



Redcar & Cleveland Carers Partnership Meeting
12.30pm on Monday, 14th March 2011
Coatham Memorial Hall, Redcar

Attendees

Carers

Chris Paton	Gordon Mogg (Co-chair)	Alan Burton
Linda Dickinson	S R Lewis	R Sabiston
Vera Bailey	Tony Atherley	Adam Steele
Claire Dunnett	Jim Ruddock	Mrs M Sheehy
Beryl Stark	Jill Yarker	H Williams
M Hardy	Ann Milne	Stuart Saunders
Les Simpson	Caroline Simpson	E Whitewood
Christine Axford	Ron Wood	Gwen Wood
Julie Page	Avril Baker	Maureen Julian

Others

Mary Goodman	Ian Hutchinson	Sarah Morris
Janet Evans	Sandra Smith	P Robson
K King	David Jordan	Amy Thompson
Ron Wood	David Morris	Jane Reast
Sally Bell	Jim Wingham	Kath Oyston (Communicator)
Joanna Caton	John Carroll	Pete Moody
Phillipa Woodhouse	Carole Dodd	Nikki Sidgwick
Sue Reeves	Irene Poynter	Sue Humphrey
Jo Swinburne	Angela Bartley	

Apologies

Carers

Tricia Abell	Dennis Smith	Marjorie Elliott
Anne Lowe		

Others

Chris Pope	Mary McDermott	Valerie Halton
Barbara Rankin	Pat Rutherford	Claire Smith
Cllr Norma Hensby		

1. Welcome/Apologies – Gordon Mogg

- Gordon welcomed everybody to what would probably be the last meeting of Redcar & Cleveland Carers Partnership – explanation to follow.
- Kath Oyston, Sign Language Communicator, was present should assistance be requested.
- Apologies would be included in the minutes. No apologies were received from the floor.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising – Gordon Mogg

- Minutes were made available and viewed for accuracy. A matter of accuracy regarding agenda item 3 was raised following distribution and they had subsequently been amended to read Amanda Skelton rather than Spencer. No issues were raised from the floor.
- The question of whether there is a carers champion in Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council has been carried over from the meeting held in Carers Week last year. Although a carers champion has not yet been successfully identified the good work that Councillor Norma Hensby carries out on behalf of carers in the borough was recognised.

3. Safeguarding – Nikki Sidgwick

Nikki has worked as the Strategic Lead for Safeguarding Adults in Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council since last September. The team work on a multi-agency basis alongside colleagues from Hartlepool, Stockton and Middlesbrough Borough Councils. Services for adults are based around the 'No Secrets' statutory guidance.

Abuse is defined as the violation of an individual's human or civil rights by any other person or persons and is recognised in a number of forms including violence, psychological, neglect and financial abuse. Adult safeguarding also includes institutional abuse. There are a number of reasons why abuse is not always reported – the uncertainty of the impact that a report may have on the cared for person is often enough to deter people from getting involved.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in Teesside is a campaign to promote the importance of reporting abuse. Leaflets providing information about abuse and how abuse can be reported have been produced, a radio campaign has been launched and posters describing four different scenarios are also available. Nikki relayed the details of one such scenario which demonstrates how a carer/daughter reporting abuse on behalf of her mother resulted in improvements in care.

The Adult Access Team are available on 01642 771500 for anybody who wants to express concern or report an allegation of abuse.

4. What is a Carers Assessment About? – Ian Hutchinson

Ian works as a Carers Service Communicator within Redcar & Cleveland Community Mental Health Teams.

To qualify for a Carers Assessment consideration needs to be given as to whether a person is a carer; this is determined from advice given in 'Carers and Their Rights' guidance.

Carers Assessments are always beneficial as the advice and information provided could prove useful at the time or as circumstances change. If you care for someone in secondary mental

health services an occupational therapist, social worker or psychiatric nurse should identify carers, and offer and conduct Carers Assessments. In some circumstances, the Carers Assessment Team can also step in, ie to prevent any friction between the carer, cared for person and the social worker.

