

Involving the Faith Sector in Warrington

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**Produced by
Compass Community Partnerships**



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Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to make recommendations with regard to the representation of the Faith Sector within Area Coordination across Warrington, the Faith Sector's development in partnership with other agencies and the opportunity for the commissioning of the Faith Sector to deliver local services. The value of the sector is already recognised and established via the Warrington Partnership and Warrington Borough Council. This is clearly evidenced through
 - The development of Research Project into the Community Activities provided by Faith Groups (CAFG)
 - The compiling of good practice via a DVD
 - Investment in the "Open Doors" conference on the 28th January 2009
 - The designation of a faith sector representative (and his / her nominated substitute) on area coordination boards
 - The support for the Warrington Council of Faiths and Churches Together in Warrington

- 1.2 The scope of this report is limited and it is recognised that there is much information and insight from both the CAFG and the Open Doors conference that demands further analysis. This report focuses on
 - the need for ongoing dialogue and increased cohesion both within the faith sector and between the faith sector and the statutory sector.
 - a mechanism for identifying faith sector representatives at borough wide, area board and local working group levels.
 - a framework for commissioning the faith sector in the delivery of initiatives that will help achieve the vision within the Sustainable Community Strategy.

- 1.3 The perspective of the evaluator within this report is primarily drawn from his experience as an accredited and experienced adviser from the department for Communities and Local Government. He is also an ordained Church of England Minister of 30 years' standing and has experience of working in Warrington as the designated adviser by Government Office for the North West on neighbourhood working.

- 1.4 The policy and strategic context in which this report sits includes
 - National guidance and legislation covering community involvement and empowerment including the "duty to involve" incumbent on all public sector bodies with regard to community engagement
 - The vision for Warrington as contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), especially looking to the spiritual well being of communities that will be come increasingly cohesive and welcoming of diversity
 - The delivery plan for the SCS in the form of the Warrington Local Area Agreement (LAA), which amongst its indicators includes an increase in the percentage of people feeling they can influence decisions in their locality and establishing the environment for a thriving third sector

Involving the Faith Sector in partnership in Warrington

- The development of area coordination within Warrington, and the recognised role that can be played by faith sector organisations.

1.5 The information used to shape this report includes

- Report of the Research Project into the Community Activities provided by Faith Groups (CAFG) within the borough of Warrington (2007)
- Observations, conversations and notes relating to the Open Doors conference (28th January 2009)
- The Warrington Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement
- Good practice from Locality Working within Warrington and nationally
- Feedback following the publication of the draft report
- Meeting with the Council of Faiths for Warrington

1.6 The evaluator records his thanks for the opportunity to work in partnership in this context, and hopes that no terminology used when referring to faith groups and others causes any offence.

Understanding the 'faith sector'?

- 2.1 The sector is defined here as the myriad of "congregations" from all faiths in Warrington based within localities. It is not seen here via any umbrella organisation, even though the development of such an organisation that is owned by both the sector and recognised as credible by "secular" partners would be an important part of a commissioning process.
- 2.2 The faith research report worked via a mailing list of 96 groups, most of which are Christian. This highlights the need to ensure as comprehensive a list as possible – particularly examining whether the list reflects the demographic profile of the borough. It also needs to be acknowledged that representation needs to be inclusive towards minority faith groups, recognising the need for special support in terms of capacity building, for the most isolated and 'hard to reach'.
- 2.3 There also needs to be recognition of the difference between neighbourhood based faith groups, and those that are more eclectic. The neighbourhood based groups' focus on a designated geographical area, and have particular value at being immersed in community issues. The eclectic groups might attract in people from a wider area and their geographical location is less relevant. Their value is that they are able to combine resources from over a wider area and will appear to be stronger in terms of capacity. Both types have value and their complementary roles need to be recognised and developed.
- 2.4 It is also recognised that some faith groups operate across Warrington and beyond. These groups have particular value as specialist deliverers and often bring in national good practice and deliver via local organisations such as schools. Even though there is a neighbourhood focus to engagement of the sector, borough wide organisations have the potential for engagement at their point of delivery.
- 2.5 It is recognised that the motivational force within the faith sector is strong. Historically this force can lead to division rather than cohesion and the differing beliefs across the sector need to be recognised and respected, especially within a public service context. There is much common ground between groups in terms of 'social care' – but the "elephant in the room" cannot be ignored. That is that groups may have a common social care agenda but hold religious beliefs that can be condemnatory towards each other. Is the common agenda enough?
- 2.6 As the CAFG report highlights, distinction between social care and evangelistic activities is hard to identify. In some ways, it would be false to do so, but there must be recognition of the responsibility in the use of public funding as opposed to private finance. In the public realm, inspiration to social care needs to be perceived by those on the receiving end rather than having opinions about faith shared as part of the support process. Is the outcome of support without change of belief enough for organisations providing a service?
- 2.7 The CAFG report also identifies those who wish to work in partnership and those who prefer to work alone. The potential for development of services via the sector lies primarily with those willing to work in partnership with those of any or no faith.

58% reflected a willingness to do this. There is still value in the engagement of all groups, but it is inappropriate that public funding is directed towards those who choose to work in an isolated environment – or believe that they are unable to work in partnership with those who do not share their beliefs.

