Forum Meeting 03/03/2022

Attendees: Stephanie-Anne Harris (ECHF), Daniel Richards (ECHF), Rossi Craig (THA), Catriona Windle (HAR), Alison McGhee (HIM), Anne Munro (PDP), Chuyang Cheng (PDP), Biddy Kelly (Fresh Start), Brenda Black (Edinburgh Community Food), Fiona Partington (THA), Helena Richards (CarrGomm), Jen Richards (B Healthy Together), Magda Czarnecka (Feniks), Richard Dark (ELGT), Rachel Green (The Ripple), Ruth MacLennan (Care4Carers), Sue Freeth (LifeCare Edinburgh), Susan Lancaster (LGBT H&W), Susan Paxton (SCDC), Suzanne Lowden ( H&SCP’ship), Linda Fitzpatrick (), Sophie Milner ()

Apologies: Dawn Anderson (PCHP), Marion Findlay (Volunteer Edinburgh), Nicola Djeala (LCiL), Maruska Greenwood (LGBThealth),

1. Welcome and Introductions:

Cat welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a warm welcome to Linda Irvine Fitzpatrick and Sophie Milner

1. Presentation from Linda Irvine Fitzpatrick

SAH had asked members to submit questions for Linda in advance of the meeting which had been shared with Linda. Linda too the opportunity to answer all the questions submitted as recorded below:

**1. What money are we talking about when we discuss the Pact and its parameters?  I’m all for the discussions around innovation and new working practices/relationships, but not at the expense of losing core services – these innovations need to be in addition.**

There is approx. £25 million in total, although recognise that the Forum’s focus will be on the IJB grants programme £4m. The Community Mobilisation Fund is new money. Funding for THRIVE, ADP etc all comes through health and social care p’ship as well. We wanted to lay it all out so everyone can see where all the money and comes from in totality.

**2. What is the PACT trying to achieve?**

It’s about building different relationship between citizens and organisations and across sectors. We want people to have more good days, whilst also recognising that to enable someone to have a good day depends on someone own’s lived experienced. It needs to be person centred.

**3. What means is the PACT working with?
 Is there new money to support it?**

The Community mobilisation fund (£1mill confirmed) is new money coming in on top of the £25m previously mentioned. £25m includes the £4 mil EIJB Money.

**Is it going to include the current EIJB grants money?**

The £25 million does include the EIJB grants funding (health inequalities) which currently totals £4m per annum

**4.What is the timeline for decisions around the current EIJB funding beyond March 2023?**

 Taking an update report to the EIJB in April ( 21/4) which will measure current progress in order to set out the proposal before the council elections. This will allow us to take a deeper look at how community commissioning has functioned and its effectiveness. EVOC is currently writing up the learning from the Mental Health Commissioning process and will need to get the views of the participants f not April then May.

Community commissioning- A forum member expressed the view that EVOC’s experience is different from other organisations with regards to how community commissioning has played out- especially in terms of the amount of time commitment that has been committed. Many smaller organisations simply don’t have the staff hours to commit to this model of applying. There is a worry that EVOC may be biased in favour of CC in terms of their feedback in the report. It needs to be ensured that it will properly reflect the experiences of everyone and be seen as independent.

Action: Linda will check with EVOC about how they are planning on gather participant feedback from the Mental Health Fund/ Community Commissioning in a way people can be open and honest.

The Forum advocated for impartial ways to gather feedback from participants so they can be open and ensure this reaches the Partnership.

Noted that by end of April everyone should get letters from Suzanne confirming the extension to their grant for 22/23.

**5. How much is the funding?**
This has already been covered in previous questions

**6. What is the process to receive funding beyond March 2023?**The process is what will be proposed in the paper to the EIJB in April/ May

**7. What will the parameters be of this funding?  (If the conversations we are having about how to approach things is with a view to help mould the parameters of the funding we should have been informed that at the beginning of the conversations and we need to know what money we are discussing.  It feels a bit like having a conversation about what we are going to buy to make the garden prettier without knowing how much money we must spend or knowing that that money is coming from the much needed maintain the roof fund we’ve put aside)**

Question not answered directly.

**8. Where is the £1m pot coming from and is it part of the EIJB £4m or stand alone?**

 It’s in addition to the £4m . There is £1m for community mobilisation through the EIJB and a further £1m for Systems pressures from the Scottish Government.

