

Voluntary Sector Studies Network: Second Annual General Meeting

Held at London School of Economics, Wednesday 30 November 2005 at 12.30pm

Present: 38 members and other persons interested. Peter Halfpenny in the chair

1. Apologies: Received from Pete Alcock (Birmingham); Chris Cornforth (Open); Meta Zimmeck (Home Office).

2. Minutes: of meeting held on 27 October 2004 were formally approved

3. Matters arising: None

4. To receive Annual Report: The contents were noted.

5. Chair's Remarks: Peter Halfpenny reported on the achievements of the Steering Group since the previous Annual General Meeting. The VSSN is advancing steadily.

He noted that there are now over 120 formally enrolled members of the Network, up a third from this time last year. The second edition of the Members Directory was published in January this year. He thanked Helen Cameron for her work on extending the membership and preparing the directory and Gareth Morgan for the publication of the directory.

The email list now has over 235 subscribers, including a substantial number from outside the UK. Peter thanked to Jill Mordaunt for managing and moderating the list.

The established bi-annual day conferences have continued, with one at the Open University in November 2004 and another at Aston Business School in May this year. Thanks to the organisers, speakers and audience who made these very successful.

For the second time, VSSN joined NCVO to run the Researching the Voluntary Sector Conference, held at Warwick University in early September. VSSN SG members played a significant part in the academic programme. Thanks especially to Jeremy Kendall and Duncan Scott who assisted in refereeing the papers and putting together the programme. Thanks too to VSSN members who chaired paper sessions and especially to Margaret Harris, one of the founding members of the VSSN, who gave the opening keynote address. The 'new researchers' session at the conference is very important in encouraging new entrants to the field and thanks to Angela Ellis and Helen Cameron for organising that. VSSN is already working with NCVO on the next conference in 2006.

The VSSN website, launched in summer 2004, continues to expand and play an increasingly important part in the operation of the Network. Thanks especially to Nick Plant for the work he has put into this.

Gareth Morgan does a lot of work behind the scenes as Treasurer and he was thanked for that and for his expertise in all matters constitutional.

Extending our networking beyond the membership to other organisations and agencies active in research on the voluntary sector is essential to obtain synergies and thanks to Jeremy Kendall and Duncan Scott for maintaining our external relations.

In addition to these successes, the Steering Group has been considering how to maintain the advance of the network, assisted by a very helpful paper on strategy prepared by Jill Mordaunt. Discussions have included how to generate income, whether to create an administrative office, whether to change the format and number of the day conferences, how to extend the Network's membership, what new ventures to embark on, whether to start a journal, and similar matters. A key issue is how much can be done with just the voluntary efforts of eight Steering Group members. Ideas include involving more members in running the Network and/or raising more funds to employ someone to run it on our behalf. Your views will be very welcome.

6. Treasurer's Report: Gareth Morgan reported that there was £524.07 in hand at 31 July 2005. We have received donations of £322.50 from members. The meeting approved the accounts.

7. Election of Steering Committee: Eight nominations had been received for eight elected places:

- Angela Ellis Institute for Volunteering Research
- Peter Halfpenny University of Manchester
- Jeremy Kendall, London School of Economics
- Rob Macmillian, Sheffield Hallam
- Jill Mordaunt, Open University
- Gareth Morgan Sheffield Hallam University
- Nick Plant University of West of England
- Duncan Scott, University of Manchester

These nominations were approved unanimously. The Chair explained that we would like to expand the Steering Group to 10 using 2 co-options and he was given authority to explore how to achieve this.

8. AOB: None