 2011) were agreed as a true record.

**Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising to discuss.

**Presentation - by Mark Roberts from Lifeline:**

Mark discussed the Lifeline Project and the valuable contribution that volunteers can make to the lives of others. Lifeline is a project that provides Harm Reduction services to the whole of Sunderland and Mark's role is to raise the profile of the harm drugs and alcohol can cause and to offer support; advice and guidance. This means reducing the harm drugs and alcohol can cause to individuals, communities and their families. The project provides an open door 'drop in' service and no appointment is needed. Lifeline provides advice and information, Blood Borne Virus interventions e.g. blood tests for Hepatitis and HIV, referral for treatment for Hepatitis and Needle Exchange. They also give safer injecting and disposal advice.

There is a full-time Nurse providing on the spot comprehensive health assessments, BMI and blood sugar tests, liver and kidney function tests, cholesterol tests, safer drinking and healthy eating advice. Lifeline specializes in interventions for stimulant users (Crack/Cocaine, Amphetamine and Steroids) and offers a range of natural remedies e.g. Lavender Oil and Sleep and Detox Teas. Complimentary therapies such as acupuncture and body massage that suit

stimulant and alcohol users are also provided. These are popular as they can also help clients with their sleep patterns and client's mental health. Reduction Events are also organised to raise awareness and the project's aims and to give clients quality care and advice. Mark explained that there has been a change in the mindset for drug users with the Government wanting drug users to 'move on' from drug use - therefore support is essential. Lifeline can inspire and motivate client's to move on from drugs and works in partnership with a range of organisations.

With regards to volunteers - Lifeline can provide training and experience. Volunteers are also able to shadow staff members; and those volunteering become more employable. Most of the referrals for volunteers are from the Volunteer Centre Sunderland and Sunderland University. Lifeline always has a quick response to people interested in volunteering and like a good 'mix' of volunteers from a variety of backgrounds. The recruitment process for volunteers involves an informal discussion; CRB check; 2 references and then volunteers are required to do some role specific training before they are able to start volunteering. This recruitment process helps to get the right volunteers for the project and Mark delivers the Volunteer Training and has regular volunteer meetings to update and offer supervision and feedback.

Training is also available for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector which is delivered free; there is a small charge for training to the Private Sector - based around drugs and alcohol work.

### **Steering Group Update:**

Sharon Charlton discussed the Steering Group and informed all that the Volunteer Centre was looking for new members and asked if attendees would be able to promote the need for new members. The last Volunteering Forum Steering Group was in July and at the moment it is not known who the contact for volunteering will be in the Council. David has contacted Graham Burt from the Council and Jane Hibbert regarding this matter.

### **Good Practice Information:**

Jeff Coates - presented a workshop on 'Monitoring and Evaluating your Volunteering Projects'. Please see attached Power Point Presentation.

### **Information Sharing:**

Jeff Coates gave information about the next Volunteering Information Event on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at the Bunnyhill Customer Service Centre from 1.30 - 3.30pm. Approximately 16 different organisations are attending and these organisations have a range of volunteering opportunities available. Staff from the Volunteer Centre will also be able to assist potential volunteers who are interested in the wide range of opportunities available in Sunderland. Jeff also gave information regarding the next training date which is Tuesday November 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Bunnyhill Customer Service Centre, from 1.30 - 4.30pm. The training is, 'Volunteer Motivation and Retention Training' and is free to Community and Voluntary Sector Organisations. Those interested in attending were asked to make a booking at least two weeks prior to the training.

Jeff also stated that he was looking for projects for the Employee Volunteering Scheme (EVS) that is organised by the Volunteer Centre. The Volunteer Centre currently has a number of projects for employees of company's and organisations from the Private Sector to become

involved with (as part of their Employee Volunteering Schemes). At present most of the opportunities are outdoor activities such as gardening and the Volunteer Centre are looking for more indoor volunteering opportunities - especially in the winter months.

Jeff discussed that companies interested in engaging employees in volunteering projects may also be able to help contribute to the cost of materials / paints etc. If any organisation from the Voluntary and Community Sector had projects for the EVS it would be appreciated if they could contact Jeff at the Volunteer Centre. It was discussed that a company called Spark Response recently painted two rooms and a hallway at the Alzheimer's Society and this had been a successful partnership.

Dorothy Gardener from Sunderland Mind highlighted that Mind is working with Prisons from June to September 2011. This is to help a small number of ex-offenders on their release. This work has been made possible by a small amount of funding and it was stated that two funding bids had been successful for a mentoring project with ex-offenders. One of these projects is in Sunderland with the other in the Stockton / Middlesbrough area. Mind requires volunteers for the Mentoring Project that they currently provide.

Angela Robson from Sunderland Healthy Communities Collaborative - discussed her project and stated that the funding for the project will no longer be available in November. Angela is looking at possible 'exit' strategies for the volunteers on the project and would like to match current volunteers with organisations with a health remit. This is to provide a continuation for current volunteers in a health related capacity.

Jane Lertas from Gentoo - discussed the project that Gentoo currently has for volunteering and stated that it is looking at linking in with various projects.

Marilyn Newman from Turning Point - discussed that it was her first time attending a Volunteering Forum and gave an overview of her project. Turning Point is an organisation for Health & Social Care provision in the UK. It acts as the gateway into treatment services in Sunderland for anybody over the age of 18 who wants to access treatment for substance misuse.

**AOB:**

Staff from the Volunteer Centre asked if anyone had a suitable venue for the next Volunteering Forum. Mark Roberts was helpful in this matter.

**Evaluation:**

Everyone was asked to complete an evaluation form to express their comments about the Volunteering Forum and the presentations.

**Date and Time of Next Meeting:**

Date: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Time: 10.30am - 12.00 noon

Venue: Lifeline, 3 Saville Place, Borough Road, Sunderland, SR1 1EA.