

MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY TASK AND FINISH GROUP: DAY CARE OPPORTUNITIES

**HELD ON MONDAY 22nd MARCH 2010 at 10.00 am
At Hightown Community Sports and Arts Centre**

PRESENT: Councillors Simons (Chair), Hinkley and Pedersen

Mr Ron Greenham – Chair Senior People's Forum,
Ms Heena Yadav – Advocacy Alliance,
Mr John Wailes – Advocacy Alliance.

LBC SUPPORT OFFICERS / ADVISORS

Dee Colam– Interim Service Manager Provider Services
Maud O'Leary – Resource Manager
Alamin Mukith – Policy & Performance Officer – Project Lead
Bert Siong – Scrutiny Officer
Richard Lovelock – Democratic Services Officer
Susan Rowland – Democratic Services Officer

The Chair welcomed Ron Greenham from the Senior People's Forum, Heena Yadav and John Wailes from the Advocacy Alliance. She explained that the Task and Finish Group were looking at improving day care facilities for older people and adults with learning or physical disabilities. The Group were keen to hear from people affected and the different organisations around the town and welcomed feedback and suggestions before any decisions were taken.

ACTION

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)

No apologies for absence were received.

39. NOTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (REF: 2)

The notes from the previous meeting were read, agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

20. URGENT BUSINESS (REF: 4)

With the agreement of the Chair, the Group agreed as urgent business the finalisation of the questions for witnesses. Feedback had been received from the Chair, Roger Kirk and Graham Wrycroft and the wording had been amended.

The Chair requested that Alamin liaises with Mark Farmer to ensure all feedback had been noted. AM

Bert Siong advised the Group that it was within their remit to gather evidence from different perspectives and tailor the questions accordingly.

21. PROJECT PLAN UPDATE (REF: 5)

Bert Siong advised the Project Plan had been updated following the meeting on 8th March.

22. EVIDENCE GATHERING- COUNCILLOR M. HUSSAIN (REF: 7)

Councillor M. Hussain the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care had been invited to answer questions in regards to Day Care Opportunities by Members of the Task & Finish Group.

Question

(1) At What stage are the proposals relating to Day Care Opportunities in Luton?

Response

A new approach was being introduced in supporting people requiring social care through the "Putting People First" agenda. Anyone entitled to social care would in the future be given a choice of where they purchase this care from. The Council had to make its facilities attractive and inclusive in order that people were encouraged to use the Council's services.

(2) Part of the range of Day Care Opportunities to be provided will be based within community centres. What are the other options under consideration? Why?

For people with substantial and complex needs specialist centres such as Chaul End and Bramingham would still be required but other users could hold their day centre activities in community centres that were under utilised at the moment. There would always be certain people who had very substantial and complex needs and were unable to integrate - such as the people who attended the specialist dementia care day centre at Farley, these people required specialist staff from Adult Social Care to be in attendance to care for them.

The needs of the person in receipt of day care should be the number one priority.

Some members of the public not qualify for 'day care' as they were not categorised with critical or substantial needs, but would benefit from the social aspects of these groups and could be encouraged to attend community centres for a fee and could integrate with users at the centres.

Activities such as Luncheon Clubs could be made more inclusive to people with Area Committees providing a start up grant, people who were not eligible for day care could pay for the facility.

It was emphasised that a lot of people were unaware of the facilities available to them and this needed to be addressed.

(3) What does this mean for existing provision?

The Council would continue with the existing arrangements until better facilities can be provided.

Scrutinising Day Care Opportunities were about integration and improvement of facilities for people and not savings.

The Government were encouraging people to stay fit and to remain living in their own homes.

(4) Across the country, many local authorities who have been testing out personalised budgets, have discovered that people who use services who are given a personal budget often choose to spend it on the help they need to use community facilities. How can the Council support them in using their budgets this way?

Personalised Budgets would be a cultural change for all. The system was at an early stage of development. As the number of users increased we would be able to tell if our services were attractive to them.

(5) How will the requirements of people who use services with more substantial needs be met?

For people with substantial and complex needs some specialist centres would still be required, some users would be able to use Community Centre and some centres would require investment due to lack of facilities.

Supplementary Questions

Could the Council work with private organisations such as Betty Dodds Court? Some of its residents had asked whether their community room could be used for general social activities as it was under utilised at the moment

It could be a possibility but Betty Dodds Court and Jill Jenkins Court were private enterprises. The Council would need to work with Pilgrim Housing Association who owned Betty Dodds Court.

