

East Glasgow Learning Disability Carers
Minutes of the meeting held on
Wednesday 30th May 2008

Present:

Carers: No sign in sheet went out on the day but around 12 carers were present at the meeting.

In Attendance: Audrey Thomson Development Worker Planit
Lee-Anne Thomson Community Worker
Margaret Wheatley Head of Service
Mark Feinmann Director East CHCP
Councillor Jim Coleman Chairperson East CHCP

Committee

Apologies: None

The purpose of today's meeting was so the East Carers group could ask the East CHCP some questions and discuss some fears and concerns regarding the modernisation of day services. Grace started off with explaining that the group has nearly 40 members and most meetings have at least 25 carers attending, the reason for the poor attendance at today's meeting was due to the time of the meeting, 1pm – 3pm, carers need to be at home from 2.30pm for their sons or daughters arriving back from the centres. Mark apologised for the time of the meeting and committed to meeting again at a time more suitable for carers.

Questions to Mark Feinmann & Jim Coleman

Q - Is the service being cut, i.e. the number of hours?

A – There will be no cut in service but people might decide to take their service at different times during the day. There are people living in the community that don't receive a day service, we need to assess what each individual needs and offer support to them that need it.

Q – Why is there a need to modernise day services?

A – The review started several months ago because we have to meet some national standards so things can improve. In the East there are some good things happening, people have choice i.e.

work, college, sport. Over the past several years things have improved and continue to improve but we recognise we need to offer more jobs and opportunity to people. 250 people use day services and have different needs and want different things, we need to offer more jobs to those that want it, and we must find a way of enabling them to do this. We can explore choice and possibilities for people that want different things.

Q – Are you meeting with colleges, sport and leisure and employment agencies?

A – We are meeting with John Wheatley College and we want to bring you carers into these meetings. It will take 2-3 years before things start happening. There will be an opportunity to talk and work with colleges and employability agencies. We need to keep the centres open for as long as they are needed, that is my (Mark Feinmann) opinion and that is why we will work with you.

Q - Cost – Who's going to pay for the extra cost of all the activities & lunches?

A – If people are out of the centre we need to find a way of paying for things. If we say people want to use the community but it will cost more we will find a way to help with this. We will still need the big buses for some people but we will use public buses and mini buses for some others.

Q - What exactly is changing? – Centres already offer employment, colleges, sports etc.

A – If we are able to get more people into jobs, to go to college, and to use the community more we will not need 2 centres. We will not close any centre until we are clear we don't need it. I believe we need 1 new centre that is big enough for all that need it but we haven't got the capital for this yet. We are having discussions with planners of the Common Wealth Games and are trying hard to get money (MF said this).

Q – What if jobs don't work out for people?

A – There has to be a fall back if jobs don't work, it is not acceptable for parent/carers to be responsible for people if this happens. It may be that the college and centres are used during the summer to spend time in. If service users don't like a job they will get the same service at the centre and get the same benefits they were on, the Council will sort all of this out.

Lee-Anne explained that there is a pilot in Mental Health services that if jobs don't work out people get the same benefits they received within 1 week.

Q - If the centres at present aren't fully staffed how do you imagine this would possibly work with a bigger centre?

A – The Care Commission insist we must provide minimal staff to keep people safe. If a member of staff is on long term sick we can replace them on an assessment of risk in the centre and the level of needs of the service users. We have to follow rules the Care Commission set for us but we know the sickness of staff is a problem.

Q – Are there any plans to buy in private agencies to provide the day service in the East?

A – No plans for private companies to run the day centres and there is no tender out for Accord or Riddrie.

Q – Why are the service users from the Accord visiting the Riddrie centre?

A – Mark was not aware this was taking place. Margaret Wheatley will put something in writing to the carers regarding why service users from the Accord have been visiting the Riddrie centre.

Q - We received letters stating that it is now care teams within the centre, and service users do not have a named person, and they cannot contact them until the afternoon. Why were we not consulted, is this a pilot, will this be reviewed to see if it works?

A – Margaret Wheatley explained that social work teams used to be on full day duty to answer calls, they are now only on call duty in the afternoons, they believe that half a day is sufficient for someone to sit at their desk all day taking calls. People should have been consulted on this, if carers have an urgent call there will be someone to take it.

Q – Is there a timescale for the changes?

A – We need to come to carers with a plan that will be over a 2-3 year period. Our next step is to talk to carers because it is not on that you don't understand what is going on, it won't be one plan for everyone. We don't think we need the number of big buses we have. Any money saved will be spent in different ways within Learning Disability.

Mark Fienmann - no-one has been offered redundancy at this moment in time but we do want to change the balance and mix of staff. We haven't taken a service from you. We will continue the same service for people if that is what they want but we must provide a different service for those that don't want to attend a centre. If people want to go on a big white bus and go to the centre we will continue to provide this. I am aware of many people that want something different and I must provide them with what they want.

Jim Coleman – There will always be a centre for people and there will always be demand for centres. We know the Accord is no longer suitable and we need a new centre. No-one will be forced to go to college or get work, it will be up to the service users and carers what service users will do. It is our job to reassure the service continues if that is what people want. I will try to get invested money from the Common Wealth Games for a new build centre, we are in discussions just now and will let carers know as soon as we do. We are looking at the Clyde Gateway because it is more important to the Council than the Games and is in the middle of Dalrnarnock, we will keep you informed. The private sector has money and we need to negotiate with them. We need to offer service users options but we guarantee if they need a centre then service will continue.

Grace then talked through the groups "ideas for change" for a new centre. Mark said what they need to do with the ideas is to sit down with carers and take these ideas and turn them into a plan, service users and carers should take part in designing a new build.

Q – Why is the proposal the same after consultation?

A – Jim Coleman said he didn't know why as he wasn't at the meeting and he doesn't know the details but that proposals don't mean anything until the committee agrees. The Council will put in a final document once all stakeholders agree.

Q – Why has a GP surgery moved into one half of the Accord?

A – Jim Coleman will look into this and get back to the group.

Mark stated that the next step is to sit down and explore sport & leisure, employment and colleges with carers and start making plans.

A.O.B.

None

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Friday 27th June, 11am – 1pm, Parkhead Library, 64 Tollcross
Road