

West Sussex County Council and Partner Organisations

Parent Carers Planning Group

Notes of the meeting held on 20th January 2010 At 10.30am at Brinsbury College

Present:

Jon Philpot	Principal Manager Special Needs & Disability (Chair)
Ric Turney	Principal Adviser Special Needs & Disability
Heather McIntosh	Parent Partnership Officer
Gemma North	Admin Assistant, Parent Partnership Service (Minutes)
Lynda Bell	Acting Service Manager, Child Disability Teams & Sitting Service
Dr Juliet Starbuck	Parenting Commissioner
Judy Howard	Project Manager, Learning
Ranti Fallowfield	Parent/West Sussex Parents Forum
Lindsey Butterfield	Parent/West Sussex Parents Forum
Nigel Scott-Dickerson	Manager, Springboard
Debbie Buckwell	Service Manager, Aiming High for Disabled Children
Steve Large	Senior Carers Support Worker
Sue Berry	Connexions, Crawley & Mid Sussex
Martine Tomsett	Parent
Nick Foss	Parent
Janice Knapp	Parent

Apologies:

Councillor Robert Dunn	Deputy Cabinet Member
Dame Philippa Russell	Chair, Standing Commission on Carers
Kelly Willard	Parent/West Sussex Parents Forum
Kim Paul	Parent/West Sussex Parents Forum
Aaron Gain	NHS West Sussex
Anthony Hopkins	NHS West Sussex
Catherine Bigg	Head of Inclusion Support, Adults and Children
Bill Hargood	VSLDO
Liz Squire	Parent
Carys Wreyford	Lead Early Years Advisory Teacher
Jenni Herrett	Kangaroos

1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

Jon Philpot explained that he would be chairing the meeting and welcomed everyone present. The group then introduced themselves.

2. Matters arising from Minutes of 21st October 2009

Sign Language

Lindsey Butterfield mentioned the parent with a child who signs and attends the Elizabeth Foundation in Hampshire, who was mentioned in the last meeting as having difficulty learning to sign so she can communicate with her child. Lindsey reported that this matter had been resolved and that the parent was extremely pleased with the help she got.

FSR

Jon Philpot gave a brief update about the work being undertaken as part of the SEN/OSL project. He reported that they are taking into account the LAMB Inquiry and that the DCSF are looking for more projects at present. He said there would be a meeting soon to discuss whether West Sussex should make an application to be one of those projects.

Jon introduced Judy Howard who will be working on a project with parents that will establish issues parents have whilst dealing with the Learning department. This will then be fed into the Fundamental Service Review.

'Where do I go from here?' Update

Jon Philpot reported that the 'Where do I go from here?' is finally at the distribution stage. Gemma North explained that she had been liaising with Roger Snell and that she had posted to all schools and children and family centres before Christmas and that the rest of the distribution should be underway now and is being led by Jessica Ackerman.

Staffing Changes

Jon Philpot introduced Ric Turney, who is filling the interim post of Principal Adviser SEN from 14th January 2010. Ric will lead a range of SEN services including the SEN team, the Parent Partnership Service, the Sensory Support Team and the Lead Adviser SEN. The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) will also report to Ric having transferred from Children's Operations to Learning. Ric will be a member of the Learning Senior Management Team working directly to David Sword.

Jon explained that he would continue to have responsibility for Disability Services including the Child Disability Teams, Disability Homes, Sitting Services and the Aiming High for Disabled Children team. He explained that these services will transfer to Children's Operations and Jon will be a member of the Children and Young People Management Team working directly to Stuart Gallimore. In addition, Jon explained that he would be leading a full review of disability services across all ages as part of the FSR.

Jon explained that Ric and himself are both based in Sussex House, Chichester and will be working closely together to ensure the links between SEN and Disability Services are maintained.

Incontinence

Debbie Buckwell mentioned there had been a scoping meeting with regards to issues relating to incontinence. From that meeting a way forward is being arranged.

3. Feedback from Parents Forum

Lindsey Butterfield gave feedback on the Parents Forum on behalf of Kelly Willard and Kim Paul.

Lindsey reported that the School Transport Charter draft is now complete and is being circulated to parents for comments. She said that other key points from their report were for training to be compulsory for escorts and discrimination against SEN children with regards to exams/after school clubs etc. The former is to be taken up with the Transport Coordination Group and the latter will need to be addressed to councillors.

Lindsey gave out copies of the Parents Forum's new look newsletter. She said that it will be produced every other month and will hold up to date information about what the Parents Forum is involved in and a section of up-and-coming event dates.

Lindsey mentioned that since the last PCPG in October 2009, the Parents Forum have had a successful Disability Living Allowance (DLA) meeting in which parents were asked to 'test run' a new DLA form. The DLA expressed an interest in holding workshops for parents to help them fill out their forms, with the possibility for North and South 'events'.

Action: Lindsey to give dates to Steve Large for inclusion in the carers' newsletter

Lindsey reported that the Parents Forum are heavily involved with the Aiming High for Disabled Children projects and that there are now at least 2 parents in each group.

The Parents Forum has also been involved in budgets for the Primary Care Trust.

