

SENSORY IMPAIRMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Thursday 17th February 2022

Zoom meeting

Minutes

Attending

AWB	Andrew William-Barnes	Deaf Blind UK
KB	Karen Berkley	Peterborough City Council
PB	Pauline Brown	Independent Member
MJ	Mike Jenkins	CamSight
FK	Fiona Kerr	Cambs Hearing Help
GL	Graham Lewis	Healthwatch
MM	Melissa Mills	Healthwatch
PMc	Paul McCloskey	Vice Chair – Independent member
HM	Helena Melbourne	CCC Sensory Impairment Team
TR	Tom Rawlings	Huntingdon Society for the Blind
WW	Warren Wilson	RNIB
RV	Roger Valentine	Peterborough City Council
CS	Charlotte Salf	Sensory & Technology Enabled Manager
AP	Andrew Palmer	CDA
CF	Carol Fanar	Peterborough City Council

Apologies

MS	Mick Scadden	Chair and Independent Member
JC	Jackie Cook	Independent Member

1. Welcome, Apologies, and Introductions

Introductions were made and GL asked the meeting if it was okay to record the meeting for the purpose of minutes. GL also explained the Closed Captions facility.

2. Minutes and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th December 2021 were approved.

Action Log

Item 116 has been chased up with Police and had no response this will remain open.

Item 117 – Graham emailed Michelle Foster for an update.

3. Feedback from Independent members.

- A member raised that she is having concerns about Transport/Disabled parking spaces in and around Godmanchester. A suggestion was given to raise it to her local council, so it is logged officially.
- Mike advised that he has heard very good things about Sight Loss Councils which have been brought up in other areas and thought it was useful to share the website as they are a formal group to bring up potential issues and raise them to the relevant bodies.

The website was shared amongst the group
www.sightlosscouncils.org.uk .

- A point was raised that they agreed about the sight councils and to find out if there is one in this area and if there isn't one its important to form one. Was wondering if the Sightloss councils get involved with building Plans, Access work, tactile paving etc. Even now still coming across Lights in the middle of the pavement.
- Warren advised he is aware of the Sight Loss councils are run by Thomas Pocklington Trust and they are in Bristol, Bedfordshire, Essex, West Midlands & Newcastle. They are led by the members of their own council.
- Warren also mentioned East Cambs access Group which is a voluntary group he is a member of, and they have a relationship with the County Council and they provide them with future plans for the community and they review them and provide feedback in return to make positive change.
- Warren also gave an update from RNIB.
There was a report released in Oct 21 called "See Streets differently" which contains a lot of useful documents. It provides advice to Local Authorities like street design and why shared space is not a good idea. Within the East of England there isn't a Regional Campaign officer currently, so part of Warren's role is to bridge some of these gaps. If anyone wishes to get in touch about the campaign and how we can shape our local area to get in touch: warren.wilson@rnib.org.uk
- A person of lived experience gave some feedback that a road near where she lives in Godmanchester have been asking for a pedestrian crossing which the request has been turned down numerous times. She has also noticed within Huntingdon area the

pedestrian and Zebra Crossings markings have faded away and barely can be seen. Her concern is with the increase of electric cars that are a lot quieter she has to rely on her hearing when she's walking, and her hearing is deteriorating. She feels like she is in the minority and the LA/Council just care about the majority of people.

- Increasing anxiety over the PIP assessment regime which was being found too intrusive and, in some cases, meaningless. There is anecdotal evidence of a PIP assessor confronting seriously impaired individuals sat in a wheelchair with a guide dog and serious visual impairment having to go through the whole rigmarole that a medical professional has already diagnosed. And other vulnerable people are being pushed to provide evidence of their impairment sometimes going back over scores of years which is not always readily to hand. Consequently, could the "pip Processes" be amended to include an explanatory "identified increasing anxiety over the PIP assessment regime which was being found too intrusive at times and, in some cases, meaningless."

GL: Mick has asked to invite somebody in to discuss PIP payments.

ACTION: Graham will invite Tracy Hyland from Disability Huntingdonshire to a future meeting to discuss what support is out there for people who have to keep filling out the needed forms when there is no change to their situation.

4. Feedback from other meetings

From the Health and Care Forum:

- Presentations on Health & Social Care shared Record – Where any Healthcare professionals can see a persons Health and social care information where appropriate.
- Sati Obi– Chief Pharmacist talking about not Prescribing paracetamol as it is cheaper for the public to buy it rather than having a prescription. Also Changing the way in which regular prescriptions are given out.