**9. How does the £1m link to EIJB funding after March 2023?**

£25 million is the total third sector spend. Included as part of this there is:

* £4 million grant programme (health inequalities)

**In addition** to this, there is:

* £1 million Transition Fund (Community Mobilisation Fund) which is subject to financial balance of the EIJB
* £1 million System Pressures funding from the Scottish Government

**10. How will BAME/community of interest city-wide organisations l be included in PACT as the focus appears to be on the 20-minute neighbourhoods?**

It’s not just a focus on 20-minute neighbourhoods. There is a real attempt to include all different communities. There will be a focus on collaboration.

**Would there be an expectation to develop partnerships with organisations in particular localities to be able to tap into the neighbourhoods?**There would be an expectation to develop partnerships

**11. How formal do the partnerships need to be to be recognised as an anchor network?**There has been a change in the way we refer to anchor networks now, dropping the anchor part and only talking about collaboration and partnerships as community networks. We have a glossary of terms to help with this which we will circulate.

**12. How will anchor networks be defined and agreed?**

See answer above.

**13. Could part of the budget be ring fenced for the community of interest organisations? (We are learning from the Community Mental Health Fund how important that would be, given the distribution of the fund is focused on localities even though most of the minority organisations are city-wide. Minority organisations seem to be missing out twice by representing a minority community and not fitting the locality criteria. We are facing the same risk in PACT which has even less defined priorities than the Community Mental Health Fund.)**

**How will city-wide services fit into a community-based approach?**We recognise that there are issues i.e city wide v local and would envisage a mix of both going forward.

**14. What will the funding priorities be for the Pact?**

Under the umbrella of ‘More Better days’ and the priorities within this.

Communities need to work together. This all about relationship building across sectors to address ‘More Good Days’

**-Who will approve these priorities?**
We want decision making pushed down to a different level.

**-Will decision making remain with the EIJB or will it be delegated to community networks and, if the latter, what process will be adopted and how can you guarantee it will be objective and based on quality and the ability to deliver an effective service.**

-Unsure about the exact level of delegation but want it to be done as much as possible. It will partly depend on the level of risk and uncertainty that IJB are comfortable with. The EIJB is in a period of certain change.

**15. What impact will ‘purdah’ and the elections to the Council have on the Pact over the coming months?**

Tas Linda works for the NHS she stated that she hasn’t really experienced Purdah from a Council perspective. But she is going to continue doing what she is doing. Tight time scale so want to continue as much as possible. In the past we could still talk to people as long as any political implications etc. that might relate to purdah were managed properly.

**16. What are the issues with the current grant process?**

There were no specific issues with the current grant process. The question here is about how we commission. There are many different mechanisms to shift money from one place to another (from SLAs, contracts, grants and community commissioning). There may be several models under the umbrella of community commissioning. This has never been about replacing the grants programme for the sake of it.

The ambition is for more sustainable longer-term contracts (5-8 years)

**17. Why are all the discussions focused on community commissioning at the apparent exclusion of other mechanisms for funding distribution?**

As described above, Community commissioning isn’t necessarily the mechanism. It’s being used as an umbrella term that may have many mechanisms in which to support it.

The evaluation of the grant programme demonstrates that it does deliver effective services based on local need.

Linda thanked everyone who submitted expression of interest applications for the Communicate to Collaborate monies.

“We received 50 applications which is astonishing. The next step is for me to have a read through them all and set up time with everyone who submitted and application and have a chat about them.”

**3.Questions and Answers**

Catriona Windle thanked Lina for her answers and opened the discussion to the floor for a wider Q&A

**Q : for clarity about the scope of who could submit a *Capacity to Collaborate* application and whether this was about new work or it could cover core costs such as keeping the building open etc.**

A : It was the correct that this was for new projects rather than core work. Linda offered to meet with those who hadn’t applied.

**Q : asked whether the *Capacity to Collaborate* money is part of the £4 million Grants money or the £1 million Community Mobilisation Fund?**

**A:** It’s not part of the £4 million Grants money nor £1 million Community Investment Fund but instead hoping that this will come from System Pressures money from the Scottish Government. Though this is not confirmed yet.

**General comment: that the fact the process is currently unknown is causing a lot of anxiety. However, it’s good that the collaboration has given us opportunity to do something different. Though being at capacity makes it difficult to create the space for new collaboration but if there are ways of sharing elements of this that would be welcomed.**

**Q: Can there be better criteria for funding against the system pressure monies ?**
A : Yes looking through it at more of a 3rd sector lens rather than the governments original statutory outlook. We need tackle those system pressures that aren’t just coming from an NHS/government perspective.

**Comments made by members on how it’s about how you keep buildings open, staff employed. Most people need to understand this in more detail and understand expectations around how it will work.**

**Q: Any insight into the report going to the IJB? Processes, timelines?**

A: The EIJB wants to reduce the complexity of the applications, have more conversations with each partner putting in a tender. As learned in the Thrive process this allowed the EIJB to redo/change aspects of the application to improve, have better dialogue between all parties involved and at the end of the day build better relationships.

