

26th November 2008

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Minutes of the Carers Community Forum Wed 26th Nov 2008, 10.00am at SAVS Centre, 29-31 Alexandra Street in the Large Conference Room

Present: Colleen McCarthy (SAVS), Celia Clark (SAVS), Amber Smee (SAVS), Alison Semmence (SAVS), Mary Green (Older People's Assembly), Dawnette Fessey (Southend Carers Forum), Irene Grubb (Southend Area Bus Users Group), Alan Grubb (Southend Area Bus Users Group), Michelle Grubb (Southend Area Bus Users Group), Madeline Norman (CAPE Care), Jackie St John (Carers Breakthrough), Carol Edwards (Southend Mencap), Michelle Southcott (Salvation Army), Tom Deans (Chalkwell Park Methodist Church), Lee White (Supporting People), Molly Dennis (Southend Carers Forum), Clifford Passmore.

Welcome and introduction

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

Matters arising from the last minutes

At the previous Carers Community Forum there was a suggestion that we liaise with Sherry Fuller to organise a workshop on Direct Payments. Colleen McCarthy and Sherry Fuller have been in discussions and a half day information workshop is hopefully going to be held in February 2009. Further discussions may be held regarding another workshop for a question and answer session.

There was a concern raised with regard to the way in which money is monitored and whether the money given is being spent for the care it was intended. Further investigation by Colleen McCarthy has shown that everyone on Direct Payments has to agree to a contract before the service is set up. This includes agreement of the care plan showing what the money is to be used for. If the money is not used in the correct way the user may need to revert to a direct service. But this would not happen immediately in case a genuine mistake has been made. Monitoring is done by way of quarterly returns which show how the money has been spent. These returns can be completed by the user, their carer, a nominated agent or Essex PASS. If the returns show an anomaly the finance section will either speak directly to the user to find out what has happened or bring it up with the social worker who will then follow it up.

Presentation

There was a presentation given by Michael Mann of Southend Borough Council about the Carers Participation Questionnaire.

He went through the range of services that are available to carers such as breaks, support groups & practical help and explained that the questionnaire should help to identify who is a carer and if the services available are what the carers need. 16,000 carers have been identified in the Southend area and the survey will help to identify any others who may not be getting the required support. He then explained about the activities of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee and how they will help identify gaps in the health and social care services to better help the carers. The Questionnaire is to be distributed through a wide range of focus groups and the speaker asked for the Forums help with the distribution of the Questionnaire.

Question and Answer

- **Madeline Norman (CAPE)** – Is the survey for the 16,000 registered carers or for the missing carers?
 - ⇒ It is intended for the missing carers including young carers.
 - ⇒ There is a limit to how much distribution Southend Borough Council can do, which is why the Carers Forums help is needed.
 - ⇒ SAVS will send the survey to their groups.
- **Madeline Norman (CAPE)** – Is Southend Borough Council able to provide the groups with funding for the cost of the distribution of the survey?
 - ⇒ Funding is available if the Council are given labels and they do the mail out themselves or if the labelled envelopes are taken to the Council for franking.
- **Molly (Southend Carers Forum)** – Revision of the transport services is needed.
 - ⇒ This will be done by the Carers Strategy.
- **Dawnette Fessey (Southend Carers Forum)** – Apologies need to be made if people receive duplicate copies of the Carers Questionnaire.
 - ⇒ The duplicate copy can be passed on.
- **Clifford Passmore** – When is a person defined as a carer?
 - ⇒ When they are not paid for the caring.
 - ⇒ When the person being cared for is not a loved one.
- **Clifford Passmore** – In the Walthamstow area everyone over the age of 65 receives a telephone call and over the age of 75 receives a face to face appointment at their home to get help if it is needed filling out forms.
- **Clifford Passmore** – The person being cared for may not want the help of the care services. What happens then?
 - ⇒ The care services can be put in place but the carer can remain in the house as well. So if a respite break is needed it can still be gained without distress being caused.

Information on Strategic Partnerships & Compact

Information from Strategic Partnerships - Celia then gave summary details of ongoing and future work and meetings as follows:

- **Supporting People Core Strategy Group** - had a presentation on Direct Payments from Registered Charity No. 1063655/0 Company No. 03351855 A company limited by guarantee

Sherry Fuller, which looked at their links to other partners, heard updates on the teenage pregnancy strategy, procurement projects and discussed the contingency plan.

