

16th July 2008

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Minutes of the Carers Community Forum
Wed 16th July 2008, 10.00am at SAVS Centre, 29-31 Alexandra Street in the Large Conference Room

Present: Colleen McCarthy (SAVS), Celia Clark (SAVS), Amber Welch (SAVS), Howard Marks (Southend Area Bus Users Group), Matt Holmes (Southend Library), Mary Green (Older People's Assembly), Des York (Southend Mind), Peter Stroudley (Carers Forum), Irene Grubb (Southend Area Bus Users Group), Alan Grubb (Southend Area Bus Users Group), Michelle Grubb (Southend Area Bus Users Group), Sharon Wheeler (Southend Borough Council), Ron Alexander (DIAL), Michelle Southcott (Salvation Army), Teresa Jago (Alzheimer's Society), Madeline Norman (CAPE Care)

Welcome and introduction

Celia Clark gave a welcome to the second Carers Forum. The Agenda for the meeting was outlined and Colleen McCarthy outlined the housekeeping for the meeting.

Minutes of the last meeting

Amendment to the last minutes Mary Green is from the Older People's Assembly.

Matters arising from the last minutes

At the last Carers Community Forum there was a suggestion that we liaise with Sherry Fuller to organise a workshop on Direct Payments. There was discussion on the merits of this. It was felt that while workshops were a good idea that we would not be able to reach all interested parties by this method.

There were concerns raised about some financial aspects of the scheme and the validity of the work carried out. To ascertain whether the money was being spent in the correct ways a financial audit would be carried out and receipts given, also social services would review annually. It was noted that ultimately service users must be responsible for themselves.

Ron Alexander advised the group that the 'substantial' and 'critical' need elements of the service will no longer be used.

It was decided that the workshops should not be run until literature clarification had been obtained, due to the need to cover all organisations and sectors.

There was a concern if there was a way of monitoring if the money given was being spent for the care it was intended for. Sharon Wheeler said that there were checks and measures in place. Colleen will follow up if with the council what checks are in place and feed this back to the forum. Sharon Wheeler informed the group conference called; "Taking Control: Putting People First" 28 July 2008 Essex County Hotel in Southend. For more details contact Sherry Fuller at Southend Borough Council.

Sharon and Peter Stroudley to discuss with Sherry the literature available.

Information on Strategic Partnerships & Compact

Local Area Agreement (LAA)

The Central and Local Governments LAA targets were discussed and it was agreed that the targets relating to Carers should be brought to the next meeting.

Peter Stroudley expressed concern that that the 16,000 (10% of the population of the town) carers in the town were not represented in the top 35 LAA indicators. Celia Clark said that the Carers Strategy Group would be the link for representing Carers interests at the Local Strategic Partnership. There are 198 LAA targets and it was decided that the top 35 should be reviewed by the Forum. Celia to follow up.

Strategic Partnerships

Celia outlined the work being done to date on the Strategic Partnerships. She gave an overview of the:

- Stronger Communities Executive
- Local Safeguarding Children Board
- The Homelessness Prevention Strategy and Faith groups.
- South Essex PCT Strategy
- Supporting People

Celia informed the group that there is a meeting being held on 22nd July 7:00-9:00pm at SAVS in Alexandra Street by CEMVO who are the new host organisation for Links which replaces the Patient and Public Involvement Group.

Southend are piloting a survey due to go out on Access to council services. The group were distributed the surveys and encouraged to respond.

Please contact Celia for more information about any of the above on 01702 356081

Compact

Celia outlined the progress that has been made on Compact to date. It is hoped there will be an annual meeting in November 2008.

Southend Community Action Forum

Celia outlined the SAVS Involvement Group. The SAVS Board are looking for representatives from the Forums to advise on issues and help frame SAVS policy.

Information Sharing

Members of the forum gave feedback on their individual areas and any areas of special interest to the groups.

Peter Stroudley – Carers Forum

Peter gave details on the Scrutiny Project set up to examine information carers are receiving from the authorities. He also gave details on Carers week. The group were informed that the PCT will be briefing the Carers Forum on the new Expert Carers Programme on 21st July. They will be rolling out the programme to carers from the autumn.

Ron Alexander – DIAL

Ron spoke about the role of DIAL and it's involvement with the Focus Panel for Transport, Radar and the Carers Strategy group.

Mary Green – Older People's Assembly

Mary spoke about the Carers Support meeting she attended and raised the concern that they are unwelcoming to first time carers. A three month programme to give first time carers special support is being implemented.

Michelle Southcott - Salvation Army

Michelle spoke about the drop – in service and support available to carers of 18 years and older.

Teresa Jago – Alzheimer's Society

Teresa spoke about the in-home service for people with dementia and their carers. They have just received funding for a 6 week course for newly diagnosed with dementia. There is a group called the memory group/social club that meets one afternoon a fortnight at a local venue. Speak to Teresa for more details.

Sharon Wheeler - Southend Borough Council

Sharon spoke about the Carers strategy and the lack of information when people are discharged from hospital. She also spoke about the accommodation survey for older people, which are being carried out. Workshops will be available on Monday 21st July between 2.30 – 4.30pm.

Alan Grubb - Southend Area Bus Users Group

Alan spoke about the closure of the Westcliff post office and the disadvantage this may pose to people in the local area. He also spoke about the companion element of the bus pass. The companion is now only allowed to travel in the borough of Southend, which may put the disabled person at a disadvantage. There was general discussion about the lack of accessible buses. Ron Alexander explained that it will be law as of 2017 to run accessible transport, however, till that date they did not have to run the buses in law.

Howard Marks – Bus Users Group

Was also concerned at the reduction of subsidies for carers on buses.

Madeline Norman CAPE

Outlined what the home help service does but also finds it useful to come to the forums to find out what groups are doing and to gain information for her service users.

Des York - Southend Mind

Spoke about their service in Southend that looks at improving access to mental health services to people from BME communities. They are funded by the PCT. He spoke about the changes to the new Mental Health Act that will affect the next of kin and carers.

Matt Holmes

Wants to find out what people want from the library service. He is interested in outreach work and developing this area. The library currently organise reminiscence resources for Alzheimer's organisations. They are available to come out to groups in the community to inform people what services are available from the libraries.

Accessing 'Useful information' on the Southend Community Action Website.

There is information available via the Southend Community Action website on the Independent Safeguarding Authority. Select the '**Local Forums**' link in the left hand column and select **Carers Community Forum** from the main body of text. Then a '**Useful Information**' option will appear on the right hand toolbar. Additional information links are available here.

Future of the Forum

There was discussion about the future of the forum. The group was asked to consider Terms of Reference and the aims of the forum. Colleen distributed sample terms of reference to the group that have been developed by the Disability Network Southend.

Please contact Colleen with any ideas 01702 356080.

Any other Business

There was no other business from the group. However, the group were told that if anyone had any other queries to contact Colleen at Southend Community Action at SAVS on 01702 356080 or email Colleen on: cmccarthy@savs-southend.co.uk or Celia Clark, Partnership Development Manager on 01702 356081 or email partnership@savs-southend.co.uk

Date of the next Cares Community Forum

All meetings to be held at SAVS, 29-31 Alexandra Street in the Large Conference Room 9.45am - 12.00 (with lunch to follow) unless otherwise stated. Registration required for forums for catering and planning purposes.

Wed 26th November 2008

Form more information on any of the Community Forums and or register to join call: **Colleen McCarthy at SAVS on 01702 356080** or email: cmccarthy@savs-southend.co.uk