

Medway LINK Steering Group Meeting
Wednesday 18th June 2008
3.30 – 5.30
Meeting Room 2 – Gun Wharf

Chair: David Haymes

Minutes: Alison Brooke

Attendees: Jane Williamson (Host)
Brenda O'Neill (Host)
Graham Hills (Host)
Jenny Gibson (Independent Member)
Ann Whybrow (Independent Member)
Kim Eaglestone (Advisory Group – Medway NHS Foundation Trust)
Russell Prestwick (ICAS)
Toni Lancaster (Age Concern – Gillingham)
Edward O'Neill (Independent Member)
Genette Laws (Advisory Group – Medway Council)
Shirley Griffiths (Vice Chair – MERGE)
Clare Murray (Independent Member)

Apologies: Jane Duller
David Elks
Suzanne Brooker
Tina Murphy
Maureen Luxton
Bobbie Taiano
Joy Birdsey

Welcome:

David Haymes welcomed all and members introduced themselves.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting:

KE noticed that Louise Parker's presentation did not feature in the Minutes. KE offered to forward the slides from Louise Parker's presentation at the last meeting.

Action: KE to forward slides as part of minutes

Matters Arising:

DH confirmed the activity of the sub-groups. Neither the Engagement sub-group nor the Communications sub-group had met. The need to build relationships with public bodies was discussed.

EO has contacted local Councillors about the LINK Steering Group and how they could be better briefed as part of the Multi-Agency Engagement Team (MAET). It was agreed that this would be an ongoing exercise.

KE explained how MAET can reach more people, with limited resources. The members pick a Ward within Medway and talk to the Ward Councillor(s) and make contact with other key people in the Ward through them. This information would contribute to building one database for all to access, including e.g. police. SG talked about working with VOICE to

share one-sheet wonders. KE suggested own website with LINK Contact details and will come back to Group once she has all information from Meeting.

Action: KE to provide information at the meeting in September

DH summarised that several agencies in Medway to engage with the public and volunteers. And instead of several agencies working individually, they should be working together as a team. KE confirmed that it should be one person to talk about different groups. DH explained that one way of getting information from people is to talk to the public. AW suggested getting information from CAB (Citizens Advice Bureau) all agreed, although, most information they hold is statistical and not relevant to the group. DH suggested that the group asks them and LINK can add the personal information

Action: Group to request information from CAB

DH asked for news on Governance. GL facilitated the group and summarised on last weeks meeting with the Governance sub-group. They discussed various models but recommended an initial adoption of the Traditional Model, Guide 12 from the National Centre for Involvement will be circulated.

Action: GL to circulate Guide 12

DH emphasised the need to get Governance arrangements actioned for the group and the to move quickly towards administration and policy-making, management. Steering Group should not be responsible for the work plan; a larger elected assembly should act as representatives for them. Ongoing events should be used for gathering their views.

GL explained that the work programme was developed for the Host to take forward and the work programme was brought to the Steering Group for their approval. CM felt the sub-group meeting was particularly helpful to move the structure forward. There needs to be clarity if the Governance is to exist, as there is potential confusion about moving forward.

DH suggested that the Steering Group take a 'holiday' and that the Governance sub-group meets in the next few months. Then discuss this at the Steering Group meeting in September. July and August will allow the Governance sub-group to work on the governance arrangements. In the meantime, the meeting dates will be used to focus on the change in the eligibility criteria as part of Fair Access to Care Services.

DH suggested meeting later in September to discuss progress, in the meantime all can be updated via e-mails. AW asked when will the steering group be 'live'? DH responded, there is no date in mind and proposed trying to engage the voluntary sector and the public and maybe change the strategy slightly. Perhaps, engage specific issues with voluntary groups to build networks, for them to take up specific issues.

JG asked if they would be kept in the loop. BO requested regular bulletins from the Host to all present about the developments.

Action: The Host to provide updates about the outcomes from the Governance sub-group

GH confirmed that the LINK building blocks are not in place but there are other ways for people to express their views. If the number of people getting in touch with LINK does not increase yearly i.e. not achieving, the Government will close it. But the groups of people

getting involved in i.e. Cancer Care are increasing. LINK is part of the influence on Health Care in Medway.

EO asked the Host to 'tweak' the Governance arrangements for LINK Steering Group. GH confirmed that the Host's job is to provide choices for decisions, subject to the budget.

BO suggested the need for a foundation as without it their credibility could be questioned. EO asked if the Host would attend future Governance meetings. GH confirmed that the Host would provide a range of opportunities to participate. To engage with the groups who are more difficult to reach i.e. the hard to reach, etc.

