

**MINUTES OF CARERS FORUM**  
**VENUE RIVERSIDE CENTRE**  
**18<sup>th</sup> JULY 2005**  
**12.00pm**

**PRESENT**

Daron Perkins – Team Manager, Adult Learning Disability Team  
Jan Taylor – Co-ordinator, No Barriers  
Tina Snow – Admin Assistant, Adult Learning Disability Team  
Pat Smith – Carer Representative on the Partnership Board  
Elizabeth Sturton – Carer Representative on the Health Care Sub-group  
Rob Paton  
Bridget Paton  
Mrs M Green  
Mr R Green  
Alan Roberts  
Mary Roberts  
Dave Downer  
Eric Edwards  
Hazel Edwards

**APOLOGIES**

Andrea Colson – MENCAP Pathways  
Chris Partridge

Daron opened the meeting by welcoming Jan Taylor, No Barriers Coordinator who will be showing a presentation in today's meeting.

Apologies were received from Andrea Colson who was also due to do a presentation.

**NO BARRIERS**

No Barriers was formed in 1996 and was initially funded through the European Social Fund. This funding has now ceased and Social Services fund No Barriers entirely. They employ two Employment Support Workers and a Community Service Volunteer.

Dependent on level of work and staffing levels, work taster sessions are offered for service users to try jobs. The next step is work experience to suit the person.

Work experience may be paid depending on employer.

Jan explained that it can take a person with a learning disability a considerable length of time to settle into a job and intensive support is required by No Barriers to maintain the placement.

Jan explained that the majority of service users are on Permitted Work, which has replaced Therapeutic earnings. Some people progress onto a paid job depending on individual circumstances

On the island, the majority of jobs are part-time and before commencing a job it is essential that an assessment is carried out of clients' benefit entitlements to ensure they are not worse off if they are working.

Another option is the Workstep program. There are currently five Worksteps placements funded by the Government on the Island. The Government pays the Social Services Department to support them in a job. After six months, they will withdraw the funding.

It was questioned whether a person could revert back onto No Barriers from the Worksteps program which Jan confirmed was possible.

Jan gave a brief summary of the work carried out by MENCAP Pathway. MENCAP Pathway work with people with any disability. Whereas No Barriers provide long-term intensive support for people with a learning disability only. MENCAP Pathways have been on the Island for approximately five years and have additional funding from Job Centre Plus. Jan advised people that they should contact Andrea Colson at Mencap Pathway for full details of the services they offer.

Jan explained that before some one applies for a job, finances need to be investigated thoroughly.

Jan summarised the referral process to No Barriers. Firstly, a referral is received from the Care Manager, then the person is interviewed. A Vocational Profile is then put together listing their hobbies and strengths. Often skills are transferable into a work situation.

No Barriers endeavour to support the Service User for as long as possible on a 1:1 basis. Gradually support is reduced and a natural support network builds up with work colleagues.

There are currently no formal links with Person Centred Planning. If a change has been highlighted in a Person Centred Plan regarding work, No Barriers will become involved.

A general discussion took place regarding reviewing transport arrangements and skilling people up to travel independently.

No Barriers will offer assistance with equipment and clothing if the employer does not provide it.

No Barriers offer a six-week Employment Skills Training course, which addresses specific modules such as Health and Safety.

The Employment Skills training courses are run informally at the Adelaide flat, Ryde. They take place periodically depending on work levels.

MENCAP Pathways offers a 13 week Advance to Work course, which will take place in Newport from September. Andrea Colson can be contacted for further information.

Jan showed a variety of slides relating to work settings.

No Barriers cover support to the whole Island. They provide ongoing support to both employers and clients to maintain the work placement.

A carer questioned the involvement of the retail industry. Other than M and S, no large department store is involved on the Island. Jan explained that many large national department stores are reluctant to get involved.

A general discussion took place regarding the Isle of Wight Council being more involved in employing people with learning disabilities. Daron explained that the Council have very complex jobs, though the Learning Disability Team are currently exploring the possibility of employing some one with a learning disability, though this would need to be a meaningful job.

A carer questioned if a person went into a work placement whether their day centre placement would be protected.

Daron explained that day services are reviewed monthly and that the Learning Disability Service tends to be flexible.

Jan said that there are more suitable jobs available in the Health Trust such as catering, portering, and grounds work. The Partnership Planning Board is exploring employment opportunities within the NHS.

Daron explained that No Barriers provide intensive support and they are currently supporting 72 people on work placements. There is currently a staffing shortfall due to funding implications and they do not have the capacity to increase the amount of people supported in work placements until the current placements are settled. No Barriers are hoping to justify additional staffing and are currently exploring funding.

Daron said that compared to other areas of the country, our Learning Disability Services compare very favourably

The No Barriers Team are based at Ryde Social Services Centre and can be contacted on 566011. Jan circulated No Barriers leaflets to the Carers Forum. Daron requested that if carers wished to access No Barriers, please contact the relevant Care Manager who would make a referral.

## **OUR LIVES**

Jan explained that service users are making videos in conjunction with Solent TV regarding their lives. Jan has filmed service users doing a variety of activities including mackerel fishing. Jan said that this video is well worth a look and if anyone required a copy, please contact her.

