

Minutes of the West Berkshire Council

Disability External Scrutiny Board

Meeting 22 January 2015

Item	Notes
Board Members in attendance	Jan Rothwell (Chair), John Carr, Sue Hinks, Mick Hutchins and Alan Fleming
Others	Councillor Graham Pask, Nick Carter, Elizabeth O’Keeffe (Newbury Town Council), Jo England (Client Financial Services Manager) and Elaine Walker (Principal Policy Officer),
1. Introduction and apologies.	<p>The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies: Apologies were received from Keith Hester and Councillor Roger Hunneman</p>
2. Minutes and Matters Arising.	<p>The minutes of the meeting of 16 October 2014 were agreed.</p> <p>For an update on previous actions, please see the attached sheet.</p>
3. Agenda Items for Next Meeting	<p>MH requested an update on the Social Care Act, in particular how this would be funded, and what impact users could expect due to the changes from ‘critical’ to ‘substantial’. MH acknowledged that the Council had historically assessed needs fairly leniently, placing people in the ‘critical’ category, when other areas might have considered their needs to be ‘substantial’.</p> <p>Councillor Pask explained why the level of funding had not been certain, but confirmed that the Council and the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) were progressing the issue.</p> <p>AF raised an issue with the commissioning of care providers, saying that he believed that users should be involved in their selection in some capacity, and that comments and complaints were not dealt with satisfactorily. EO’K commented that care providers were private companies, and it would be necessary to think about how to improve their provision. AF also stated that some people were fearful of making a complaint in case their care was stopped.</p> <p>Agenda Items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Update on the Social Care Act and the impact to users of the change from ‘critical’ to ‘substantial’2. Update on Personal Healthcare budgets, in particular how the Council are identifying and supporting people onto the correct funding.

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	<p>3. Commissioning Care Providers – how users are, or can be, involved in the decision making process, and how complaints are handled.</p> <p>Action 1: Invite Cllr Marcus Franks and Cllr Keith Chopping to the next meeting for these items.</p>
<p>4. Closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF)</p>	<p>Jo England explained that over the last 18 months, officers had been undertaking background work in preparation for the closure of the ILF. The closure of the fund had been delayed, and made uncertain, by two legal challenges, and the Council had needed to wait for clarity around the future of the fund before taking further action.</p> <p>Work is now beginning with clients to identify their support plans and consider what the implications will be for individuals. The majority of clients had been happy to share their support plans, but a couple of clients who had claimed from the fund more recently, were less comfortable with sharing their information.</p> <p>Officers were contacting individuals to discuss how payments would be made to them. Whilst there is a significant overlap between clients receiving payments from the ILF and clients with personal budgets, it could not be assumed that they would wish their payments to be made in the same way.</p> <p>There are 29 people affected by the closure of the fund.</p> <p>The government will provide funding for nine months after the closure of the fund. However the value of this funding will be net of individual's contributions and will include a 4.5% attrition rate. Officers are therefore assessing the impact of this funding. After March 2016 it is not known where funding will come from.</p> <p>MH commented that the ILF had proven to be a very efficient model with very little money being diverted for administration costs etc. By using other management methods, the administration costs would divert far more money from the end user.</p> <p>MH continued that people with a greater level of care needs could continue with, or be moved to continuing healthcare budgets as this would aid the transition to personal healthcare budgets. The combination of funding from the NHS and Local Authorities needs joint thinking to ensure that clients are receiving the correct funding from the correct sources without disruption.</p> <p>Jo England said that Officers within Adult Social Care had been working on Continuing Healthcare for some time, looking to identify and increase the number of clients. Now that support plans are being reviewed, this will provide a further opportunity to identify where a re assessment is required.</p>

