



Together we are stronger

Bromley Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum

**TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**

Bromley's Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum was established in the early 1990's as an independent network of local voluntary groups working with children and young people as well as their families. Today the Forum is their primary point of access for information, training, joint planning, consultation and representation purposes. Everything we do helps our members better serve children, young people and their families. We have over 250 member groups, many of which are small and do not have the time or resources to keep up to date with changes in legislation, good practice or seek funding opportunities.

Our sole aim is to enable all our member groups to be better equipped to serve children, young people and families in the Borough.

Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Registration No. 1153545

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Valerie Michelet (Chair)
Gillian Eldridge (Vice Chair)
Helen Dyer
Edward McWhirter (Hon. Treasurer)
Tony Catherall (resigned 16/12/2016)
Glenis Ruston
Phil Cheverton
Keith Sykes
Paul Cosgrave

Registered office

JusB
51 College Road
Bromley
BR1 3PU

Independent examiner

T.J. Catherall

Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Number: 1153545

Tel: 07917 221475
Email: cfforum@btconnect.com
www.bromleycff.org.uk

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TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

Message from Chair

The Children and Families Forum continues to provide an essential umbrella for our local charities. It is hard to find the words to describe the energy, commitment and enthusiasm that pulses through our events. It is always wonderful to see and hear of the vital work going on in our member organisations and to meet the people who make it all happen.

This year some of the outstanding accomplishments include organising and offering 3 Makaton training courses, each fully booked and enthusiastically reviewed. We successfully prepared our first Consortium bid with our member organisations and submitted it to Sport England. This money meant our member organisations were able to offer additional activities to their young members. This was exciting new territory for local charities to work together and share funding to increase their vital work.

We had another incredibly successful Santa Run before Christmas with The Widows Sons Masonic Bikers Association South East Chapter donating hundreds of toys which were shared out among the neediest of our families with 18 different organisations taking part. It was a splendid day and the highlight must be stepping out of the Bromley and Downham Youth Club in the company of the Mayor, to witness a steady stream of remarkable bikes all ridden by a remarkable group of Bikers, each one dressed as Father Christmas; once again highlighting the Forum's facility for enabling all members of our community to support each other.

Great thanks and appreciation must go to dear Judy Kimmins, who after many years of service, has left the Forum to pursue another career. Anyone who knows the work of the Forum knows of Judy's contribution to our mission and passion for helping young people and their parents to thrive. We are all so grateful to her for her great work and wish her every success.

There are few charitable bodies run on so little money and so much good will. Working with the Trustees of the Forum is an honour and one I have relished. The Forum deserves to go from strength to strength and the need for the good work it accomplishes has never been greater.

Together we are Stronger

Valerie Michelet
Chair, Children and Families Forum

Activities

The Forum's activities for the year followed the objectives set in our operational Plan and included:

1 Information

Outcome: *Member groups have been informed of relevant local and national issues, plans and developments, so that they can better serve and appropriately inform the children, young people, and their parents and carers that they represent.*

We have provided electronic updates to member groups and partner organisations with information central to their work. We have, over the past few months, included a section in the updates where members can highlight any resources that they are able to offer to other members and also items that they need

2 Networking

Outcome: *Sharing information and good practice has been of benefit for those served by member groups.*

Four open events were held during the year for networking and information purposes. We held these at member's premises for ease of access and to keep expenditure to a minimum. At each of these meetings we include some time for members to share good news, best practice or to share how they have overcome a difficulty. We also give our members an opportunity to tell others about their work and provide fundraising tips. In addition to the regular items we covered the following: Fundraising by George Rushton, Crowd Funding, A Consortium approach to securing funding and Victim Support.

3 Consultation and Representation

Outcome: *The London Borough of Bromley was enabled to consult organisations working with children, young people and families. The Forum represented children's, young people and family services effectively, (especially with regard to service provision in these challenging economic times).*

- The Forum has and will continue to be a conduit by which the LBB can consult organisations working with children, young people and families. The information gathered from the annual Children and Young People's Stakeholder Conference will help those who organise health and social care services to understand the role that voluntary sector groups play in helping children and young people to develop emotional wellbeing.
- It is the Forum's ambition to increase its ability to proactively represent the needs of children, young people and families in Bromley, offering support to its member groups as appropriate.
- We continue to represent the interests of member organisations on the Bromley Children's Safeguarding Board and are working closely with their Business Manager to support voluntary sector groups across Bromley Borough. We have supported the Safeguarding Board during the lay member recruitment exercise and also on their communications group.

4 Encouraging Good Practice - Training and resources (Workforce Development)

Outcome: *Improved skills and knowledge for those working for member organisations whether paid staff or volunteers.*

We continue to seek ways to support member groups increasing the skills and knowledge to serve children and young people across the Borough. We held our first Makaton training session in May 2016. The initial course was delivered to 20 member groups and further sessions followed

The Forum strives to encourage member groups to share training. We have started to see member groups sharing training including: spaces being offered on managing behaviour that challenges, welfare benefits workshop and lone worker training. Other groups have offered venues in exchange for a place on a training course.

5 Administration, Finance/Fundraising, Reporting and Governance

Outcome: *Value for money, effective governance, financial security and efficient administration.*

The Forum is a 'no-frills' network providing support and information for the benefit of local children's, youth and families voluntary organisations. We seek to keep our expenditure to a minimum and over the past year have used member accommodation to host both trustee and open forum meetings. This is our second year of independence without any statutory funding and we are grateful for the financial support we have received. Our members continue to support us through donations .

The Forum no longer has funding to support a Development Officer. But the Trustees have volunteered to take on the essential work of maintaining the Forum albeit in a

reduced fashion with a quarterly news letter. We continue to hold 4 Open Forums each year.

Structure, Governance and Management

Bromley's Children and Families Voluntary Sector Forum was established in the early 1990's as an independent network of voluntary and community organisations concerned with children, young people and their families. The Forum acts as a primary point of access for a diverse range of organisations in the London Borough of Bromley for information, training, joint planning, consultation and representation purposes. There are approx. 250 groups in membership, many of which are small and do not have the time or expertise to keep up to date with changes in legislation, good practice or funding opportunities. A full list of membership can be found at www.bromleycffi.org.uk.

Trustees are appointed at the Annual Meeting on the basis of nominations received from member groups. Consideration is given to specialist skills or knowledge, competence and overall suitability. New Trustees receive information about their responsibilities and the aims of the charity. They are required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service check. Trustees meet every two months. The day to day running of the charity is undertaken by the trustees.

None of the Trustees has any beneficial interest in the charity. All of the Trustees are members of the charity and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

Risk Management

Risks are identified, assessed and controls established throughout the year.

The key controls used include:

- comprehensive strategic planning, budgeting and accounting.
- clear authorisation and approval levels.
- vetting procedures as required by law for the protection of children.

The Financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Small Entities (effective April 2008).

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and were signed on its behalf by:

Approved by the Trustees

Signed:

Valerie Michelet, Chair

Date:

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