- 2.8 The research report also highlights the abysmal response to the questionnaire from public sector partners. This could be symptomatic of a lack of recognition of the value of the third sector and the faith sector in particular – and the need to continue to build bridges as the Warrington Partnership and Council are seeking to do.
- 2.9 The value of the sector is clearly evident the commitment of resources in terms of premises usage and volunteer hours. This is demonstrated further through
- Faith communities being ever present even in the most disadvantaged areas
 - Faith communities delivering high quality services to those who are often the most vulnerable in society
 - Faith communities as conduits to the most vulnerable and 'hard to reach' with regard to provision of mainstream public services
 - Faith communities provide 24/7 care compared with the restricted time via public agencies
 - Evidence of faith communities providing in excess of 15,000 activities per month
- 2.10 Often third sector organisations are seen as a cheap alternative to the public sector rather than recognising they are able to deliver to people who have lost trust in the public sector. Added to this, there is a question mark over motive in the faith sector. Quality needs to be assured and motive needs to be clarified, but neither should be used as an excuse for lack of engagement.
- 2.11 With regard to this, faith community initiatives have the potential to be commissioned to impact on a range of the designated indicators within the Warrington LAA. This is due to their contact with vulnerable groups, and the trust placed in them by vulnerable people as with other third sector organisations. The list below is not exhaustive, but would include
- NI 39 Alcohol related harm hospital admissions
 - NI 40 Drug users in effective treatment
 - NI 110 Young people in positive activities
 - NI 111 10-17 year olds entering the Youth Justice system
 - NI 112 Under 18 conception rate
 - NI 115 Substance misuse by young people
- 2.12 It would be inappropriate to think that faith can be systemised or organised in anything like the way the public sector might be. That is where its value lies as a complementary provider. There is a rich diversity of belief both within individuals and reflected through communities of faith that holds a common value of care. The challenge for Warrington Partnership is to identify and commission such values without changing the ethos of the sector.

Findings and Observations

- 3.1 This section seeks to summarise some of the key issues arising from the Open Doors conference, especially the workshops, which focussed on
- Faith Groups – their role in the Warrington Partnership
 - Faith Groups – working at the heart of neighbourhoods
 - Faith Groups – a Government Response
 - Bringing Communities Together – the role of Faith Groups
 - Young people, their voice and our future – the role of Faith Groups
- 3.2 The purpose of the conference was outlined by Cllr Fiona Bruce as being
- to consider the common aim of improving the quality of life of Warrington residents
 - report on the achievements by the faith sector via local projects
 - reflect an appreciation that faith groups play in the life of Warrington
 - begin the process of involving faith groups in town and neighbourhood development.
- 3.3 Jan Souness, Head of Service from the Chief Executive's Unit, highlighted how community engagement via Area Coordination enable public services to have a greater chance of "getting it right first time" as far as service delivery is concerned. Faith communities have a vital role to play in helping to improve services and increase efficiency.
- Warrington Partnership has recognised the need to improve engagement within local communities to improve their involvement in decisions affecting their quality of life and the services they receive
 - Statutory agencies need to better target their services to areas of greatest need
 - Rolling out neighbourhood working arrangements across the borough
 - Voluntary, Community and Faith organisations are key to the success of this agenda.
- 3.4 The Revd Stephen Kingsnorth from the Warrington Council of Faiths highlighted the challenges facing the faith communities in their engagement with partners from the statutory, private and 3rd sectors.
- Have we the capacity within the faith sector?
 - Does our community have the energy?
 - Do we trust partners? If not, how can that change?
 - Are we speaking the same language, and if not, is there a means of translation?
 - Do we need training as a faith community?
 - Do we need particular insights as statutory, private or 3rd sector partners?
- 3.5 Faith Groups are seen as resource centres both in term of plant and volunteers. They are able to access funding that is beyond the public sector's reach, and

work more intensely with the most vulnerable. As identified above, it is the groups who are willing to work in partnership with others and see themselves as having a role for the whole community that are such a resource.

- 3.6 There needs to be clarification with regard to what is meant by “representation”, especially with regard to Area Coordination. It is difficult enough to represent members of one community, never mind those of other communities and even other faiths. Representation needs to be seen as ‘looking through the eyes of...’. It revolves around providing insights from the perspective of a faith community, rather than trying to represent that community, other communities or the people in them. It is about providing insight into a problem solving process. That insight comes from a duty to social care driven by a motive of faith, and revolving around the experience of being an active member of a faith community.
- 3.7 Having defined what is meant and expected by “representation”, it will be essential that appointment to this role is locally owned and supported by the faith sector geographically based with the area concerned. There is some uncertainty as to how faith groups will link into Area Coordination, but this will become clearer via the development support on offer to the areas. Each area can then decide, support by the coordinator, how it wants to organise itself in terms of communication and representation.
- 3.8 At a neighbourhood level, linkage to local providers is easier with some more than others. Those working at a neighbourhood level are more accessible, and can often see the value of common working. Communication within and across communities is seen as being vital. Links with the police are particularly highlighted in a positive way, which would tie in with other evaluations regarding the police working via neighbourhood organisations as a part of the neighbourhood policing agenda.
- 3.9 Of particular note are the initiatives provided for young people that achieve impact in terms of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour. These projects are built on national good practice in providing positive alternative activities and developing mentoring relationships with appropriate adults. The “Redeeming Our Communities” initiative has been strong in encouraging close partnership working with the police.
- 3.10 Some aspects of the sector seem to be looking at the public purse as a means for sustainable funding. There is some appropriate and understandable frustration that the faith sector is delivering effective services yet finding public resources so difficult to access. Public funding may be appropriate, but can only be achieved via a proactive commissioning process, rather than a reactive application process. The delivery of services needs to be linked to outcomes that are local priorities if they are going to be publicly funded. It is appropriate though, that such a framework for commissioning is developed.
- 3.11 The workshops highlighted a range of issues that the faith sector would be particularly adept at delivering based on good practice. The following list is far from comprehensive but demonstrates how faith communities can help develop

(or be the sole provider of) neighbourhood infrastructure. These ideas are listed alphabetically, and link to local priorities as in the SCS.

