

Carers Group Meeting: 4th October 2011

PRESENT: Sally Burns (Chair), Julie Carter, Lisa Gallacher (Merton Mencap- Minutes), Andy Whittington (CEO Merton Mencap), Carole Mathurin, Julie Carter, Carolyn Nowell, Mrs Gilder, Pauline Stanley, Miriam Egan, Nellie Lynch. Lola Barrett (CE Grenfell Housing Association), Julie McCauley (Merton Brokerage Manager)

1. Apologies: Anita Cota, Jeanette Townley, Sue Hubbert, Anna Weddell.

2. Minutes of September meeting and matters arising: Minutes read and agreed.

New CEO of Carers Support Merton is called Melanie Monaghan.

All Saints steering group: the issue of personal care not being undertaken was noted. In August, September and October, there was a high usage rate and carers think this may be because they feel happier with the service. As All Saints is only an 18 month pilot project, Merton will need to go out to tender again and draw up a new spec. The steering group will need to decide whether to continue as it is or become part of the tender process.

One carer asked about the toenail cutting service offered by LD nurses and Sally said she will e-mail Vanessa Ashman to ask how information about this service is being circulated to professionals so they can pass it on to clients.

3. Lola Barrett (CE Grenfell Housing Association) and Julie McCauley (Merton Brokerage Manager)

Grenfell traditionally provide housing for young, single, homeless people but 5 years ago, Lola said Grenfell decided to provide their service to people with LD. Gables House in Tamworth Lane, Mitcham used to be a home for older people then young homeless. Grenfell applied for capital funding from the department of health and received £406,000 which helped to refurbish the property. It opened in August 2011 and there are 16 single rooms, all en suite and there is also a large kitchen and 2-3 smaller lounge areas. Accommodation is on 2 floors and 3 flats are disabled adapted. Lola said people are given the opportunity to develop their independence and stay for as long as necessary, although the aim is no longer than 5 years. Lola was keen to stress that The Gables is a new service and she wants it to be shaped in a way which meets people's needs and is fit for purpose. Age range is from 18-55. Every flat has an entry phone but staff are also alerted so they can check who is entering the property. The Gables has a garden and Lola would like to add a sensory garden, if people want this. Sally said she is happy to hear there are communal areas as this reduces the risk of isolation and loneliness.

Julie McCauley has worked for LBM for 10 years and she used to undertake out of borough reviews for the physical disabilities team. She said she became passionate about realizing people's potential that were in residential homes but had the capabilities to live independently. She said 5 people have already moved into Gables, with 4 being from Doliffe Close. Once Doliffe has been refurbished, residents of Gables may move back there or to Haslemere Avenue. At the moment, LBM are providing care staff for the Gables but Grenfell will take this over next year. Julie said she would like to continue partnership working with Grenfell. Sally asked what range of care needs can be dealt with. LBM staff (Doliffe) are now registered to provide support with personal care. When at full capacity, there will be 7 staff offering 24 hour support with one sleep in. If anyone requires assistance at night, Julie said LBM managers may agree to fund this. Staff can support with travel, but this will need to be on public transport. One carer said she has found Doliffe staff to be inflexible and she has this experience from another establishment. One carer asked what the policy is regarding visitors; Lola said people can have visitors to their home but they are responsible for them - if visitors show bad behaviour, tenant will be asked to get their visitors to behave or risk being evicted. What is the referral process? Via an allocated social worker or duty. A report is completed and this is presented to the panel: Steve Langley, Lola, Julie and a social worker and they decide whether the referral is appropriate. A flat costs £507.00 per week and Lola said she is happy for potential clients and their carers to visit. Lola said Sally and a small group of interested carers are welcome to visit. Andy asked if Grenfell will speak to clients and carers after one year to evaluate the effectiveness of the service and Lola said they will try to set up a system to make sure information is captured and fed up to directors. Julie said she has stipulated that any person who lives at The Gables remains open to an allocated social worker rather than to duty. Lola encouraged any interested parties to ask questions.

