

# **BRACKNELL FOREST FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY GROUPS**

## ***Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting, 7 pm., 28<sup>th</sup> June, '10., Bullbrook Community Centre***

**Present:** Ed Glasson (Chair), Pat Kennewell (BHCA), Margaret Camp & Isabel Mattick (EHWRCA), Lynn Jenkins (FPCA),

Goeff Freeman (HWCA), David Little (MH&TWCA), Robert Gristwood (NPCA) & Terry Pearce (U3A)

**Apologies:** Geoff Hallett (Bracknell Area Deaf & Hard of Hearing) & Ivy Riggs (Bullbrook CA)

**Absent:** Allan Scorer (Bullbrook CA), Caroline Elkins (JPCA) & Jenny Costello & Jean Tidd (NOCA)

**Welcome** EG welcomed EC members.

**Minutes of the EC Meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> August '09.** were approved. There were no Matters Arising.

**Correspondence** (See adjacent Summary)

EG drew members' attention to the Correspondence Summary to be circulated at the ensuing General Meeting.

### **Chairman's Report**

EG reported that, while he was willing, if elected at the next AGM, to continue to serve as chairman, he was no longer

able to do as much organizational work for the Fed. as hitherto. He asked EC members to consider how best to handle

the tasks of clerking meetings and writing draft minutes, booking venues and speakers and representing the Fed. in the

various partnerships and other groups in which it needs to participate. It was agreed that the EC should submit a plan

detailing which officers should take on the various jobs currently done by the chairman for consideration at the Fed's

third quarter meeting so that the responsibilities of officers were clear before the next AGM in December.

### **Treasurer's Report**

LJ reported that the Fed's balance at 15.6.'10. was £541.00. A Grassroots grant application for £250 to cover annual

operating expenses had, unfortunately, been rejected, - probably because BCF funds were

overstretched; also because BCF had given priority to "front line" organizations. However, the

Fed. had won a £250 prize in the draw run by BFVA for the first time this year to encourage groups to return their 2010 monitoring survey forms. This had given the Fed. a breathing space in which to

consider how to secure the funding it needed to survive beyond the next year or two. It was agreed that CA chairmen should be sounded out about the possibility of CA's paying an affiliation fee to the Fed.

and their response reported at the Fed's. third quarter meeting.

### **Any Other Business**

None

There being no further business the meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

# **BRACKNELL FOREST FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY GROUPS**

## ***Minutes of General Meeting, 7.30pm., 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2010., Bullbrook Community Centre***

**Present:** Ed Glasson (Chair), Pat Kennewell (BHCA), Firdosia Pal-Emery & Bibi Tegally (BICS), Lynda Lunn (BFS), Charles Chesterton & Dave Short (Bullbrook CA), Margaret Camp & Isabel Mattick (EHWRC), Lynn Jenkins (FPCA), Keith Simons (GtHNO), Goeff Freeman (HWCA), David & Margaret Little & Jackie Dudley (MHTWCA), Shelagh Pile & Chris Turrell (IC100U), Robert Gristwood (NPCA) & Terry & Val Pearce (U3A)

**Also:** Max Baker (BFC), John Wiggins & Greg Scott (H&WP Hospitals' Trust) & Keith Roberts GMB (H&WP Hospitals)

**Apologies:** Geoff Hallett (Bracknell Area Deaf & Hard of Hearing) & Ivy Riggs (Bullbrook CA)

**Absent:** Allan Scorer (Bullbrook CA), Caroline Elkins (JPCA) & Jenny Costello & Jean Tidd (NOCA)

**Welcome** EG welcomed all present, thanked Bullbrook CA for hosting the event and congratulated BCA members on

their Community Centre's bright new look following its comprehensive refurbishment. He was sorry that Ivy Riggs had

not been able to get to the meeting but was delighted that Ivy had been suitably feted at the Centre's official reopening on

6.6.'10. and elected President of BCA in recognition of her contribution to the life of the Bullbrook community. EG also

thanked Fed. Sec'y., Isabel Mattick, for organizing the refreshments & raffle for the meeting. He welcomed the speakers

who had agreed to speak at the meeting but apologised for the absence of Russ Bryant who had decided not to attend.

