



Thinking the Unthinkable – Overview

The event supported by GMVSS (Greater Manchester Voluntary Sector Support) held at the Mechanics Institute attracted a good turnout with a wide range of voluntary sector organisations represented to consider some difficult scenarios.

Morning Session - consisted of presentations delivered by keynote speakers.

Presentation: “Sinking the Unsinkable”

Delivered by: Mike Wild, Manchester Alliance for Community Care
Manchester Community Central.

Overview: Mike talked about the “icebergs” that we may be facing over the coming months with the key messages of think or swim, do not panic and consider all options available.

Sinking the Unsinkable presentation attached

Presentation: Option of Merger?

Delivered by: John Hartshorn, Young People’s Support Foundation

Overview: John gave a real example of a successful merger between two organisations – Signpost and City Centre Project. He identified the history around the projects and the reasons behind the merger. John informed participants that hard decisions needed to be made along the way but there is support available and if the opportunity arises to merge and create a stronger organisation then this should be explored.

Presentation: TUPE, Consultation and Redundancy

Delivered by: Mark Makin, ACAS

Overview: Mark presented an overview of the legal obligations and the implications of TUPE, Consultation and Redundancy processes when bidding for or losing contracts. Mark gave scenarios of cases known and offered participants the opportunity to ask questions throughout the presentation.

TUPE, Consultation and Redundancy presentation

Presentation: Is social enterprise an option?

Delivered by: Frank Titley, Blue Orchid

Overview: Frank discussed the possibilities for income generation, gave an overview of the different types of social enterprise and the differences between each structure.



Afternoon Session

Networking was seen as a crucial key element to the event, therefore time was included in the programme throughout the day to allow the opportunity to talk to similar groups. Comments made on the day and from feedback forms suggested that this was seen as one of the most valuable elements of the day.

The afternoon programme involved splitting into groups to discuss three questions around funding cuts, future opportunities and the role of infrastructure with emphasis on how we might take forward some of what we had learned in the morning, what the key messages participants would be taking away and what options were open to their organisations.

The discussion groups offered the opportunity for organisations to talk to each other and to share solutions to some practical problems raised.

The event ended with an overview of assessment tools / health checks highlighting the importance of using them to identify how strong organisations are and whether they are prepared to forthcoming changes. A number of health checks are available from a variety of sources with each offering vital questions to take into consideration when thinking about the unthinkable.

Attached are a few examples of organisational health checks for groups to consider, with thanks to GIO Project, GMCVO and Tameside 3rd Sector Coalition.

Finally, thanks must go to GMVSS, Keynote speakers and everyone involved in making the event a success.

Would you be interested in attending a similar event in a few months time?

Do you have ideas on specific topics / issues you would like to learn more about?

If so we would like to hear from you – please get in touch
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