4. Andy Whittington – update from Merton Mencap

Andy gave an update regarding services for adults and carers at Merton Mencap (MM)

Andy said he and Jennie Chapman fought hard to keep services for carers in LBM and CCA service gets funding from CSM, as on a sub contractual basis. He said he is meeting the new CEO Melanie Monaghan and he hopes he will build a good relationship with her to continue the good work already established.

Bi-monthly carers surgery: This had a low take up so was discontinued and has been replaced with a coffee morning or a guest speaker once every 2 months.

Carers assessments: CCA still does these on referral from social services but social workers are also doing some as well.

Café funding was turned down by LBM and MM did not apply for funding for **Wimbledon Arts Group**. A decision was taken by trustees to close WAG as interest from people on personal budgets was low but now Andy said MM has had a U turn on this decision and may be able to keep the WAG going. MM will underwrite the costs of these projects until the end of the calendar year. Andy said he has asked LBM to ask people if they want to use MM services and so far there has not been much interest. Andy said he is seeking other sources of funding to run MM projects.

LBM funding to run **holidays** for people with LD was turned down. Andy said he has applied for external funding for this and is waiting to hear if his bid has been successful.

After hours service (Evolution Club). A bid was put to LBM to run an evening activities group after day centre to provide a longer break for carers. LBM said they felt the greatest need was to provide a preventative service for people not eligible for services. As this was not in the original bid, Andy said he spoke to trustees and they agreed to run the new service which was being requested. 10 people are currently attending and early indications are that it is a success. Andy said he is going to try and run an evening group on another evening and this may be for adults with autism who are not FACS eligible.

In the next funding application, Andy said he may apply for evening activities for people who are FACS eligible.

When trying to protect front line services from cuts, Andy said Merton ranked 7th overall in the country. By 2013, local authorities have been set a target to have everyone on a personal budget - last week, Andy said he wrote letters to people attending MM projects to find out if they wish to continue but using a personal budget.

MM strategic review: MM will work more in partnership with National Mencap and Andy thinks this will strengthen our charity. Andy thinks MM have access to the best information about numbers of people with LD in the local area. He said strategic review will be published before the MM AGM.

MM AGM will be on 30th November 2011, 1-3pm at Acacia Intergenerational Centre. Carers asked if time can be made earlier and Andy said he will try to see if he can arrange AGM for 12-2pm. There will be a guest speaker and the Saturday Club will give a presentation on hate crime. Catering will be provided by MM café. *

5.CIL Meeting – report back.

Carole attended this and said it was very interesting. Simon Williams and Rahat Ahmed Man attended and gave a presentation. People were divided into groups and said transport, breaks and support are the main areas of concern if cuts were to happen. Carole said she will tell the CIL they need to be more organized. Sally said she is not sure what role carers play on the CIL. Carole said she will talk to the CIL to see what their views are re: the inclusion of carers. She said there should be a central carers hub/ forum to represent all carers and she felt this should be part of CSM. Sally said she will e-mail CSM to see if they got funding for a campaigns manager and whether they may be able to help with this.

6.September Partnership Board – report back.

Linda Kirby did a general report on how budget cuts were being decided but no hard information.

A.O.B.

- Oct P.B. - Jatinda Buhi (NHS commissioning) Nov P.B.-a representative from the CIL will be attending.
- Carole mentioned SCIE were looking for carer reps. and paying £150 to those selected.
- Outreach Team: on Monday and Tuesday at High Path day centre, Sally said they are trialing a new service for 6 months -people watch DVDs/play on the Wi and have something to eat. This is proving very popular and there is limited transport to take people home. Sally suggested Andy O'Brien comes along to the carers partnership group and talks about this scheme and other Outreach activities.

NEXT CARERS GROUP MEETING IS AT 10.00 AM ON TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1ST 2011 AT HIGH PATH DAY CENTRE.

***NB this has since been changed to Wed November 30th, 11am – 1pm, at The Hub**