It was agreed, in view of the abandonment of the previous government's SE housing targets by the new government, that

Max Baker's contribution which would, consequently, be very brief, should be taken at the start of the meeting.

**Max Baker, (Head of Spatial Policy, BFC)**

MB said that there had not yet been an opportunity for discussion within BFC. It looked like development targets would

now be decided locally. But BFC would, as ever, have to plan to meet local needs and HMG would be able, via various

funding incentives and penalties, to influence what LA's do. Households were getting smaller and more numerous due to

many factors such as increased longevity and divorce. BFC could, following the abandonment of the former SE target of

12780 new dwellings in Bracknell Forest, opt for the target it had previously offered, namely, 10780. However, this

would mean a different pattern of development across the area. The new government has also decreed no more "garden

grabbing" but this may depend on how this is interpreted by each LA.

In questions & answers members reminded BFC that residents at the RAF College site and at Jennett's Park were still

waiting for promised facilities. MB was also asked to make clear what planning documents were still relevant. MB said

that the 5 year land supply would still be inadequate possibly forcing development between existing settlements. Finally, MB was reminded that "5 minutes' walking distance" is an inappropriate phrase applied to many elderly residents.

The meeting warmly thanked MB for his contribution to the meeting

Minutes of the **General Meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> April'10.** were approved. There were no Matters Arising.

**Correspondence** (See adjacent Summary)

EG drew members' attention to the Correspondence Summary which was duly noted.

#### **Chairman's Report**

EG reported that, while he was willing, if elected at the next AGM, to continue to serve as chairman, he was no longer

able to do as much organizational work for the Fed. as hitherto. EC members were to consider how best to handle the

tasks of clerking meetings & writing draft minutes, booking venues & speakers & representing the Fed. in the various

partnerships and other fora in which it needs to participate. The EC will submit a plan detailing which officers would

assume which roles in the operation of the Fed. at the Fed's third quarter meeting so that the responsibilities of officers

were clear before the next AGM in December.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

LJ reported that the Fed's balance at 15.6.'10. was £541.00. A Grassroots grant application for £250 to cover annual

operating expenses had, unfortunately, been rejected, - probably because BCF funds were overstretched; also because

BCF had given priority to "front line" organizations. However, the Fed. had won a £250 prize in the draw run by BFVA

for the first time this year to encourage groups to return their 2010 monitoring survey forms. This had given the Fed. a breathing space in which to consider how to secure the funding it needed to survive beyond the next year or two. It had been agreed by the EC that CA chairmen should be sounded out about the possibility of CA's paying an affiliation fee to the Fed. and their response reported at the Fed's. third quarter meeting.

#### **At this point the meeting broke for Refreshments & the Raffle**

#### **Heatherwood, Going, Going, Gone?**

**Keith Roberts**, (GMB Full-time Official at Heatherwood)

KR reported that 1000 of the Trust's 3500 staff were GMB members but some 14 TU's had members in the organization.

His job is to represent Trust staff and, so far as possible, to work with the Trust. As an employer the Trust can do pretty well anything legal to its staff; in everyone's interest we need to keep things on an even keel.

#### **Dr. John Wiggins**, (Medical Director, Heatherwood & Wexham Park Hospitals' Trust)

JW said he'd have preferred the discussion to be entitled, "Heatherwood, Changing, Changing, Changed!" , to more accurately reflect what is happening. He had been a Consultant for 19 years, an ex-director of the Trust and a patients' voice giving medical advice to the Board. JW felt that Heatherwood should be viewed in the overall NHS context and the incredible changes that had occurred over time in health care. The hospital had started in the '20's as a TB sanitarium. In those days, there were no drugs to cure TB; patients spent ~18 months in a sanitarium and either recovered or died. Now, with antibiotics, the recovery rate is 95%; then it was 50%. JW said that the Strategic Health Care Authority had, that day, been discussing regionally based high tech. Centres; that long hospitals stays were no longer necessary & this would save huge sums since they were very costly. Treatment could be offered at home or via day visits to health centres.