BO agreed that the first draft of the Governance framework should be ready by September, then to launch LINK in October, with publicity such as the press etc., when the Governance framework will be fully available. GH suggested a draft strategy to deal with public relations and other issues, to include health and not just Social Care.

DH suggested setting up another Sub Group to look at the issues of Social Care. DH explained to the group Fair Access to Care Services – There are 4 categories of need, Low, Moderate, Substantial and Critical. Only those with Substantial and Critical needs are now entitled to receive help from social services. Because of this change, there is now a re-assessment process and some people have changed from having the top two needs to the lower needs and have lost entitlement. Suggested we ask Social Services how many people have changed categories and fallen from the system. Questioned how this affects people, what are the statistics and who has been treated unfairly. This issue needs to be looked at to help promote the Group publicly.

AW asked whether people with e.g. dementia are being re-assessed. GL confirmed that all people with Care Managers would be re-assessed.

DH suggested that the first step is to get statistics; you use the statutory power to ask for information. GL explained that there is a moderation panel that is ensuring consistency within and among care management teams and therefore any information provided will not necessarily be indicative of any trends.

DH suggested that the first request is, they need to see the paperwork behind the process. GL confirmed that Fair Access to Care Services is a National Framework. The framework has eligibility criteria that enable a Council to set a threshold for eligibility, in Medway it will be 'Substantial & Critical' from 1 July.

RP asked about the Appeals process. GL explained that there is no Appeals process but the right to ask for a review and if still dissatisfied then use the complaints process. The framework is designed to ensure that the Council delivers services in a transparent and consistent way in the context of operating a safe budget.

BO suggested a project which needs aims and objectives to investigate the impact on the residents of Medway, how to implement the National Framework in Medway. How many people are affected by re-assessment and once they know the outcome, look at how to deal with it. GH suggested publicising this, LINK to look at this.

Action: Host to consider possibility of publicity

DH made 2 proposals:

Proposal 1: *The Governance Sub Group meets with DH, with a representative of the Host. DH to report back to Steering Group in September.*

Proposal 2: *That the Steering Group meet for the next 2 months as a Project Group to look at 'Fair Access to Care' issues in Medway. DH proposed and EO seconded the proposal.*

Both proposals were agreed.

DH proposed the Advisory Group be disbanded as a body, they would still be welcome at future meetings but as observers only. The group agreed. DH also proposed a Motion of Thanks to the Advisory Group; which was agreed.

DH Suggested a review of the recent Events and in particular the finance. DH proposed an agreement was needed to authorise the people with the funds to pay CVS £1,814.83. CM proposed and JG seconded the proposal.

Any Other Business

SG requested ID badges for members.

Action: Host to pursue

DH went to Kent's LINK and spoke on the Groups behalf. He was paid £90 that was split between the LINK and DH employer. DH will be speaking again for a £150 fee to be split again.

DH & EO raised the need to make a decision to fund people's expenses, so long as a receipt is supplied. EO suggested a standard expenses form for the Steering Group, Sub Groups and anything related to the Group.

GH wanted to bring the Steering Group up to date about the Host's contractual position. The Council has accepted a tender for this particular Group, from 1st July 2008 – 31st March 2011; this could be extended by 24 months. He is in discussion with Medway Council and he wants to support the group straight away. The role of the Host is to give professional advice and support. Subject to a Performance Monitoring Agreement, there will be a quarterly monitoring meeting led by Stephanie Goad. The plan is based around what the Council is asking the Host to deliver.

- 1) Staff, premises, insurance etc. to provide support for the Group.
- 2) Use of non-fixed costs that LINK can influence. LINK Group to decide how the money is spent e.g. CRB check costs.

EO asked what percentage is fixed and what percentage is non-fixed. GH will provide actual figures. Their office in Folkestone is for all core activities i.e. IT, paperwork. Field workers will be based in Medway; there will be a local office where members can get information. Could be a Council contact centre or voluntary group location, the Host will keep the Group updated about the premises issue.

The website will be costed and he is in discussion with the Kent University about the possibility of them providing this. The Hosts long-term aim is to find a location. AW suggested the Kent University as an ideal base.

CM emphasised that members need an ongoing flow of information, until now this has not been available to LINK. JW confirmed that the Host would implement this immediately i.e. via Newsletters on behalf of LINK.

Action: Host to create and circulate a newsletter

Date of Next Meetings:

Sub-group to discuss FACS and agree remit

Wednesday 9th July 2008 and 13th August 2008

LINK Steering Group

10th September 2008