- Being centres for activities
- Being conduits for community engagement (as part of the “duty to involve”)
- Being hubs for local communication
- Caring for the vulnerable (especially the elderly)
- Educational activities regarding substance abuse
- Helping “map” provision across their area
- Increasing cohesion
- Increasing community confidence through reducing isolation (which impacts on issues such as fear of crime)
- Intergenerational activities
- Providing ‘on the street’ pastoral care and support
- Providing local knowledge that can improve service delivery through helping to shape services.
- Providing positive activities for young people
- Restoring local facilities through change of use and developing community space (eg ex public houses)
- Work with young people covering a diverse range of support needs

3.12 The groups also highlighted a number of areas where their capacity would need to be increased.

- Accessing funding that is sustainable
- Becoming more cohesive (building up respect)
- Linking to area coordination
- Mapping the level of providing services by the sector
- Organising themselves into a sector that can be commissioned
- Support to know how to develop a role as a local support agency

3.13 The Neighbourhood Area Boards and the linked Area Coordination Team will provide opportunities for faith groups to engage. Overemphasising the role of the person filling the chair on the board would distract from a range of other appropriate opportunities for facilitating community engagement, shaping services via working groups, and delivery services to the most vulnerable via a commissioning process.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- 4.1 The most effective way that faith communities can engage with the public sector is from an **area based approach**. The move to an Area Coordination pattern of working will enable this engagement. Most of the locally produced good practice is delivered at a very local level, and it is the level at which most volunteers will operate. This level also provides a mechanisms for genuine community engagement and local people will be able to provide valuable insight as to why public do, or don't, work effectively.
- 4.2 The investment from the Warrington Partnership and Warrington Council indicates a **willingness** to develop the sector. The majority of faith groups surveyed indicated a willingness to work with partners. It has to be questioned whether it is appropriate for those unwilling to work in partnership to be recipients of public funding. There is still value in engaging all faith groups as long as there remains mutual respect amongst people with very different beliefs.
- 4.3 There is some anecdotal evidence of extreme religious views that borders on racism amongst a tiny minority. The attitude and behaviour of individuals and groups is seen as under the **governance** of the Warrington Partnership and action that could cause tension or division is appropriately tackled.
- 4.4 It is essential that appointments to the Area Boards are made by those from the area concerned, and that those appointed are able to reflect an understanding of the aims of social care initiatives from all religious backgrounds. This will be enabled by working closely with those of other faith backgrounds. Further scope for involvement lies at a borough wide strategic level through the Council of Faiths, and at the most local level through the involvement of front line deliverers from faith communities within working groups tackling specific priorities.
- 4.5 There are **4 key "next steps"** for developing the faith sector with regard to playing a more influential role within their communities through the influencing of service design, providing community capital and infrastructure and delivery of key services especially to the most vulnerable and hard to reach.
- 4.6 **Recommendation 1:** Faith groups are integrated into the working of the Warrington Partnership at each spatial level. See appendix 1 for a development framework. This is
 - at a Warrington wide level via the Council of Faiths
 - at a Area Board level via locally nominated representatives (see below)
 - at Working Group level supporting Area Boards tackling local issues via local congregations with specific insights into local issues
- 4.7 **Recommendation 2:** A **commissioning framework** for the faith sector within the context of the third sector is established that will enable public funding to be appropriately directed. This will recognise the value of current faith community initiatives and the impact they are having with some of the most vulnerable. In order to operate at the local level of most faith organisations, this is again best achieved via Area Boards, but gives scope to initiatives that operate across the

borough as a whole. This will entail working through a staged process. A learning and development tool is included below in appendix 2 that will enable a process that includes mapping the strengths and weaknesses of the sector.

4.8 **Recommendation 3:** An **area based faith forum** (working title) is established in each of the Area Coordination areas as the mechanism for delivering the previous recommendations (ie partnership working and commissioning). This should be coordinated by the Area Coordinator and seen established as a sub group to the Area Board. It should consist of representatives from any faith group geographically based within the relevant area. Its responsibilities will include

- enabling cohesion both amongst faith leaders and within communities across the area.
- identifying appropriate local outcomes as part of delivery the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- agreeing the 'job description' for the faith representative on the Area Board. The job description needs to be approved as per similar roles on the board, and it is recommended below that the Council of Faiths can fulfil an advisory role in this process.
- appointing the faith representative to the Area Board. It is also recommended that the nominated substitute to the appointed faith representative should be of a different faith, and that the two appointees should seek to operate in a cooperative and inclusive manner.
- developing the faith sector as an appropriate vehicle for commissioning
- reviewing the effectiveness of this process in January and July 2010.

4.9 **Recommendation 4:** Recognition needs to be given to the role that the **Council of Faiths (CoF)** continues to play in reducing the isolation of minority communities, and increasing cohesion. The recommended role for CoF includes

- providing a forum for the leaders of the faith communities across Warrington that will continue to enable cohesion
- continuing to encourage an equity between faiths irrespective of their percentage of followers
- ensuring the CoF is strategically placed to influence policy via the Warrington Partnership
- fulfilling an advisory role regarding the production of a role description for the Area Board Faith Representatives
- providing a 'community of practice' for those who are appointed as the representatives to the area boards, and their nominated substitutes

Appendix 1 – A framework for partnership development

These questions are ‘teasers’ and should be used as suggestions rather than a list to tick. A healthy partnership will keep asking itself challenging questions.

CRITERIA	WHAT'S IN PLACE?	WHAT NEEDS DOING?
<p>1 Common Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do partners recognise their respective roles and are able to discern that which is best tackled through working together? ▪ Do partners identify the added value through adopting a partnership approach? ▪ Are partners willing to adopt a joint approach to problem solving? ▪ Do partners recognise the contribution they can make to priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy? 		
<p>2 Agreed Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there a mechanism for engaging with other partners across the faith, third and public sectors? ▪ Is there clarity with regard to all stages of the process and understanding of protocols? ▪ Is there a consistent and corporate approach with regard to documentation and its usage? ▪ Is there an agreement that enables participation for partners (especially more isolated and vulnerable groups)? 		
<p>3 Strong Working Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there mutual respect amongst all those with differing outlooks? ▪ Is there openness to sharing information, and a willingness to remove barriers? ▪ Is there accountability between organisations even when there is no statutory necessity? ▪ Are agreed actions being executed with immediate effect? ▪ Does the strength of partnership working that goes back through individuals to the organisations they represent? 		

Appendix 2 – A commissioning framework for Faith sector development

Self – assess your position in the Red / Amber / Green column. This should be used as a learning tool – so be honest!