Carers can also request a Carers Assessment by speaking to the social worker involved with the person for whom they care or by contacting the Access Team on 01642 771500. The person conducting the Carers Assessment will talk about the caring role, asking what the carer does, how they do it, how it affects them, how it affects their family, work and leisure time. Advice and information will then be given about the services available with every effort being made to tailoring it to meet the carer's needs – although funds for additional support or assistance from social services are limited.

5. GP Commissioning – *Ian Reeve*

Speaker did not attend.

6. Future Partnership Working – *Carole Dodd/Janet Evans*

Carole has been Acting Head of Adult Services in Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council since September 2010. During this time she has faced a number of significant challenges - not least today's – as, with great sadness, she announced that funding for Redcar & Cleveland Carers Partnership will come to an end later this month. Government funding through the Area Based Grant has ceased. Funding now provided has much less ring-fencing and, as priorities were decided, it was agreed that the collective partnerships should not be included.

This cut does not extend to funding for Carers Together - negotiations are taking place for settlement in the new financial year.

Janet sits on the Board of Directors at Carers Together, and has recently been working more closely with the organisation to help develop it. Part of this work has been overtaken with the announced cuts affecting much of the third sector. Carers Together provides a carers' service and is also a user-led organisation providing a voice for carers in the borough – one of the ways that this has been achieved is through the Carers Partnership. Funding has allowed regular meetings to be held and a great deal has been achieved; not least the valuable involvement with the local and national Carers Strategies. However, meetings do not make a Partnership and so we must now look at ways of moving forward positively.

Janet took the opportunity to say that she feels that a number of lessons need to be learnt with the way that funding of services was decided following the recent budget cuts.

7. Working Together for Change – *Janet Evans*

Carers Together has used Department of Health funding to make improvements to their carers database - this should assist them in being able to better identify carers' issues. Once these social policy issues are identified, focus groups can then be established to gather evidence before approaching the council. Gathering information in this way, and working more closely with groups of carers, will mean that Carers Together will no longer be dependent upon anecdotal evidence and that information obtained via focus groups can be explored in depth. Benefits will enable the organisation to be more proactive in their work with carers.

The Carers Partnership has been a good forum for consultancy and work needs to continue. There may still be a need for meeting to focus on particular issues. The Local Carers Strategy, for instance, is being taken forward and may be brought back at some point.

Carers Together recently raised concern about staffing cuts to a Welfare Rights service in the borough by writing to Amanda Skelton, local MPs and Councillors, as it was felt that people were no longer supported with appeals, etc. A response has been received from Simon Dales, who has offered assurances that a service is still being provided – caseloads are being looked at and a further worker is to be recruited. Carers Together will be happy to hear of any experiences relating to the level service that is being provided.

It is important to support one another and, despite the loss of goodwill, continue to move forward. The council are looking at engagement and funding may be provided for Partnerships in the future.

The following were generated from the floor

- Jane Reast, Redcar and Cleveland Real Opportunity Centre, spoke on behalf of the Disabled People's Partnership. Thanks were offered to the Carers Partnership and Older People's Partnership for all their work and collaboration. It was noted that the inter-dependency of partnerships mirrored the inter-dependency of individuals. Whilst it is a great disappointment to lose funding, efforts must be made to move forward together with dignity and partnership, albeit in a different way. Redcar & Cleveland Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) continues to be funded and is delivered through the Shaw Trust and will be a channel to take things forward. Jane informed the meeting that the Learning Disability Parliament would still be funded because individuals there do not otherwise have a voice.
- Sue Reeves, Carers Together, commended the proactive work of the different partnerships – each working independently and in different ways, and yet together. She then offered thanks to members, and to Gordon Mogg who has chaired the Carers Partnership since it was first established, donating a considerable amount of time to it whilst also attending various other meetings on carers behalf.
- Linda Dickinson, parent carer, recollected one of the achievements of the Carers Partnership directly involving her caring situation. The Carers Partnership was heavily involved with establishing the Redcar & Cleveland Carers Strategy. Feedback from focus groups resulted in parent carers being included in the priorities within the final draft of the strategy.
- Les Simpson, carer, stated that meetings like those held by the Carers Partnership have provided a very important link between carers and professionals.
- Jane Reast observed that representatives from the various partnerships have been involved with the Right to Control Programme Assurance Group. As 'none of us is smarter than all of us' it is surely fundamental that individuals continue to be represented in this way to assist the future direction of Adult Social Care. It is equally important that clear lines of accountability are necessary.
- Gordon Mogg remarked at how the council had made assurances that front line services would not be affected by cuts. In his opinion, the Carers Partnership, Older People's Partnership and Disabled People's Partnership are equivalent to front line services.
- Gordon expressed thanks for his involvement in the Carers Partnership stating that it has made him a better person and that he will miss it. He reassured those present that he will