**Q: When will the £4m be out of the door? That’s what affects everyone in terms of important core funding. It’s important that this is clarified as at the end of the day it’s the single most important part of any of these talks.**
-A: When we get it agreed upon by April/May- so people should be getting letters by September explaining how to apply.

Q: So by saying by September we should know about how the new community commissioning model should work for collaborating. However essentially there is no guarantee that will happen, and it also doesn’t answer the question of when the money will be out the door by.

**Q:** Made the point already that organisations don’t necessarily have the time and staff hours to deal with all of this uncertainty with applications- we wouldn’t get funding if we spent money on admin and governance- Therefore there isn’t a lot of time even if we got all this information in September. It’s not healthy for organisations waiting for feedback or people managing it for it to be so time consuming. If there’s an impact on staff in organisation there’s an impact on services too.Also pointed out the Sectors aren’t used to working together so the difference needed to be understood. Each sector has a very different set up, working life and approach.

**Q: Has there been sufficient risk assessment done in regard to what happens if things go wrong, and the money doesn’t get out the door in time etc.**
**Outlined that there is a worry is that this new structure has a big risk that it isn’t easy for us to identify where core aspects that we deliver sit in the new mechanism for distributing money. If it’s not clear how that all fits together there are big risks in failing to get core funding.**

 A: We’ve got a very broad risk register, and this need to be expanded. There’s nothing from evaluation to hear anything negative about it. So I would see no reason why anyone wouldn’t get funding. Genuinely trying to listen and it’s not about lack of trust. Cost of living will be factored in.

\*Note
I was asked to clarify that this question was focused on asking about a Risk Assessment and Impact Assessment not a Risk Register on its own. However if there is a Risk Register, can we see it? This was not something mentioned in the meeting

**Q : recognised that is seems to be worrying talking about funding new projects when organisations are worried about their core funding etc.** **It also puts us against each other – we don’t want anyone to lose their funding. This time we’re in a worse situation because COVID has changed the landscape and the emphasis is on small organisations. The larger organisations need support too.** **What does this mean for organisations that don’t have funding especially with the cost of living increasing so much.
When will decision on FUNDING be made?**

A: These can’t be answered right now. Decisions need to be made on the process in September. We want to reduce the levels of uncertainty by April/ May.

When we talk about the 25 mil this refers to the entire spending across the third sector.
Also want to point out that there is lots of additional funding sources coming in from government. Example of eating disorders money. So there are different sources of funding available for the third sector and it shows that this sector does play a vital role and this is recognised by the government.

**Comments that** **we have so little time. Good points about pressures and trying to keep track of all the processes being incredible time consuming and difficult for smaller organisations. If new projects are not going to be considered in these new funding streams, we need to focus energy elsewhere.**

**Catriona Windle thanked Linda for her time to respond to the wide variety of questions, members for submitting questions and asked Linda to come back again and give an update when more is known.**

1. **AOCB – Forum only**

After Linda left there was discussion amongst members on what they thought of the answers and discussion. The following are some of the key points brought up.

- Big concern it would seem as though there is no actual risk assessment

-The time frame that Linda is putting forward does not seem realistic even for a normal funding cycle
- There needs to be a caveat for a plan B- Need a contingency plan if the April deadlines aren’t met for IJB report
- Slightly concerning that Linda seemed very certain that there will not be another year rollover for the funding- however there is question if this is even her decision to make.

-Some senior managers in the IJB seem to be aware that there are some issues in terms of time scale etc.
-We will be able to prepare once we get access to a draft of the report to go to the IJB

S-AH- will be happy to forward a few concerns on the mental health fund onto Ian and Steff for any organisations involved

1. **Update from Magda on FENIKS role in the current Ukraine crisis**

She outlined that there was a great deal of support in sending goods etc. to Poland. However there have been some issues with getting goods and equipment over the border likely to do with Brexit.
-They have currently been getting help recruiting volunteers to help with packing/ accurately listing everything that is getting packed.
-So far it has been very busy and an overwhelming response
-Some overhead from other sources of funding to use for this project
-Unfortunately there is a lack of Ukrainian speaking volunteers/members available now. As such there have been some issues with language barriers and if anyone knows of anyone that speaks Ukrainian this would be very useful.
2. **Minutes from meeting held on 01/02/2022**

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.
3. **Date of next meeting**
April 5th, 2022. 9.30am- 11am on Zoom