Criteria	Rationale	RAG?
Relationship	<p>In order to enhance the faith sector there must be willingness of sectors to work together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How strong is this relationship? ▪ How can it be strengthened? ▪ Where are the barriers? ▪ Is the faith sector seen as an asset by the public sector? 	
Umbrella body	<p>There must be an umbrella network that is recognised and owned by the sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What could that umbrella body be? ▪ Is it best at an Area or Borough level in Warrington? 	
Strengths & Weaknesses	<p>The reach into the most vulnerable communities will vary. This level of reach is the sector's greatest strength. It can reach where the public sector can't.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How far does the faith sector reach? ▪ Where are the gaps with regard to communities both geographically and of interest? ▪ How can it be strengthened? 	
Strategy & Funding	<p>The development of the faith sector should not be seen just as a faith sector issue. It is best developed as part of the third sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the need for a thriving third sector acknowledged by the public sector? ▪ If so, how is that seen? ▪ If not, how can it be developed? ▪ Is there a joint funding strategy for the sector that accesses mainstream resources complemented by grant income? 	
Best fit for delivery	<p>Building on previous information...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where is the sector in the best position for delivery of services? ▪ Where does it reach the most vulnerable where public services struggle to impact? ▪ Is this value recognised by the public sector? 	
Procurement	<p>Procuring services from the sector will give a backbone to its funding strategy and provide longer term security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are services being procured via the third sector currently? ▪ Where does 'best fit' indicate the potential for delivery? ▪ Does the sector have the capacity to tender successfully? 	

Appendix 3 – Notes from the workshop groups at the Open Doors conference

OPEN DOORS CONFERENCE – WORKSHOP NOTES

Table 1

Links to Warrington Partnership and another Faith Conference

A - Empowerment and 'strategic shepherding'

- Groups can only be empowered if they are invited to the partnership board /forums. Invite Board / visit groups. Equal representation (different faiths – send message out directly)
- Limit restrictions - availability / opening facilities
 - Integration – Partnership must help groups be enabled to participate – i.e. evening meetings – practical barriers
- Partnership should recognise vision and capability/capacity for groups – improve capability
 - capacity should be put into enable groups to engage with partnerships
- Build Capacity
- Recognise faith centres as resources
- Partnership should feedback to groups if they are to promote engagement – establish clear structures

B – What Role?

- Representation – new neighbourhood areas / forums should feed from ground up to partnership board / forum
 - can one rep from faith groups truly represent all?
 - geographical structures not necessarily the answer – people aren't in one area
 - solution – technology – can papers be summarised and send out via email / text? (possible improvement)
- Communication – good news, activities, publicity – send message out
 - effective forums and mechanisms
 - ensuring people know about them
- What are the Councils / public sectors expectations of faith groups

- How do faith groups engage with people involved in areas they're not?

Improvements

- Are there issues re: equality of funding – whoever shouts the loudest
- Council needs to get the basics right first
- Information availability – funding D/B, activity D/B
- Faith views on big issues – inconsistent

Themes

1. Representation and empowerment
2. Capacity to enable engagement
3. Communication – all directions

Table 2

All workshops

- Resource and volunteer database
- Structures need to be in place to support individuals representing all faiths as well as their own
- Funding that is easily accessible
- Communication about neighbourhood working and how to get involved
- Communication – effective systems to enable most efficient communication
- Information – faith groups need key information on
 - Services
 - Funding
 - Needs and priorities
- Support local issues and problems via CEMS and allow the CEM to co-ordinate the faith groups momentum
- Need to develop relationships

Table 3

Workshop 2

- Police to make themselves know to faith groups.
- Police to engage in activities/model in Manchester/Stockport/ Merseyside
- Advertise town wide all groups events. Promote regular activities, which are run by the church. Database/free magazine/flyer.
- Funding. Make it easily accessible.

- Simple presentation to communicate plans of Warrington Partnership to congregations. (Leaflet/flyer).
- Directory of available funding (with the criteria of tapping into user friendly!)
- Communication!
- Church's work together well and want to promote this widely.

Table 4

Workshop 2

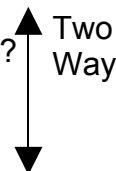
“Stop being a community in the church and be a church in the community!”

- Placing resources in the right place
- Opening a dialogue which will enable different groups to signpost.
- Find where our priorities touch each other
- Passing on information and making sure information is circulated
- One voice – being listened to and responding
- Accessing information – Where? What? How?
- United in purpose – one heart
- Accessing funding for projects
- Re-building confidence in the partnership eg answering letter, phone calls, emails.
- Bringing skills together
- Respecting each other
- Being involved in initial planning – ie Area Co-ordination boards

Table 5

Workshop 2

- How do we access the Area Co-ordination boards?
- Could groups go to the Area Co-ordination Boards to find local needs?
- The board disseminate local needs to various groups as well as helping local groups
 - Needs fed out to local groups
 - Finding out needs of community
- Communication



Impact – neighbourhood Policing Units (stat body)
 - Faith groups (church association) area board

} Area co-ordination board may enable residents

May enable different responses to be given to part issues – not always police but different faith groups

- Church groups can be very inward looking – need information, knowledge of needs to be helped to reach out – perhaps to break a sense of apathy.
 - Safety in the community – central to the partnership (around national media perception). Important – feedback – positive feedback to local areas.
 - Community action meetings – all take, not action
 - Police Authority Forums – specific questions, particular questions
 - Would resident want to be involved?
- Residents only interested in specific questions – difficult to incorporate them into general comm. improvement
- Area co-ordination Board could provide an avenue for the local community to comm. With stat bodies/faith groups knowing that they care.
 - Community Spirit – Engaging with local media! Good new Stories. Warrington Guardian- running a blog for – on terms with, relays news from neighbourhood police
- Develop media communications blogs Warrington Guardian blue tooth – to mobile phones
- Pride in the community:-
 - Groups set up to help the community – the Area Board needs to know how needs are being met.
 - Borough Council needs a representative from Area Boards to report back.
 - Resources – Community Development Officers? Are there officers co-ordinating progress from the area boards.