Councillor M. Hussain explained that Luton had contacted Camden Council, the most improved Council in the country for the provision of day care opportunities. Camden had changed the way it offered day care by making facilities available more locally which meant that clients spent less time travelling and more quality time socialising at community centres. The new system was now working well although there was public concern when the changes were first announced as people did not want to see facilities being closed.

Councillor M. Hussain met with Councillor Martin Davies at Camden Council and discussed the improvements that Camden had made. He suggested that the Group contacted Councillor Martin Davies as part of its evidence gathering on the provision of Day Care Opportunities.

23. EVIDENCE GATHERING – PAM GARRAWAY (REF: 8)

Pam Garraway, Head of Resources and Performance Review due to a prior engagement, sent her apologies for absence from the meeting.

24. EVIDENCE GATHERING – MAUD O’LEARY (REF: 9)

Maud O’Leary, Resource Manager had been invited to answer questions in regards to Day Care Opportunities by Members of the Task & Finish Group.

Question	Response
What are the other options under consideration? Why?	Carers at Bramingham were worried about changes to day care provision. A very positive carers meeting was held recently and some carers explored the possibility of selling some of the land and building a new building for people with more complex needs. Such a building would need sufficient hoisting equipment and storage space as people who attended had complex health care needs and required intensive staffing needs.

People with autism also need special consideration as they did not cope very well with change.

A local strategy for people with autism needed to be developed and consideration needed to be given to how to best to support this group.

However there were opportunities such as the CERC Projects (Marsh Farm) where some Bramingham customers might be successfully accommodated and discussions were under way.

There would be financial implications in that space in the CERC or other community resources would need to be rented and this could be a challenge if we were still maintaining a large building. Savings were likely to be around capital costs but revenue costs could increase and the finances may not be transferable.

There were also a growing number of people coming through the system suffering with early to mid dementia, if day care is held at community centres risk management would need to be considered, including consideration of deprivation of liberty. Technology could offer some solutions and the capital investment required may be offset against savings.

There would also be a need for consideration of dementia care requirements for the next few

years and how to support people in their own communities. Some one was about to be appointed who would develop our local dementia strategy.

The Farley Day Centre provided a day care for people with advanced dementia. The service included a Wednesday group for more active customers who could benefit from more community based activities.

Dee Colam stated that when younger people got dementia it tended to accelerate more rapidly. The Farley Centre that supports dementia was introduced as part of the POPPS Project.

John Wailes of the Advocacy Alliance informed the Group that Day Care Opportunities were available through the partnership board and faith training. He also informed the Group that Ian Hillsden Business Development and Vocational Training Manager, Luton Borough Council had done excellent work with employment training for people with learning and physical disabilities.

Heena Yadav of the Advocacy Alliance advised that places of worship often offered day groups for people. The problem was that people did not know about them.

Councillor Hinkley agreed that it was a problem that people did not know what was available to them.

Councillor M. Hussain pointed out that Camden Council used assisted technology and suggested that Luton learnt from them.

Councillor Pedersen suggested that the Group could learn from the BSF technology used in schools where children just need to scan their hands to be registered.

Ron Greenham pointed out that dementia sufferers' carers should not be forgotten. At Hightown there was drop in centre for dementia and support was provided for carers. He also informed the Group that there was a National Dementia Strategy available on the website.

25. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – SANDRA LEGATE (REF: 10)

Sandra Legate, Equalities Manager was not present at the meeting.

26. DATES/DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS (REF: 11)

Thursday 8th April 2.00 pm Committee Room 2
Thursday 22nd April AM meeting – Venue to be arranged AM/RM
Thursday 29th April – Possible visit to Enfield

The Bramingham Carers Forum Focus Group would be held on Monday 26th April 2010 at 7.00 pm. The Councillors of the Day Care Opportunities Task and Finish Group were welcome to attend. Bert Siong advised that Peter Headland, Consultation Manager, should be consulted on developing some questions to assist in obtaining the information required. AM/RM

The Chair suggested contacting Margaret Birtles, Capital Asset Management to enquire if there was any information available from them on possible changes to Bramingham. AM

Councillor Hussain enquired if NHS Luton had been asked to give evidence. The Chair responded that she had written to Angela McNab but to date had not received a reply and requested the Project Lead to follow this up. AM/RM