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	<p>MH commented that the Council holds some expertise in managing Personal Budgets, and there is a client base who are experienced in running their own Personal Budget. He suggested that the Council meeting with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to share this expertise and help with Personal Healthcare Budgets. Jo England replied that offers had been made to share experiences, and in fact a couple of early Healthcare Budgets had been paid for by the Council whilst Health were still setting up their processes. Cllr Pask confirmed that conversation was ongoing with the CCG through the Health and Wellbeing Board. Councillors form part of the Board and are able to raise issues and share processes.</p> <p>MH questioned the level of understanding of these types of budgets by people working at that level. He suggested that a workshop or seminar could be beneficial to explain to users about the budgets, how they can be accessed and used and when they might be appropriate. Jo England agreed that this could be useful but would require significant resource to be diverted from other work to manage. Jo suggested that the existing regular meetings were a good way to ensure the issues were not forgotten and agreed to speak with Tandra Forster to ensure they remain active.</p>
<p>5. Personal Health Budgets</p>	<p>See previous</p>
<p>6. AOB</p>	<p>Access Panel: JC confirmed that the Panel were still meeting and considering applications put forward. However he noted that there had been little progress on the requirements of the Lifetime Homes Criteria being strengthened.</p> <p>EO’K informed the group that she had requested signage at the entrance to the Town Council to direct people to the side door where there is a lift, and also a request for an assistance button, and a rail outside of the building. In addition, EO’K had raised the possibility of the footpath on Northcroft Road being widened and dropped kerbs being built. The street furniture outside the new Cote Brasserie had been dealt with to ensure that anything that had not been agreed (the large pavement planters) was removed.</p> <p>SH informed the group that a petition was in circulation against the closure of the public toilets in Thatcham. Also that Radar keys were no longer available from the Council but from another organisation at £4.50 per use. JC informed the group that Shopmobility held the keys but he was not aware whether they charged for their use.</p> <p>AF told the group that the person who parked in the bus stop on Hilden’s Drive still did so, stating that he was entitled to as there were no markings on the road. His parking prevented use of the Cassel Kerb to getting onto or off the bus.</p> <p>Action 2: EW to inform Clive Tombs of the parking issue at Hilden’s</p>

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	<p>Drive bus stop.</p> <p>Fairer Contributions Policy – EW updated the board that a review of the policy was being undertaken and that views would be sought shortly.</p> <p>Action : All to respond directly to Sandie Ralph – sralph@westberks.gov.uk - with any comments regarding the redrafted Fairer Contributions Policy.</p>
<p>7. Conversation with Nick Carter</p>	<p>Nick Carter attended the meeting and addressed the following questions put forward by JC prior to the meeting.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The air pollution at the Burger King roundabout is generally high and does go above permitted level when there is excessive traffic for various reasons. I feel one of the main reasons is HGV vehicles still coming through the town instead of using the by-pass. <p>The Transport Policy Task Group was due to discuss this issue at the next day's meeting. The proposal being put forward was to use signage to divert HGVs away from this stretch of road by directing them to the A34 to the north, and the B4640 and A34 to the south. It would be unlikely to be successful if a proposal was put forward to either ban freight or place a weight restriction on this section of the A339.</p> <p>Cllr Pask asked if freight companies could be contacted directly to ask them to avoid this section of road.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Newbury Station – I have received the Improvement brochure from Jenny Graham to discuss with our WBDA committee. I understand that there are discussions within the Market Street redevelopment. Is an accessible bridge part of these discussions with Network rail? <p>Pressure has been put on network Rail to improve this bridge, and access to the station. The electrification of the rail network will require this bridge to be demolished so rather than replace it like-for-like, pressure is being applied to replace the bridge with an accessible one. Richard Benyon MP has been asked to take this forward with the Department for Transport directly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Greenham House ramp any further development for re-surfacing? <p>Weather permitting, this will be undertaken on the 8th and 9th February.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Drawings for the "Village". It is sometime since you thought drawing would be available for consultation. Is there any date for these to be looked at? Is the disabled community/public

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	<p>going to be consulted before going to planning?</p> <p>There have been a number of issues regarding the viability of the plans for the Market Street development which have delayed the planning application being put forward. Graingers (the development company) will be consulting before and during the application.</p> <p>5. The Access Panel have for some time been trying to get the Lifetime Homes Criteria (16 no.) included in the WBC Core Strategy. The Core Strategy refers to Affordable Housing but does not mention Lifetime Homes Criteria.</p> <p>In the view of Planning Officers an intention of adding the Lifetime Homes Criteria to the core strategy or as a condition of a planning application, would not be agreed by the Planning Inspector. Poole has managed to apply the requirements more fully (although the exact extent is not known) but this is thought to be a reflection of the local population, a significant number of whom are retired. We do not have that argument in West Berkshire. If any planning application was appealed because of these conditions being imposed, it is anticipated that the Planning Inspector would find for the developer.</p> <p>MH commented that he believed there was a disproportionate number of disabled people awaiting housing as houses were not suitable for them (25% of the housing list, compared to 10% of the population) so there was some argument for requiring a proportion of lifetime homes.</p> <p>Nick Carter would raise this with the Planning Policy Task Group for further investigation.</p>
<p>Meeting dates for 2014/15</p>	<p>Agreed dates for 2015/16</p> <p>Thursday 26 March 2015, 10:30 – 1pm – Committee Room 1</p> <p>Thursday 16 July 2015, 10:30 – 1pm – Committee Room 1</p> <p>Thursday 15 October 2015, 10:30 – 1pm – Committee Room 1</p> <p>Thursday 28 January 2016, 10:30 – 1pm – Committee Room 1</p>