Two Issues:

- Go to area board to find out needs.
- Go to area boards for volunteers/resources.

Communication – Very poor and most important.

Safe areas to take risks and give responsibility – generation gaps.

- Communication is vital – who knows about Area Co-ordination boards? How will the information be disseminated? How will residents be able to communicate with Area Boards.

- Can area boards tell faith groups/voluntary organisations the needs in their local area.
- Can local groups go to area boards and ask for resources/volunteers. (Communication across Warrington).
- Borough Council needs a Rep from Area Boards. Name change.

Table 6

Workshop 2

- Opps – tell each other what resources can be used.
- Have up to date database of contacts
- Communicate – feedback – reduce out rents!
- Theme – support local issues and local problems via CEM's and allow CEM to co-ordinate the faith groups momentum
- Demonstrate to public our joined up working who sometimes feel we are poorly organised.
- Make it local with projects big and small!!
- Network ideas eg community payback – information from council
- Identify what is needed in an area and sustain the provision eg older people and fitness classes (which have had funding stopped).
- Identify premises which can be used (churches)
- Opps to network on big and small projects.

How can faith groups be supported to make the most of opportunities presented by new proposals for neighbourhood working?

- Mapping of area – avoid duplication
- Unite faith groups in practical way
- Use existing comms more effectively
- Need link in community re funding eg community development officers but to indicate all areas
- Identify individual needs and bring in partners
- Sustainable funding is absolutely necessary

Table 7

Workshop 2

- Key issue collaboration
- Learn from other areas external and internal to Warrington
- Need for on the group networkers to understand needs within diverse community
- Need to skill up faith and 3rd sector groups to be able to engage with new neighbourhood opps. Shouldn't be unequal partnership
- Will neighbourhood working reduce inequalities
- Is there a want or a need

- Recognise minority community cultural issues and methods on interaction
- Need for high quality communication between different faith groups – sharing of resources adequate funding
- Limited life of building
- Often resources and energy is directed on survival of church etc
- Stronger together funding has enabled churches and group to charge real cost of use of building
- Misconception that churches can do things on the cheap
- Support needed to help faith groups to focus work outside their buildings
- Model of community Hub with church eg Birchwood
- Need to create links with other faiths to ensure their needs are met eg meeting rooms. An integrated facility
- 'New people migrating into area need a 'safe' space in which to start to engage with community –
 - Statutory agencies should commission 3rd sector faith sector to provide direct community engagement and support to improve wellbeing.
 - Information – funding information, whats available, what the need/issues and priorities are in the area
- Willingness for people to volunteer from 1 area to another eg education support from homework clubs, high achieving area to lower achieving area.

Information

Faith groups need key information:

- On services
- Funding
- Needs and priorities in the area in order to provide the service with Neighbourhood works

Table 8

Workshop 2

Faith groups helped to make most of opportunities presented by Area Coordination Board:

1. Resource and Volunteer data base would identify who and which are the appropriate volunteers for new ideas and schemes inc. personal details/contact details/area of interest and skills
 - Collated by - ?Who would be sufficiently all – embracing on WBC?
 - Held by - ?
 - Accessible to – All voluntary sector
 - Problems:
 - i. Not everyone happy to have their details on such a database.

ii. Even different departments of WBC don't communicate effectively.

(Communication is a major issue – needs work)

- eg Childrens services directorate has such a database for unto 25 year old – how can this be extrapolated across the age groups?

2. Deal with gap in understanding between faith communities and statutory and non-statutory authorities eg

- area of mental health, Royal College of Psychiatry is exploring spirituality of patient care more these days.
- Some progress in place like schools (offering pastoral care).
- Area co-ordination board – create an arena for dialogue between NHS trust, faith communities, PCT et al: chaplaincies

Problem: many grades in eg Social Caring Agencies are interest but not usually the higher (decision – making grades) – more seminars could be staged on specific issues like Mental Health Issues

- Festival of Hope – October 08 run by St Annes to focus on the positive aspects of community life and celebrate positive action and stress co-operative initiatives – had a strong beneficial local effect.

3. Sustainable Funding – Faith groups not always aware of sources of constant funding for continuity.

- Importance of sustainability of schemes in, especially, deprived areas.
- *Application funding in more likely to be successful when faith – and civic organisations bid in cooperative partnerships neighbourhood.
- The Orford Network Project can sometimes provide grants to improve the social health of the neighbourhood TEMP is a faith/civic partnership.

Problem: Performance related funding can sometimes jeopardise some agencies eg family services, where there are not neat measurable outcomes. There has to be appropriate measurement of performance of agencies.

* Some eg faith – based agencies may need help in forming appropriately measurable goals and outcomes.

4. Auditing the faith groups assets and activities.

The recent audit was not universally subscribed to be every faith organisation – why?

- Mistrust – why do they want to know what we do?
- We only run a.b.c – they wouldn't be interested.
- The ministers were too busy/distracted to communicate information

Preferred method of communication: “write your views down because they’re important:

- Needs to be face – face meeting? Agreed inc. aims and objectives.
- Assure that information will be secure and not ignored
- Use permission slips.