## **MATTERS ARISING FROM LAST CARERS FORUM**

Pat summarised the carer's forum, which dealt with the will making process, Power of Attorney, etc. A recommendation was put forward that all carers have a Power of Attorney who could act on their behalf if necessary.

## **LEARNING DISABILITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

Daron summarised the work carried out by the Learning Disability Partnership Planning Board which is the main decision making body on the Island comprising of service users, statutory services, carers, voluntary and professional groups and county councillors.

The Partnership Planning Board have various sub groups in the following areas:-

- ❖ Health
- ❖ Person Centred Planning
- ❖ Personal development for staff
- ❖ Advocacy.

There are currently difficulties with the Housing group, which has still not met.

## **GOLDEN LANE**

Golden Lane are looking at developing ten flats which is similar to a key ring scheme. One of the flats will be lived in by a worker who will be available on-call in lieu of rent. It was queried whether these flats were built for one or two people.

**Action** – Daron to clarify.

Concern was expressed due to lack of carers' attendance at sub groups. Daron requested that if possible, more carers attend.

## **RESIDENTIAL VACANCIES**

A general discussion took place regarding residential vacancies.

## **KEEPING ON TRACK**

Dave Downer explained that the Valuing People White Paper was put together in 2001. A Valuing People Support Group was set up to ensure recommendations from the Valuing People White Paper are followed through. The Isle of Wight has volunteered to be part of this group. Martin Johnson and Dave Downer and two people with a learning disability are involved with this group.

The Strategy of Learning disabilities Services on the Isle of Wight will be circulated to all carers attending this forum. This document will list priorities of learning disability services on the Island such as Housing, Health, and Supporting People. This document will be placed on the Isle of Wight Council's web site.

Dave said that the Keeping on Track Meetings were very useful and that the Isle of Wight was leading the way in many fields. The Isle of Wight Council were the only authority who took people with a learning disability to these meetings.

## **VISION OF PARTNERSHIP PLANNING BOARD**

Dave summarised the Partnership Planning Board's vision and services from the Advocacy Trust were explained.

All people with a learning disability will have a Person Centred Plan and an independent advocate can represent service users in a residential setting.

A summary of the People First Group was presented at the meeting. Concerns such as visiting the hospital, and transport issues are being addressed at the People First Group.

## **PERSON CENTRED PLANNING GROUP**

There are now 15 facilitators. Pat Ready, Person Centred Planning Coordinator has developed a flyer which will be shown at the Garlic Festival and other events to recruit facilitators.

Pat and Sue Simpson are both involved in a national project to introduce Person Centred Plans to children in year nine. This will aid the transition process.

Ann-Marie Will's mother has given consent for Ann-Marie's video to be shown. This to be shown at the next Carers Forum.

Daron explained that the current priorities are children in transition and the hope is that Learning Disability Services can think creatively making a positive impact to service user's lives.

## **EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION AND DAY SERVICES**

These will be split into two groups.

### **1 CARD**

Daron has been in discussion with Alison Pride. Agreement has been reached that any activity on the card will cost £1 for some one with a learning disability. Alison has also agreed that a carer can apply for a One Card which will need to be validated by Daron. If a carer is supporting a service user, they can attend an activity for free. If carers want to attend leisure activities independently they must pay £1. The One Card is valid for a year and each activity is £1.

Daron explained that if carers have difficulty in accessing the One Card, please contact him and he will liaise with Alison Pride. Alison Pride or her assistant, Karen Johnson can be contacted on 823352.

The People First Group have been offered one card for their group. Residential homes will also be able to use a One Card for the whole home to access activities.

The One Card can be used at all Isle of Wight Council leisure facilities including the Heights.

## **TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

The Partnership Planning Board has access to funding from the Government which can be utilised to fund developments. Daron, Bob Marks and Paul Smith have put forward a transport plan to the Partnership Planning Board for funding to employ a worker to review and implement new transport arrangements. A worker from social services has been identified to carry out this work.

## **LEARNING DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY**

Carers present at the forum felt it had been a very positive day. It was generally felt that some stalls were not easy to find and clearer information was required. This event will be held annually. Day care providers and residential settings will be involved from an earlier stage.

## **HEALTH**

The Health sub group fed back to the Partnership Planning Board Meeting that there are now 100 people with a learning disability on the Island who have a Health Action Plan. All carers are encouraged to fill in this document, which summarises the history of a service user's health. Ultimately we hope that all service users will have a Health Action Plan. Health professionals will be shown a video about how to support service users and clients more effectively. Pat Taylor discussed her role in Palliative Care.

## **MODERNISING DAY SERVICES**

Jenni Charity from Osel and Andrea Colson from Mencap Pathways are developing a roadshow asking what people want from the Partnership Planning Board.

The Learning Disability Development fund will be used to purchase an assessment tool from the British Institute of Learning Disability. This will give the Partnership Board an assessment tool to evaluate all learning disability services and will help us to prioritise and improve services.

## **LEISURE**

A general discussion took place regarding accessing leisure services. It was queried whether people could be paired up to assist with leisure activities on a voluntary basis. Daron said that if the service user met the Eligibility Criteria support could be sought through the Direct Payments route.

A general discussion took place regarding the Partnership Planning Board newsletter.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday, 19 September, 12 to 2 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. Speakers will be Pat Ready, Person Centred Planning Coordinator and Jan Gavin from Isle of Wight Advocacy.