Consequently it was perfectly sensible to cut hospital beds. Heatherwood provided low cost short stay care and, perhaps because most patients are only there briefly, infection rates were low. However, the cost of maintaining the site was high and acute services have already been moved to Wexham Park. In discussion, TP expressed doubts about the merits of care in the community based on past experience. Any hopes of a hospital in Bracknell having been dashed, residents now saw Heatherwood being closed down by degrees as chunks of land were sold off and mental health & maternity beds closed down. So it's hardly surprising that they think it will close.

And the new Health Space looks like being a long time coming. JW acknowledged that Heatherwood is more popular than Wexham Park, but said it was "a little cog in the NHS machine".

IM felt that the Trust had chopped & changed direction with improvements focused on Wexham Park & every indication, until recently, that Heatherwood would go. JW said that the PCT's decision to build the Health Space had put plans for Heatherwood in jeopardy. RM told the meeting that, while progress with the Health Space had been frustratingly slow, residents did very much want facilities close to home. She promised an update on the status of the Health Space a.s.a.p.

PK reminded everyone that Max Baker had been talking about an extra 30,000 people in Bracknell and asked why so many people should have to travel so far, sometimes at great risk, for treatment. VP accused the Trust of patronising residents. She said that ordinary people were not afraid of change, but had found that each time they look around another service has gone. VP asked for a bit of openness about the Trusts' lost millions. And she wondered if the Health Space would be built before the PCT itself disappeared. She recalled that wards at Heatherwood had been closed before the consultation on their possible closure had been completed.

KR said that problems were occurring as far away as Gerrards Cross & High Wycombe, nurses have been told, having moved to the area, on reporting for duty for the first time that their jobs have been axed. Meanwhile, if you need urgent treatment at Heatherwood any time outside 8.00 am. & 4.30 pm., think again. At present some 800 staff jobs are under threat with dire consequences for the staff & patients. JW said he was aware of people's anxieties, but HMG decides on NHS funding and treatment policies and the Trust must save money. He understood people's scepticism but asked for understanding. Care standards must be maintained if there are further changes at Heatherwood. With reference to this, KR noted that there was now only a birthing unit at Heatherwood.

RG produced an unsigned circular from the Trust admitting serious IT problems which had caused patients serious problems with appointments. JW apologized for the inconvenience to patients & the fact that the circular was unsigned.

JD complained about the premature discharge and, all too often, re-admission to hospital of highly stressed colostomy patients, who had received no suitable support in the community, and asked if there will be penalties for re-admissions.

JW regretted that a sometimes rushed approach doesn't leave time to give patients the personal attention they should get.

BT disputed that the Trust simply responded to pressure from above and RM agreed that the PCT buys its services based on local requirements. KR said that the Trust's £20M deficit over two years could not all be laid at the door of the PCT.

Both JW & GS stressed that it was possible to get better health care at less expense. TP & EG acknowledged that this was possible, however we were faced with immediate and severe cuts in expenditure and it was inconceivable that these cuts would not undermine NHS provision. SP reminded all those present that when people moved to Bracknell New Town the necessary land was available and they were promised a hospital. She felt that it was out of order to require the old, young mums and those who simply don't drive to travel to Wexham Park. VP & other members found the way in which the NHS was organized thoroughly incomprehensible and bound to lead to tensions and confusion. JW acknowledged that there were tensions between the Trust and PCTs which needed to be resolved.

GF described how he had been put in a private ward when he would have preferred to be in a publicly owned facility & he recalled his wife's gruesome experience over one recent 24 hour period. He also felt that making people travel great distances was anathema in an age of global warming. KR reported that he had seen patients made to walk 24 hours after surgery to make space for new admissions.

Finally, TP advised members that his TU Branch, Unite, Bracknell Branch, was organizing a meeting at 7.30 pm. on 29.7.'10. at Priestwood Community Centre to establish a coalition of local TU. & community groups to oppose cuts in public expenditure which are already impacting the NHS.

*EG, on behalf of the Fed. then thanked all the guest speakers for their contributions to the meeting.*

*It was decided to postpone other agenda items and, there being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.30 pm.*