5. Service Level Agreements

- Help promote trust between agencies
- Create a level playing field for evaluating information.
- Respect diversity

Table 9

Workshop 2

- Vital role? Absolutely.
- Challenge – Number of organisations – massive number of people to get to know.
- So much good work going on
- Who determines what is a problem?
Need to get information eg how do we find out where lonely, older people live?
- We would love to visit them.
- Co-ordinator needs to know what all faith groups do, want to do.
- What skills they have etc.
- Road map of activity in an area
- Work with schools and parents
- Mustn’t take advantage of willingness of faith community to get involved and abuse the times and skills they can offer
- Knowledge about funding streams and how to apply (make bids) support.
- Communicating effectively
- Improved networking
- More networking opportunities
- Central place for advice and information to give a received it
- Advertises in CVS newsletter
- Inform faith comm. About what is needed

Table 10

Faith Groups – Working at the heart of neighbourhoods

- Money – applications – phasing – outcomes common
- Communication about sources – religious

- Old buildings –
 - develop within limits of faith
 - refurbish
- Language – compromise faith stance
- Surplus of buildings
 - Maintaining
 - Utility costs
 - Energy efficiency
- Who to get relationship with
- Lack of volunteers – and ageing
- Difficult for 1 person to represent all faiths.
 - Too great expectation
 - Delegates/representatives
 - Support for reps/coming together
 - Dialogue/ how to work
 - Christian diversity
 - Recognising multiculturalism and diversity – crossing cultural divides without adapting pluralism
 - How to work together to do what we can and don't where we can't
 - Resource bank
 - Spaces to use.
 - Make use of vacant properties
 - Challenge to get involved with community
 - Support for pressing utility company – drainage, gravel instead
 - Communication – resources and links
 - Statutory regulation supports
 - Delegating resource/associated service/transparency
 - Minibus
 - Liaison between faith groups and departments
 - Make it clear how churches are treat – domestic/business bus etc
 - Training for faith group community workers
 - Link with community service for churches
 - What can church do to help – litter pick, tidy.
 - Engagement
 - Pray for police – work with/pop in

How can faith groups support WBC? – Forums for further discussion

- Representing all faiths
- Communication

Table 11

Workshop Government Perspective

1. Foster grass roots initiatives (eg increase) – build sustainable relationships.
2. Publicise “faith in action”
 - Good stories
 - Work on language
 - Can W Partnership Play a role?
 - Can W C o Faiths be more active in publicity.
3. Crystallise our priorities as faith groups (and present them to the government) eg common themes from each faith community present 3 themes . Can we agree?
4. Clarify and publicise representation mechanisms – avoid undue bureaucracy.

Start Here!

In order to capitalise on government “encouragement” and use it as “traction” .

Summary

Set up and develop mechanisms

- To publicise ‘faith in action’
- To crystallise on common priorities as faith groups
- To improve representation
- To promote grass roots initiatives.

Table 12

Question 3

How can faith organisations access and respond to government opportunities (priorities)

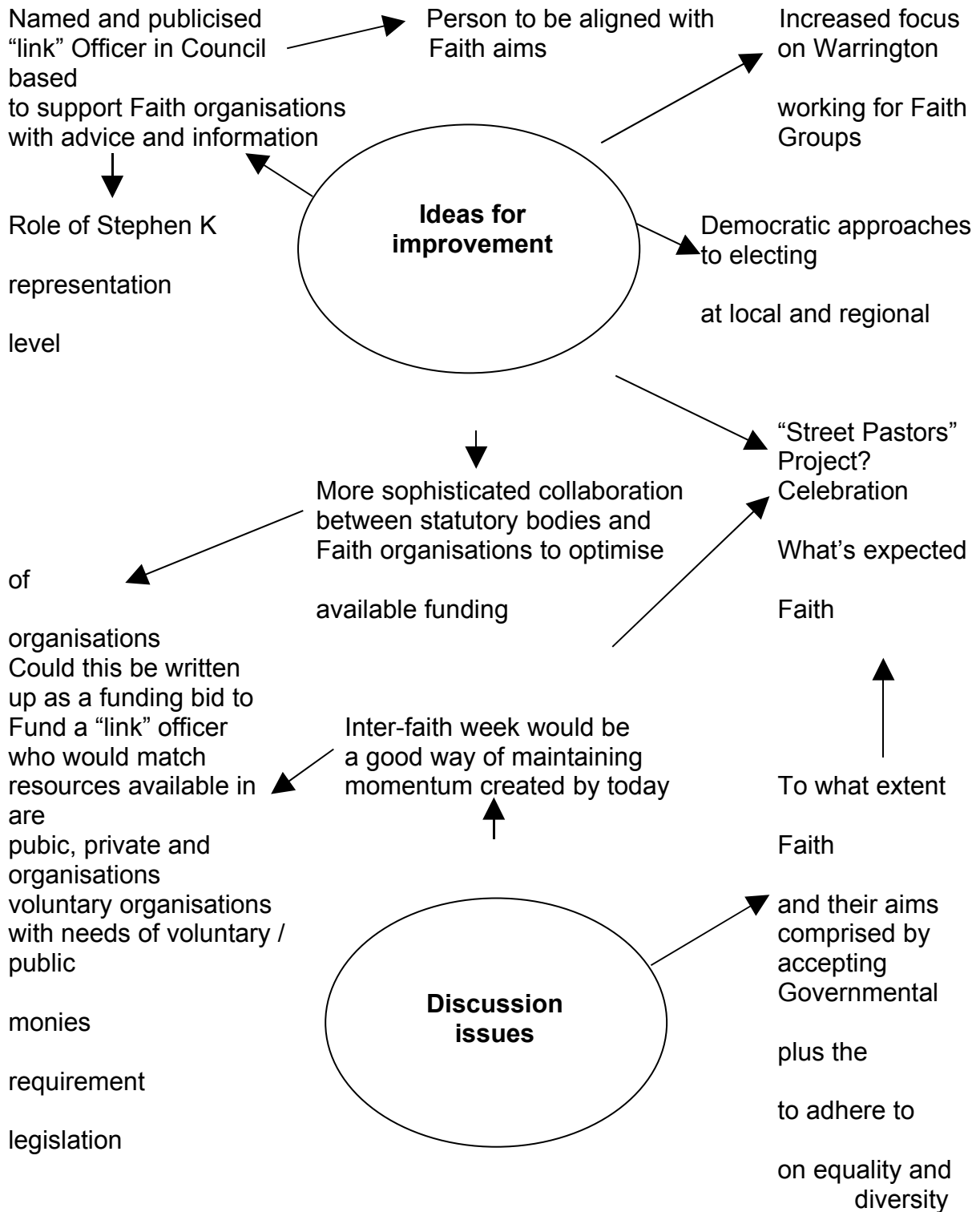
Answer

Practical approach: fund a liaison officer “person to be aligned with faith” named person. Maybe matched with WBC official to promote, support and celebrate grassroots faith in action whilst disseminating information around accessing Government funding etc.

