

**Physical and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board (PSIPB) Minutes**

**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2007, 1pm – 3.30pm, North London Business Park**

**Present**

Feroza Bartlett	- Physical and Sensory Impairment Team Manager
Alan Brackpool	- Joint Commissioner (Disabilities)
Diane Brown	- Physical and Sensory Impairment Service Manager
Jaspal Dhani	- Director of Disability Action in Barnet
Stella Henriques	- Carers Representative
Amy Jones	- Minutes
Kate Kennally (Co-Chair)	- Assistant Director, Health Partnerships (Younger Adults)
Sara Magber	- Barnet Carers Centre
Karen May	- Unscheduled Care Development Manager
Jean McVey	- Representing Barnet's Blind Community
Mike Nash (Co-Chair)	- Service User Representative
David Pearce	- Middlesex Association for the Blind
Brenda Poulson	- Service User Representative
Shirley Regan	- Physical and Sensory Impairment Service Manager
Emily Sault	- Communication and Information Manager
Nigel Thornton	- Housing Representative
Joost van der Geest	- Partnership Officer
Dominic Wright	- Director of Commissioning & Performance Management

**Apologies**

Steve Ashmore	- Audiology Services
Mira Goldberg	- Representing Barnet's Deaf Community
David Hart	- BVSC Representative
Fiona Jackson	- Head of Allied Health Professionals
Carolin Seitz	- MS Society
Pat Smith	- Barnet PCT

## 1. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

The minutes from the May meeting were agreed.

## 2. Making our meetings more accessible

The group talked about what we could do to make our meetings more accessible to all.

Mike said that a venue should have automatic doors so that people who use a wheelchair can access the building independently.

David said that from a visual impairment point of view the best thing to do is ask individuals which format they would like their information to be given to them in, and he commented on how the Board has begun doing this.

David also stressed the importance of Visual Impairment Awareness Training for staff, which would cover topics including how to guide individuals and communications skills. David felt that this should make up part of an induction program.

Jean has received some feedback that Your Independence Day had not been well advertised to the visually impaired community. Emily confirmed that the event had been advertised in the Talking Newspapers.

Feroza confirmed that she will be holding a pre-meeting 30 minutes before each partnership board for people with a sensory impairment regarding agenda items and any issues.

Emily said that the Essential Guide for Disabled People does include a section on hints and tips around sensory impairments, in addition to the Council sending an additional hint and tips sheet to the customer services department.

In addition, the Environment Protection and Planning department of the Council have requested Deaf Awareness Training. Kate said it was excellent that attitudes towards physical and sensory impairments were improving.

Jaspal raised the concern that trucks from the external caterers of North London Business Park are often blocking the ramp access to Building 5. Jaspal also raised the question as to whether the Disabled Parking Bays were being protected for people with a blue badge.

**Action:** Mike and Kate will write to North London Business Park facilities management regarding this.

Finally, Mike stated that the disabled toilet in building 5 is not large enough.

## 3. Feedback from the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 'Your Independence Day'

Mike said that the event had been a real success, and that he has received a lot of positive feedback from service users and carers who attended the day.

**Action:** Emily will send Amy the write-ups from the Workshops for Amy to circulate to the Board.

Over 200 people came on the day and there were 32 stalls.

Improvements we will make next time include a better booking system for workshops to prevent overcrowding of rooms.

Although the venue was largely accessible, there were still some issues around there not being a drop curb into the building. The Board agreed that they should write to the council stating how valuable an accessible community venue would be to the borough.

Stella said that people with a visual impairment had not found the signage clear enough so it was more difficult for them to get around the building. Emily said that we would make sure this was better at the next event.

Although 3 BSL interpreters were present on the day, it was raised that more signers would have been useful to make the day even more accessible to people with a hearing impairment.

**Action:** The next Your Independence Day will be put on the September agenda.

Feroza confirmed that the Sign Language Interpreting Service at Barnet was recruiting more Palantypists because it is very difficult to book this service.

Kate thanked everyone who had been involved in making the day such a success.

### **Feedback from the Supporting Carers Day - 5<sup>th</sup> of June**

The feedback from this event was positive, and a number of priority areas for development were identified on the day:

- Increase awareness of services available to carers
- Provide training for carers to improve their skills and quality of Life
- Provide training for professionals to raise awareness of carers issues
- More referrals need to be made from Social Services to Barnet carers Centre through partnership working with physical and sensory impairment carers support worker and social services
- More awareness and systems for joint working to be developed in primary care and with GP's
- More information needed on respite / short breaks for carers
- A system in place for emergency planning for carers and emergency planning workshops developed to support carers creating their own emergency plan involving health and social care staff,

Sara will work with carers to put a plan together to action these.

Problems with the day included parking and accessibility of the event for people with a hearing impairment.

Sara confirmed that the Carers Support Group is meeting for the first time on 27<sup>th</sup> September.