From The Adult Social Care Forum:

- Digital inclusion/ exclusion
- Reintroduced the IT Buddy system within all Cambridgeshire Libraries. Graham is not able to advise on Peterborough at the moment. Karen from CCC advised that it is still in discussion and will update Graham when she finds out Peterborough.
- A new Cancer Research Hospital will be opening on the Addenbrookes site in 2026.

5. Terms of Reference review

All in agreement of the Terms of reference with a change to add page numbers immediately.

6. Commissioner and Service Manager Update

KB Refreshing Care strategy- If anyone would like to come forward as an unpaid carer to get in touch with Karen.

Letters went out today awarding suppliers with a contract across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for carers in the sensory services.

MJ -CamSight – Mike is happy to announce they have been awarded a contract. They are very busy, they have been receiving more cases where there is more than one issue. This is the new normal. He advised that there is currently a two-week waiting list for case work and it is not ideal but unfortunately that is how things are and wants to set realistic timescales. He is hoping that things will calm down soon.

Mike wanted to thank Helena for her and staff's help with everything. Karen then added Age UK and other Voluntary organisations are having same issues at the moment and if he needs any support to contact her.

Helena – Experiencing same issues, high volumes and will make her service user's aware of CamSight's current two-week waiting list.

Helena is finding that not only are they assisting people with sensory issues they are also struggling financially with the current cost of living and inflation. She also said there's an increase in mental ill health with the link of cost of living.

Karen then advised for people to check their local authority for financial help as there is help 'out there. There is the "Household Fund" which is across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough from the LA and help with Fuel costs which has been circulated.

ACTION: Graham will circulate the information again about the funding.

7. Sensory Services update

CS advised that they will be expanding the services available online. They have been delivering new sensory training internally.

They now testing face masks as a pilot study to ensure that they were able to keep staff safe and well, but also enable people who are Deaf and who lip read to be able to fully understand what is being said to them.

9, Priorities update and highlights to be taken to ASCF

Highlights

GL Direct Payment letters that go out were not very clear and easy to understand. They are now reviewing the process and the letters.

Membership – Recruitment

Transport

Digital inclusion and exclusion

PIP Processes

Younger Disabled People going into work, more support.

- Helena – People being Technology Poor, could this group act like a lobby group whereby more people have access to technology. Cambridge Skills made available a grant system at the start of the pandemic where she could put forward people for Technology? We talked about carers but what about our carers special needs and rarely looked at and wondered if we could put together something for their needs?

- Within the community groups do we have more of a mainstream of belonging? To ensure people have support from their local community.

Warren from RNIB wanted to add that he appreciates this group as he is able to join this group for work purposes and from a personal point of view. He thinks that the reason that it is challenging for young people to become a member is due to time and that they are working when the meetings are on.

Update from **RNIB** – They are very busy and have lots of cases too. He also said that there is help there from RNIB where they can provide one on one counselling. Group sessions and wellbeing and short-term mental health counselling. They also have a Sight loss advice service which you can access via the RNIB helpline, Alexa and email and which helps people find out what benefit they can have.

A person said they have problems using the bank online and prefers to go to the bank. She also thinks carers should get more help financially especially with petrol going up. Would like to know if there is any financial help with renovations within the house as you get older it is harder to do things yourself. Family is needed for help but what happens if you don't have family to help you?

KB advised There is a Cambridgeshire Handy person service that is run by Age UK and Diana Mackay is Lead Commissioner.

Q Do they give you advice? Or you pay them for a service?

KB: Wasn't sure, advised Graham to invite her to a future meeting to do a discussion. Karen is in talks with Rebecca Simpkins who is Disability Lead Adviser on DWP to Promote Employment with

sensory needs/ impairment across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Q Is there a Master directory of services as would be useful?

KB: Yes, there is and I will find out and come back to you.

Andrew from Deaf Blind UK advised that Deaf Blind UK have an emotional support for unpaid carers, family members for dual sensory issues. Andrew will share the information after the meeting. Members and carers can assess counselling service and a wellbeing service. He also confessed that he did tick a box to say he had a disability in a job within the private sector but didn't want too. Andrew will share his email address after the meeting.

10, Any Other Business

MJ – Planning on opening a café in Cambridge, where people can socialise and get some advice easily accessible. Also, will be able to offer employment within the café and work experience for people with any sensory impairments.

PMc advised GL has been pushing the pathway to Long Covid Rehabilitation as finding sufferers are undermined at GP Surgery or individuals who haven't had it. Help promote the info GL has provided with the Publicizing of the routes into rehab if you have Lung Covid.

GL: Healthwatch are doing a survey on experience in A&E at Addenbrookes please take part we would love the feedback.

Date of next meeting

Date: 19th May 2022 (please note that this is a Thursday)

Time: 11am to 1pm

Venue: Zoom / Maple Centre, Huntingdon