Lindsey reported that they had been recently working on a strengthened committee. They hold monthly meetings and recently had a team day to raise key issues and ideas. The Parents Forum now has Facebook and Twitter pages, and Lindsey reported that in the first few days they already have over 70 members.

4. 'Think Family' – Parenting Strategy

Dr Juliet Starbuck introduced the Parenting Strategy. She explained that it is an appendix to the Children and Young People Plan by the Children's Trust and said that it should be released in its final form in April.

Juliet explained that the Parenting Strategy arose from 'Every Parent Matters', which goes alongside the DCSF's 'Every Child Matters'. She explained that the strategy was to promote the idea within social services and other organisations into thinking 'family' rather than the child in isolation, as the families are affected too by a child's needs.

West Sussex is writing the strategy and is trying to bring a sense of coordination and cohesion to stop parents and professionals saying, "there's nothing". The key theme emerging from the consultations is the need to increase the level and diversity of support across all regions in the county. Juliet reported that she has been appointed the parenting commissioner and that the strategy has been written, but is in the process of being modified to make it parent-friendly.

Juliet explained that there is a 'Strategic Priority Board', which consists of 5 priorities, these are:

Better Joined Up Planning

This aims to integrate commissioning for parenting support services. Key outcomes should include; joint agreement and accountability between Children's and Adult's services, developing parenting support services tailored to local area's needs and county-wide involvement of parents and professionals in the consultation phase as well as monitoring what is implemented.

'Think Family' Workforce

This aims to promote the idea of helping and supporting the entire family and not just getting the support the child needs. Development of staff, volunteers and parents so that all involved can confidently offer good support to families through training courses. Juliet explained that these courses are aiming to be set up in Children and Family Centres as well as schools so that as many parents and professionals as possible have access to them.

Strong Universal Parenting Support Services

This aims to give parents easy access to information, advice and guidance in an easy to understand way so parents find the processes of getting their child support less daunting. To help implement this, Juliet explained that they would be developing a Think Family Information Service Strategy.

Earlier Intervention with Families at the Right Time

This aims to make sure parents are getting the right level of support at key stages through their child's education, including school transition support etc. Increasing the level of support across the county for young or first time parents and evaluating how much support is getting to the hard to reach groups within the county. This includes the development of a new scheme called 'Parenting Early Intervention Programme'.

Targeted Family Support for the Most Vulnerable Families

The aims of this are to join up adult and children's services to work together to identify the needs of the most vulnerable of the families and plan strategies to meet those needs. This means creating pathways to parent support for vulnerable adults who are parents. This should lead to the establishment of a Family Intervention Project (FIP), which should be monitored and evaluated to ensure its effectiveness.

Juliet explained that the distribution of the strategy was still to be addressed, as it is an appendix to the Children and Young Peoples Plan but offered to come back at the end of the year to see if parents thought that it had been put in place.

Action: Juliet Starbuck to attend meeting later in the year for parents' feedback

5. Disability Review

Jon Philpot explained that unfortunately Dame Philippa Russell was summoned at the last minute to a meeting with the Prime Minister and that she could no longer attend. He explained that she will be attending the meeting on 21st April instead and circulated a document provided by Philippa Russell.

The document explains that NHS West Sussex (formerly known as the PCT or Primary Care Trust) has begun a review of the services it commissions for children with complex needs in the county. It is being carried out by a team from the National Children's Bureau and is being led by Philippa herself. It explains that unfortunately the snow has disrupted the review's timetable but it has been extended through until late spring. Philippa explains in her short report that they are currently sending out parent questionnaires this week and will be holding the delayed workshops in a few weeks time.

6. Aiming High for Disabled Children update

Debbie Buckwell gave an update on the AHDC and reported that the results of N154, a Parental Satisfaction Survey to gain views on parent's experiences over the last 12 months, had recently been released. West Sussex had been rated at 61, the same as the national average.

Debbie explained that the first round of commissioning was complete and that contracts had been provided (a list of these is attached).

Debbie said that they were in the process of getting some parents trained as assessors to give PAT marks to services. It has been reported that this has worked successfully in other local authorities. Debbie also explained how they aim to do something similar for children (CAT mark), so they are also trained assessors.

Debbie explained that the second round of commissioning was aimed at universal services, e.g. Children and Family Centres, Youth Clubs, Scouts/Girl Guide groups, cinema's etc.

Debbie also mentioned a bid for additional funding from the DCSF which includes getting more children and young people with disabilities involved in AHDC.

There is also another Family Fun Day planned on 28th February at Worthing Leisure Centre and Debbie explained that they are currently in the process of planning ones in the Chichester and Shoreham areas.

7. Any other business

Jon Philpot mentioned that parents had expressed concerns over the date of the meeting in July, that it would fall on the last day of term, and that it would be more convenient if it could be held the week before on the 14th.

Action: Gemma North to rearrange date if possible

Outcome: Date has been rescheduled for 14th July 2010, at Brinsbury College, 10.30am - 12.30pm, a buffet lunch is arranged from 12.30pm to 1pm.

8. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 21st April 2010, 10.30am – 12.30pm, with a buffet lunch provided from 12.30pm – 1pm. Meeting to be held in the Conservatory Room, Brinsbury College.

9. Items for Next Meeting

- Dame Philippa Russell
- CAHMS
- LAMB report progress update