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EXETER LOCALITY CARERS MANAGEMENT GROUP

Minutes of meeting on Tuesday 25th April 2006

- 1. Present:** Sonia Barton, Carers UK Exeter & Teignbridge Branch, Joint Chair Exeter Carers Focus
A B, carer (learning disability), Co-Chair Exeter Carers Forum
Phil Dyson, Carers Services Development Officer, (Exeter & East Devon) (from item 3 onward)
Glenn Lobb, Joint Agency Team for children with special needs
James Rooney, Operations Manager, Exeter, Devon Partnership Trust (Mental Health)
Nicky Ruane, Parent Carer Forum Development Worker, Exeter & East Devon
Lynsey Self, Development Worker, Exeter Carers Focus
Sally Slade, Health & Social Care Manager, Older People & Adults
R W, carer (older adults)
Debbie Schamroth, Young Carers Development Worker, Exeter
Dawn Adams, Exeter Carers Focus (Notes)

- Apologies** John Bunting, Chief Executive Exeter CVS, Joint Chair Exeter Carers Focus
D D, carer, Co-Chair Exeter Carers Forum
Trevor Eardley, Operations Manager, Exeter Devon Partnership Trust (Learning Disability)
Mark Jennings, Team Manager, Devon Partnership Trust (Learning Disability)

The meeting was informed that Liz Neill had resigned as Chair owing to pressure of commitments. Members expressed appreciation of all Liz's work on behalf of carers. Pending re-organisation of the PCT, John Bunting would be asked to chair future meetings. This meeting was chaired by Phil Dyson in John's absence (from item 3).

Trevor Eardley has advised that he is now Acting Locality Partnership Manager and so Mark Jennings, Team Manager, will represent Exeter services and attend future Carers Forum and Management meetings.

2. Minutes & matters arising

2.1 Minutes of the meeting of 7th February 2006 were accepted.

2.2 Matters arising. *Re item 2.1*, RW had not yet received minutes of the last two meetings of the County Carers Steering Group in hard copy form.

Action: Phil

Re item 3, Lynsey had re-circulated the *annotated outcomes document*. James had written a note on those points of relevance to his team. However, most of the document has now been incorporated into the proposed Devon-wide Carers Link contracts, and following discussion it was decided not to progress this item further at this stage. However, carer members would like to receive information on where decisions are made which carers might be able to influence (e.g. LIGs). James and Glenn have passed on this information. Details are still needed from Adult services and learning disability services. Glenn noted that there was individual feedback through the care management structure as well as through formal meetings.

Action: Sally, Mark

Re Item 4, Forum Co-chairs have begun a programme of *visits to carer groups*, both specific and generic.

Re item 5 *linkage between carers assessments and referrals to Carers Link*, Sue White (Phil's colleague) is working on this topic. It was likely that there would be a core assessment plus specific 'bolt-ons'

On the '*Real Lives*' *carer awareness training for staff*, Sally is still in contact Debbie Avery to establish how courses have been funded in East Devon. It was noted that many up-front development costs had already been met.

Action: Sally

2.3 Re Item 6, the agreed *Carers Grant* communication largely took place at the last Forum (Glenn's report is scheduled for July 4th). AB felt that a good overview had been given and carers understood that with no extra funds, new work could only take place at the expense of existing projects. However, there was still the issue of spending this money on management posts rather than on direct services to carers. Managers emphasised that Carers Grant is only a small proportion of the spend and would like to see a broader context given to reports about spending, e.g. when client/carers numbers had increased significantly. Adult Services across the board face significant reorganisation and loss of management posts and there is great pressure following the settlement the County Council has received. Lynsey highlighted the challenge for

the Management Group – not to focus on statistics and figures but to work creatively to achieve better services for carers. It was noted that this is the only forum in which James meets Sally. RW recalled the presentations formerly made to carers by the Exeter District Manager, in which all the spending was set into the context of activities. This was very transparent. Since this is a Devon-wide issue, it was suggested the issue of transparency of funding should be raised at the County Carers Steering Group. **Action: AB**

Sally added an apology for presenting incorrect figures at the Forum. There is in fact no spare Carers Grant money for Exeter and a correction has been issued in the Exeter Carers Focus Newsletter.

2.4 James encouraged the Group to move on to considerations such as: What is each service delivering? Is it delivering best value? Where are the gaps in service? Can we influence addressing the gaps? What influence do carers have in decisions generally?

There is frustration that the Group has potential but is not making enough impact. Daily contact with carers and service users shows that there is a lot happening that is never discussed - how is this to be captured? Lynsey added that many examples of good practice do not cost a lot. Managers agreed that information is being lost and that there are issues of identification of carers' needs within divisions which could usefully receive a common 'cross cutting' response.

On *Group Membership*, item 7, new parent-carer and mental health carer representatives have not been identified. The Mental Health Carers Support Worker (Mel Chamberlain) will continue to receive minutes.

3. Feedback from Exeter Locality Carers Forum 29th March 2006

3.1: *Minutes of the Forum* will appear in the May 2006 Exeter Carers Focus Newsletter which is also published on the Exeter CVS website.

3.2 As agreed at the last meeting, a *priorities document* had been drawn up and circulated to carers attending the last Forum. 13 carers gave ratings of their top three priorities for the Management Group. Analysis showed that overwhelming priority was given to identifying carers and to respite for carers. (Figures attached to minutes) The challenge now is to move this forward. Training in carer awareness is one aspect of identifying carers and carers often need help in acknowledging their role. There is potential in the £10,000 which will be available to the Group in 2006-7 (see 5 below).