continue to represent carers and would gladly continue to take any issues back to the various meetings he attends.

Finally, Janet Evans fed back on some Carers Assessment focus groups which had been held at Carers Together. A report will be produced with the findings.

8. Feedback from the Meeting with MPs – Janet Evans

Further to a letter regarding concerns over welfare reforms, Janet, along with representatives from third sector organisations, met local MPs earlier this month to discuss the disproportionate impartiality of proposed changes. Both Ian Swales and Tom Blenkinsopp were generally sympathetic with the views which were aired and made it known how important it was to hear individual experiences. Janet urged everybody to write to MPs or contact Carers Together with any issues.

The following were generated from the floor

- A scenario surrounding the withdrawal of incapacity benefit was relayed. It was reiterated that individuals should inform elected members of issues as they affect them.
- A comment was made regarding the Independent Living Fund being stopped.
- Sue Reeves noted the irony that as people are finding themselves in the most difficult of circumstances and facing the biggest reform to Welfare Benefits for many years, locally we are currently experiencing a reduced Welfare Rights service.
- Jim Wingham reminded the meeting of the numerous praises bestowed upon the borough over the years for its partnership working noting the irony in having funding withdrawn for the various Partnerships.

9. Any Other Business – Gordon Mogg

- Coastal View and Chillis are kindly holding an event on 17th April 2011 to raise money for Carers Together. Tickets cost £9.95 and include a meal and after dinner speech from local MP Ian Swales. Further information available from Carers Together.
- Irene Poynter notified the meeting that Carers Training involving six carers is now complete. Evaluation of the course has been obtained and will be used to develop further training. Details of future training will be published in Carers Together magazine.
- Sandra Smith gave details of some work tackling isolation and loneliness being carried out by Age UK encouraging everybody to complete a questionnaire to assist this valuable work.
- Gordon Mogg has been attending a computer course organised by Carers Together where participants have been working on a recipe book. It is hoped that the book, and possibly a calendar, once produced, will help to raise funds for the organisation. Progress and information will be published in the magazine.
- Information regarding Personal Health Budgets was made available.
- Jo Swinburne, Dementia Advisor Service, provided details of an upcoming music therapy event and pub lunch. Further details will be published in Carers Together magazine.
- Middlesbrough Lions Club has again kindly donated use of a holiday in Filey to Carers Together. A raffle will take place for the two prizes of one week's stay in the resort. Further information will be provided in the magazine.
- A Give Us A Break! health awareness event will take place at Loftus Centre of Opportunity

& Partnership, High Street, Loftus, TS13 4HW between 11.00am and 2.30pm on Tuesday, 22nd March 2011 providing healthy heart checks and information for carers.

- Carers Sew Together continues to meet every third Friday at Loftus Centre of Opportunity & Partnership. Carers are invited to get involved in any way they can to work together to produce a quilt. Further information can be obtained by contacting Sue Humphrey at Carers Together on 01642 488977.

Gordon thanked everybody for attending, offering his hope that some form of meeting will take place during Carers Week – 13th to 19th June 2011 – date to be confirmed.