- **Hospital Equality & Diversity Plans** – continued consultations on their equality & Diversity plans. They also discussed working jointly with SEPT and the PCT.
- **Community Cohesion** – there was a presentation from SE Homes, and a workshop to inform strategy has been planned.
- **LINKs** – continued with their discussion around management and the setting up of sub groups to discuss certain issues i.e. older people.
- **Compact** – the Annual General Meeting was held on the 7th November 2008. Alison Semmance was Chair, Southend's Mayor welcomed those who attended and Paul Barasi was the speaker. Workshops were set up and the Champions were identified.
- **LSP Partnership Meeting** – there has been changes to the Safer & Stronger Board with a new virtual partnership team and a new geographical dimension.
- **LSP AGM** – at the AGM in September they elected a new Chair Nigel Holdcroft and Vice Chair Katherine Kirk. Presentations were heard from all 4 LAA Blocks. A new LAA was launched and signed up to by the partners. The new governance structure includes places for all 6 SAVS community forums to have a representative. The post will entail representing the collective views of this forum and not representing themselves or their group. Molly (Older Peoples Assembly) was elected with Irene (Bus Users Group) as a stand in.

Celia has also attended numerous partnership meetings across the Borough and if information is required on any of these please contact Celia on 01702 356081 or e-mail partnership@savs-southend.co.uk

Information Sharing

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

Celia Clark – SAVS

Celia advised the SAVS members of the forum that the involvement group was needed by them to then inform the SAVS Trustees.

Lee White – Supporting People

Lee advised the forum of the activities of the Supporting People group. They fund all supported housing in Southend and help residents obtain the skills needed for independent living.

Tom Deans – Chalkwell Park Methodist Church

Tom was concerned that the Church has a number of facilities but it still not helping the community as much as they could. He encouraged members of the forum to use and spread the word.

Madeline Norman - CAPE

Madeline explained about the domestic services offered by CAPE. The services will now be available to all people who are assessed to have a need and not exclusively the elderly. However, the assessment does carry a charge. The cost of the domestic services is £10.60 per hour and there is a minimum of an hours work. CAPE is a registered charity and needs trustees and a treasurer. CAPE has now acquired funding for gardening services as well as the domestic ones.

Dawnette Fessey – Southend Carers Forum

Southend Carers Forum held their Annual General Meeting on Monday 24th November 2008.

Jackie St John - Carers Breakthrough

Jackie explained that the Carers Break is a listening, signposting and liaising service for people with Mental Health difficulties who work closely with Rethink. The Carers Break is in need of new members.

Molly Dennis – Older Peoples Assembly

We need to identify as many Carers as possible through the Church and Support Groups.

Mary Green – Older Peoples Assembly

Mary explained about the lack of public transport for elderly people. The bus service needs to have times to accommodate older people and some services are not run at all.

Alan Grubb – Southend Bus Users Group

Alan explained how the bus service is not a public service but Southend Borough Council can subsidise certain routes. Rule 106 can be used by the Council to make bus routes better but the rule is not implemented very often and pressure therefore needs to be put on the Council to use 106.

Michelle Southcott – Salvation Army

Michelle explained about the activities of the Salvation Army. They provide group support as well as one to one support. Free Christmas meals are being provided at the Castle Pub and the Salvation Army.

Future of the Forum

There was discussion about the future of the forum and it was decided that strategic partners should be invited to the Forums. The group was asked to consider Terms of Reference and the aims of the forum. Colleen distributed basic terms of reference to the group.

The group came up with five basic terms of reference:

- Raise awareness to existing Carers in Southend.
- Promotion of existing services to Carers.
- Development of essential partnerships.
- Working with Strategic Partners to implement the National Carers Strategy.
- To work in line with Compact.

Please contact Colleen with any ideas 01702 356080.

Colleen also handed round copies of the Community Forums Annual Review. This review has revealed that:

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- There have not been any overwhelming requests for a new Forum so the six original community forums will remain.
- Each Community Forum will now be held three or four times a year.
- There will now be only 5 special events forums.
- More Ethnic Minority groups need to be attracted to the Forum.

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

There is information available via the Southend Community Action website. 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.

Date of the next Carers Community Forum

All meetings to be held at SAVS, 29-31 Alexandra Street in the Large Conference Room 10.15 - 12.15 (with lunch to follow) unless otherwise stated. Registration required for forums for catering and planning purposes.

Wed 20th May 2009 – 10.15-12.15 (lunch to follow)

Wed 16th Sept 2009 - 10.15-12.15 (lunch to follow)

For 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