After discussion, it was decided to allocate 5 minutes to each service on the next Management Group Agenda for managers to report what their service has been doing to identify carers and where are the gaps. (NB Sally will have 10 minutes to cover both her services). Are there services which could be broadened/good practice which can be shared and developed? It was agreed that if managers could not attend they would send a report and preferably a substitute. **Action: Glenn, James, Mark, Sally, Phil**

4. 'Flexible Breaks Fund'

4.1 An additional £60,000 of Carers Grant money has become available for Devon. The County Steering Group has recommended that this be used for individual carer breaks. £10,000 will be available to each locality, under the oversight of the Management Group, to provide one off grants to carers. This will be similar to the Individual Respite Grant scheme in Exeter in 2003 and 2004. Guidance is being developed: key themes include simplicity of application and flexibility. Carers will need to be on Carers Link.

It was decided that the Management Group is not an appropriate group to consider individual applications and that statutory service members should not be involved directly in the process.

4.2 It was agreed that to consider applications, there should be a quorum of three non-statutory representatives from the Management Group making generic decisions (i.e. not acting as representatives of a particular group of carers). They would seek information as necessary from statutory services eg if there is a request which the decision-making group feel would usually be met by statutory services but the group will not have access to client records.

The Management Group is to receive at each meeting a report including a synopsis of decisions, by client area. It was recommended that the group should operate quarterly financial targets and that a transparent protocol for decisions should be drawn up. The group were advised that guidance is being produced at a county level and it will be necessary to await this.

5. Locality £10,000 allocated by Management Group – feedback on spend:

5.1 *Contract arrangements* had been amended and Exeter CVS now holds the balance of the £10,000 allocated by the Group.

- £3,000 allocated for Carers Activity Breaks is being spent, as agreed, on carer expenses, to enable carers to attend meetings and training and on the development of a training programme. Lynsey reported that a very successful session on Anger Management had already taken place, in partnership with the RD&E Learning Development Service. Twenty-one carers had attended and it had been seen

as of great value. Forthcoming sessions would be on Stress, IT, Problem-solving and Depression. Only the session on depression would incur a tutor fee (from the Partnership Trust).

- £1,000 allocated for Forum Chair expenses had been drawn on to pay the co-chairs (£375 each);
- £1,000 for hard to reach carers had been drawn on for transcription services for a blind carer.
- £1,700 for Young Carers had been used to employ a worker who organised activities for all 200 young carers, varying according to age. These included residentials, pool & pizza, films and crafts. This success encouraged donations in kind from Exeter Picture House (free film morning) and Riley's snooker club. It had released Debbie to do more development work. The group noted how much a small sum achieved.
- £3,300 contingency is still available to be rolled over to 2006-7.

5.2 Another £10,000 will be available in 2006-7 to assist the Management Group with their objectives in the locality. Given the value of the work done for Young Carers, and that this is clearly respite, it was decided to allocate £1,700 from the 2006-7 funds. This could not be deferred until the next meeting if activities were to be organised for the Summer Holiday. Payment will be made from the 2005-6 contingency, pending arrangements for the transfer of the £10,000. Debbie will invoice Exeter CVS. **Action: Debbie**

5.3 It was noted that Exeter Carers Focus has again received nothing for 'Carers Activity Breaks' (the traditional label for funding of carers expenses and training). Their main contract is with Sally's team and it was questioned whether it is appropriate that this team bears all the costs. Further discussion was deferred until the next meeting in light of discussion on carers' priorities. Sonia was concerned that discussion on the £10,000 should have started much earlier in the year.

6. Review of Carers Links contract This item was deferred to the next meeting

7. Carers in Devon Support Team Update

7.1 *Carers Information Packs* are now ready and complimentary copies have been distributed to managers and others. It is available to carers only when they join Carers Link. Existing members of Carers Link will receive local information sheets and information on back care.

7.2 Parents/carers of children aged under 18 are now also eligible for *free benefits checks* if they join Carers Link through an arrangement with Devon Welfare Rights Unit. DWRU are to insert the new 'Are you a Carer?' leaflet in application packs. It will also go out through Care Direct and in Blue Badge packs

7.3 As part of a larger application by Devon County Council for Defra funds, there will be a two-year post based at Teignbridge CVS to work with *isolated rural carers* across Devon.

7.4 The *Take a Break* specification has been agreed and implementation is now being considered. The principles are unchanged: 3 hours a week maximum, a flat charge of £2.50 an hour, open access, provision of personal care if necessary. It will be a voucher-based scheme co-ordinated via a brokering organisation and restricted to carers of older adults/Adults with physical/sensory disabilities (However, learning disability services are interested in buying into this service.) It is hoped that this will be implemented from September. Leagues of Friends sitting services which use volunteers will not be expected to introduce charges.

8. Any Other Business

8.1 AB advised that the item on commissioning of private & voluntary sector to provide services could most appropriately be discussed with Exeter CVS and other voluntary organisations in the first instance.

8.2 On *carer membership*, Nicky advised that she will continue to work with the Chair of the Exeter Parent-carer Forum to help identify a parent carer to join the Management Group. Relatives Forum continues to seek representation from a carer of someone with mental health needs.

9. Dates of future meetings.

9.1 Exeter Locality Management Group.

All meetings are at Exeter CVS, Wat Tyler House, King William St, EXETER, 10 a.m. -12 pm.

Tuesday 18th July, Tuesday 10th October

Management Group meetings take place 2-3 weeks after meetings of Exeter Carers Forum.

9.2 **Meetings of Exeter Carers Forum** will take place at the Isca Bowling & Bridge Centre, Summer Lane, Exeter from 11 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. on the following dates:

Tuesday 4th July, Wednesday 27th September