Sara will sit within the Physical and Sensory Impairment Team once a fortnight to help improve communication and increase referrals.

Emily said that she is working with the Older Adults Partnership Board around improving the information available to carers, and she asked Stella to join in with this work.

#### **4. Audiology services and the Hearing Advice Outreach Service – Presentation on some of the current issues**

Brenda raised her concerns around how the voluntary section of the Hearing Advisory Service is not receiving cooperation from Barnet Audiology Service. Dominic said that this was concerning to him, and would like Brenda to explain this further to him.

Another concern Brenda had was that the Audiology Service does not appear to be informing clients about the excellent service provided by the Sensory Impairment Team at Barnet.

Brenda was also very alarmed that Barnet College have cut their lip reading classes since this is a skill that massively improves the quality of life for the deaf community.

Shirley has recently spoken to Charles Nelson from Barnet College regarding this, and he has explained that there is a funding issue since these classes do not fit in with the education agenda because there is not a qualification at the end of the sessions. Charles has however agreed to provide classrooms for this service free of charge if alternative funding can be obtained.

**Action:** Shirley will look into the costs of this Service

**Action:** Kate and Dominic will then discuss funding this in terms of a rehabilitation service.

It was agreed that the board should monitor the availability of Sign Language Courses in the Borough.

The board looked at the audiology waiting times requested by Brenda. Dominic explained that there was a problem around the wait before individuals actually received their digital hearing aid. Dominic further explained that this is because it is only the RNT&E that provide this service, but Barnet PCT is trying to arrange further clinics.

**Action:** Dominic will confirm whether it is the case that you have to wait up to 4 years to have your digital hearing aid fitted after your last appointment.

Feroza said that there are members of the Sensory Impairment Team who could support Audiology Services with their backlog.

**Action:** Dominic and Feroza will discuss this.

Emily confirmed that there is going to be an article on the Outreach Service in Barnet First.

Amy confirmed that representatives from Audiology will be coming to the next meeting, and a representative will join the PSIPB thereafter.

## 5. Aids and Adaptations within Barnet Council – new procedures, investment priorities

Nigel said that a panel has been set up to look at adaptations over 25 thousand that have been delayed.

The council is investing 4.2 million over the next 2 years to clear the backlog for aids and adaptations (including a 2.8 million increase).

Kate said that she was pleased that hospital discharge was being cited within the Policy on Adaptations to Council Properties as a major reason for these changes being necessary. This will prevent temporary admissions into residential care which become permanent.

Kate raised how important it is for units to be developed which are accessible so people can stay in them whilst their property is being adapted, and remain out of registered care. Nigel said that this could be considered for Barbara Langston House

**Action:** Housing and Commissioning will meet to discuss this in terms of having units to prioritise hospital discharge.

Mike expressed dissatisfaction with the fact service users were not present on the Panel. Kate said that the PSIPB need to develop an Involvement Strategy for Users and Carers. In terms of this panel, Kate said that a user representative would not need to sit on the Board, but should be involved in monitoring how well the policy document was at involving users.

**Action:** Nigel and Mike will develop performance indicators for this panel.

**Action:** Nigel will pass the policy onto the Disability Equality Advisory Group.

Kate said that the Board would stay involved in this subject through the Housing and Support subgroup.

It was confirmed that the policy is also around adaptations for people with a Sensory Impairment.

## 6. Establishing subgroups – Next Steps

Shirley gave out a paper and asked for feedback by the end of next week.

**Action:** Amy will put this onto a tape for Jean.

It is proposed that there will be 6 subgroups to take forward the work plan. Each of these will be chaired by a carer or service user who will be supported to do so by a member of the PSIPB.

The volunteers from the PSIPB were as follows:

- Supporting Carers - Stella and Sara
- Housing with Support – Jaspal
- Day Opportunities and Employment – Alan
- Empowerment and Choice – Shirley
- Disability Equality – Jaspal
- Health and Social Care partnership – Diane Brown

It was agreed that this would be an excellent way of getting more services and people involved in the work of the PSIPB.

The board agreed that the PSI Network should continue its work alongside the subgroups.

Emily said that rather than belonging to one subgroup she will be available to support pieces of work that need advice on Communications.

Kate said that the feedback from the Supporting Carers Day and Your Independence Day should be taken forward by the relevant subgroup.

## **7. Partnership Board equalities action plan**

This was not discussed and will be carried forward to the next meeting.

## **8. PSI Inspection – interviews with Partnership Board members**

Kate said that the focus group was likely to concentrate on:

- How well we are working together
- What our priorities are
- Whether we have the right people on the Board
- Are we making a difference?
- Whether matters from a physical and sensory impairment perspective are considered equally

## **9. AOB**

### **- Disability Equality Oscars**

Joost gave out a paper and asked for feedback.

### **Date of next meeting**

To be confirmed