NB: also devising a faith week to share, celebrate and disseminate difference and commonality.

Table 12 - A Government Response

Malcolm K – Methodist Grappenhall
 Stuart C – Full Gospel – Fellowship
 Nigel H – HMP Risley
 Keith C – Active Hope
 Karen H – CVS
 Paul H – Warrington Collegiate



More emphasis on
"Faith in Action" in
Council of Faiths

How to use the Council
and faiths more effectively

Table 13

- 81% National or Warrington based?
- Recession – Widnes unrest
BNP increases vote?
2/3 month ago racist attacks amongst all faith groups.
- Disability – Access?
Learning
Understanding of community/professionals to provide information
Loop system.
- Education – Knowledge of all cultures
Difference between Sikh/Hindu/Muslim
Not all terrorist
British born
- Training – Accessible to all, 3rd sector and public sector
Share best practice/communication

Young People vs Older People?

- Media portrays young people in a poor light
- Cultural influence: respect for older people
- No separation in communities?
- Family life – learnt behaviour
- Education – faith led schools are over-subscribed
- Youth service needs to change / adoptable
- Parenting programmes "SureStart" / early intervention – extended schools "programme"
- Using facilities to best potential

North South Divide

- Industries used to be in centre of town
- Apprenticeships

- New business required to take on local people by LA
- Logistics – encourage people to travel to other community / faith groups
- Faith leaders to encourage people to attend all events
- Does each faith group cater for their community and therefore no need to go to other faith groups?
- Sport – Warrington Foundation based at the Stadium – sharing best practice to motivate all young people

Addressing fear of crime mixing in Town Centre

- Street pastors essential
- Education prior to use of drug / alcohol (misuse)
- Outreach workers
 - mixed faith
 - has to be right people
 - training
 - responsibilities (one body to oversee)
 - BC to fund?
- Support / link to existing organisation

Preventing potential for violent extremism

- Peace Centre
- Book signed by faith groups / public sector after Mumbai tragedy

Table 17

Young People – their voice and our future

- What is already successful?
 - Youth bus
- Let's promote what we already do
 - be positive – find positive stories about young people but do young people have the skills to promote themselves and are the media interested in good news?
- How as faith groups can we encourage media to include positive faith news?
 - column in the Guardian – we need young people to find out what is going on “facebook”?

- As faith organisations do we have the skills to promote our activities?
- Do we as faith organisations understand the culture of young people?
- Funding for activities is always a problem
- Does secular society value what we as faith groups provide? Or are services just willing to allow us to struggle financially to provide activities for young people
- The Age of Litigation – does this have a negative impact of what we can provide?
- Do faith groups know who to contact re: child protection issues? Are CRB's having a negative effect on what sort of provision is made by faith groups?
- How can we work together and find out information re: health and safety – child protection etc – this information is available but do faith groups know how to access this?
- How can faith organisations engage with young people directly
 - by building up relations with them
 - mentoring
 - do faith groups actually “go” out to young people
- Can ‘Church’ create ‘safe places’ for Children and Young people?
- Areas such as ‘Lymm’ also need provision for young people
- Are Church based activities always “sustainable” i.e. manpower/funding?
- Funding outside of church can come with strings attached i.e. prevents sharing faith
- Warrington gives less than 3% of the money that it gets to the charities that work with young people and children – WBC do not promote youth funding to voluntary/faith groups
- Faith activities do aim to share their beliefs but aim to make sure that young people feel valued and cared for
- We should be more focussed on doing one thing and doing it well and not to try and spread ourselves too thinly

- We need to identify our own skills and abilities
- Faith groups don't always know what other provision is out there – so resources not being shared – this needs to be “mapped”
- Do we WBC value the work that faith groups do?
- The faith sector is doing a really good job but can be “thwarted” by the statutory sector

Big message

- Faith sector needs help to gather useful information on what is already happening
- Also needs help to discover resources that can help with policy development / CRB's / Electrical safety checking etc.
- Funding issues – if faith sector valued why so little made available

Similar messages:

- e.g. Local media - negative
- Communications
 - Funding
 - Capacity

Table 18

Whats happening now

- Active Hope – Juniors, mentoring service
- Family Centre – supporting young families to build skills and create families
- Ministry for schools – to faith and non-faith schools, happening in non-faith schools
 - Offer church facilities building relationships with staff and pupil assemblies
 - This should be celebrated
 - Schools could be involved in the partnerships.
- Church For Christ - Senior Schools: Talking about life, re lessons, supporting good choices, mentoring utilise Christian view
- Football and detached youth worker, youth clubs

Some ideas for expansion

- St Josephs Family – Eamase counselling's service – could this be expanded into schools particularly primary – needs including mentoring?
- Utilise SACRE? Where is their influence in Warrington?
- Start with young childrens
 - Professional services – what is the needs
 - Support education
 - Play methods to build young people and childrens esteem
 - Parenting courses? Not being support locally due to stigma

Producing new activities

IDEA: Currently theatre workshops are very popular

- Costs money – funding from the arts council?
- Can we use more community facilities for such activities ...

Important Question:

- Who will co-ordinate this work?
- Need a regular group..
- Should involve young people
- Link with police – support as we're working towards same thing. Do they know what is happening and can they support it more.

To Harness Potential

- Give the widest variety of experience
- Activities that build upon skills and self-esteem (rock solid .. earn points, set challenge and reward
- Restore family value through teaching and build bridge

Important

- Stockton Heath charges a lot for part – football cage
- Little support from public sector funding would be nice, left to get on with it, run by volunteers (only support is via CRB) – How do they we tap into this?
- Networking – so you find information that can support knowledge.

Harness Young people continued:

- Creating place to belong and break cycles of damage. (Work with children can build bridges to family)
- Awards – to celebrate achievement awards. This will engage families too Recognition is important
- – to celebrate achievement awards. This will engage families too Recognition is important

- Scouts/brownies – many pack closing, where do we find leaders from

An IDEA:

- Intergenerational?

Adopt a granny.
Males role models

Important point:

- Work must be relevant to engage young people (correctly packages)
 - Not sure there is a young voice in Warrington
 - Tie work into local culture or create new cultural op's but this costs money ...
 - Go to young people where they are and improve what they have already (small steps)

Young People and Key Issues

- Networking and links to organisations, voluntary and statutory sect.
- For funding, networking and training
- Co-ordinated approach
- People with passion
- Allowing good news to be shared!
- Website?
- Warrington Partnership newsletter?
- Whats next – a copy of report will be appreciated

Table 20

Why we came ?

- Open mind – hoping to be about inter-faith – see how to work with faiths in CAB
- Try to improve relationships with community

Workshop 4

- Improving young and old relationship – result of lack of family activities, giving a sense of belonging. More integration between young and old people.
- Family service in church introduced
- Activity based on young people mixing with older people
- North / South divide in Warrington doesn't help joint community partnership
- Statement on young/old people is very general and an answer isn't easy

- Promoting the positives of both young and old rather than the negatives
- Setting up initiatives in schools – citizenship lessons etc. can help
- Need to realise that many organisations do similar work such as schools work than can be partnered together
- Look at a possible buddying system between old and young people
- Council have a different agenda to faith groups – Council are more based on targets – faith groups more interested in people
- More communication between what organisations are available for:
 - Networking within each of the 4 areas of Warrington
 - Someone in each area to know what is going on in each area
 - Many great organisations available but people are not aware of it
 - Important to educate people on the Faith/Voluntary/Council sectors
 - Need for a paid worker to keep to date information about services available
- More development needed on what impact voluntary organisations are having
- Faith Groups could do with help on terminology and understanding how to work towards Council targets. Vice versa by explaining faith terms
- WIRE FM – local radio – needs to be more community
- Are there more facilities available that can be used but with lack of funding how can they be used? We have the people but not the funding
- Close the pubs and clubs down and open up more restaurants / theatre etc. This will make the town centre more approachable
- There isn't enough variety in leisure activities
- Voluntary/faith large volunteer base. 'Man hours' but often lack 'building venues' suitable for activities – due to funding
- Faith groups very busy therefore not always able to prioritize 'admin' type activities so people aren't informed or aware of activities they are involved in

Summary – 1

- Neutral spaces
- Joint activities relevant to both
- Opportunities to mix and not make cliques

North side divide (Ship Canal) How to tackle this?

Margaret - Churches together in Warrington, Methodist, Anglican, Independent Methodist – only 3 x a year

- is there a divide? Ron – Old Lancashire / Cheshire boundary. Children notice the divide in schools
- Warrington South is in Chester Diocese, North (Anglican)

- Free Churches mix, don't have this problem

Darren – does police have divisions in areas?

Jo – political divide, money can only be spent in certain areas eg Dallam and Bewsey. Exclude Great Sankey kids

- Attitude of Dallam and Bewsey
- Council spent money on auditing how to publicise info

Shelly – bus route not good between North and South e.g. Appleton and Birchwood

Gill – Warrington is such a vast area

Margaret – Prejudice in South “all money goes to North”

Gill – Church building is a barrier

Darren – David Lloyd gym a good venue

Jo – Had 80 people when at ASDA – common to all

Gill – Colwyn in Wales Church in Community Centre, Alpha course held in a pub restaurant, mutual benefit.

What we gained?

Margaret – Neutral spaces needed e.g. ASDA. How to move into the Community? Open to whole neighbourhood for Church activity. Project idea for youth

Ayo – Christmas programme – house to house invite. Take their number

Jo – Established groups all ready – tap into e.g. Age Concern can refer people

Ken – BBQ pensioners. His son Sheffield Anglican Church (Yr 10/11)

50-70! Minor prophets week by week. Teach bible appropriately and relevant (not compromise, not watered down teaching but relevant).

Confidence to invite their mates. Spring harvest, could bring our friends here.

Ron – Youngsters not able to respond to different ages e.g. smile at people show you are not confrontational

Shelly – Wealthy children have psychological problems too.

Margaret – Does St Josephs Centre

Gill – Hope 08

Darren – have central point of contact for South /North but people care about their own area

Jo – Use Peace Centre one time, alternate the venue so lots of opportunity

Ron – e.g. Runcorn and Widnes. Halton has same problem

Margaret – Know s disillusioned Vicar who tried mixing

Gill – Lyi & John Wesley, Knutsford Road, Grappenhall 7.30

Darren – YFC works well

Ken – Feels Warringtonians are parochial

Jo – Parochial e.g. Bridge Foot island

Summary - 2

- Bus services better
- Organisations alternate in N/S
- Marketing appropriate
- Historical boundaries acknowledgement of this as being a problem
- Political divide of funding

- New incomers may not have this thought

Addressing fear

Ayo – Street pastors has seen them

Jo – Friday / Saturday nights good at diffusing. Concentration of pubs in one area – like Blackpool ! Bridge Street

Darren – Give financial breaks to other things other than pubs

Summary – 3

- Violent
- Empty offices to be housed by more projects (productive)
- Challenge use of empty premises
- Warrington licensing should say no to more bars

Jo – Change of culture of pub culture – meal and café culture, more classes e.g. dancing

- Zero tolerance policy

Preventing Potential and Violent Extremism

- “Prevent” – Government policy to identify vulnerability to extremism e.g. in schools, prisons
- Interfaith group is a diffuser
- Urban Splash event at Peace Centre “allowed graffiti art on themes”
- Government funding
- Cricket event at Northwich
- Are there any open youth groups? Nothing to do.

Darren – “Manor House” tea and toast. St Paul’s, Penketh. Peace Centre