

**PHYSICAL DISABILITY AND SENSORY IMPAIRMENT BOARD**

**19<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

Maple Centre- Huntingdon

**Minutes**

**1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions**

**1.1 Present**

PB	Pauline Brown	Independent Member
GL	Graham Lewis	Healthwatch
DD	Debbie Drew	Healthwatch
LM	Lee McManus	Commissioner, CCC
MS	Mick Scadden	Chair, Independent Member
CA	Christine Archer	Notetaker
PA	Philipa Avery-Walters	PD Team Manager
MT	Mark Taylor	Cambridge City Council
WT	Wendy Taylor Creek	Independent member
HK	Helen Kidd	Sensory Services
AC	Aaron Clarke	Home Improvement Agency

**1.2 Apologies**

EB	Erika Brown	Hunts Blind
HS	Helen Sismore	Guide Dogs
FR	Flora Raffai	Camsight
FS	Frances Swann	Cambs HIA

**2. Minutes and Matters arising**

The minutes were approved.

**3. Updates from board members**

PB - A friend in a private retirement home had a visit from Dementia Support who left a pack describing activities around the area that they could attend.

However as not a car driver getting to these support groups is difficult. How can she attend?

A discussion around social car schemes and Dr surgery volunteer drivers took place.

**ACTION-** GL source some information and send to Pauline.

MS - A friend who has a visual impairment and arthritis is struggling to bathe. She is in Peterborough. How can she get help with this?

Discussion- She could get an OT assessment who then may be able to provide equipment. She needs to do this via her GP. If its physical help she needs to bath, then she may need to pay for some carer support.

GL- Graham read a statement about the Partnership Board review and what we know at present. The boards will be continuing.

PB- I know these boards are really the only way people can get feedback into bigger organisations. What effect do they have.

GL- For example when councillors come to the board they can feed back into the adult social care forum. We have had lots of effect the Learning Disability Board has made an impact on accessible information from doctors and hospitals. They have also been able to highlight problems with LGSS which are now being dealt with.

MS- the boards have been running for many years and it does sometimes take a while for the changes to filter through.

LM- I value as a commissioner the work of the boards. I hope the people's voice does not get diluted.

GL- At Healthwatch we are looking at how we can ensure the voice is heard.

#### 4. Feedback from other meetings.

GL- The wheelchair user forum met in January. There is a new provider for the wheelchair service but at present until all the final paperwork is done, we will not be told who it is. They will be appointing a service user liaison worker and we believe they will have a lived experience.

We have this week received an email saying that someone called Guy and Lindsey will attend the next forum so we should know more then.

#### 5.Sensory Impairment Team Update Helen Kidd

We are putting on some training around sensory impairment. It is a 2.5 hr session and is in Huntingdon. It is free to council staff but a charge to other organisations.

We have been out to raise our profile to several events including Golden Age Fair in Fenland.

For referrals, if new to the service, they are seen by tech enabled care team. We having been raising awareness of Charles Bonnet Syndrome.

In Charles Bonnet syndrome, a person whose vision has started to deteriorate sees things that aren't real (hallucinations). The hallucinations may be simple patterns, or detailed images of events, people or places. They're only visual and don't involve hearing things or any other sensations. NHS.Uk

MS- When I first lost my sight this happened to me and I thought I was going mad. It was quite frightening.

HK- there are techniques we can teach people about to help. We are doing a survey to find out how many people are affected by this.

PB- With Cambridge being an area with many researchers, are you linking with any?

HK- We are linked with some work that “Esmes Umberella” are doing around medical research. These are a nationwide organization.

[www.charlesbonnetsyndrome.uk](http://www.charlesbonnetsyndrome.uk)

## 6. Physical Disability Team Update- Philipa Avey-Walters

Since the last time I was here we have been through a consultation process and the original service managers are no longer in post.

We now come under adult services (18 months). We are a standalone team based in St Ives and have geographical patches. Huntingdonshire, East Cambs, Fenland, City and South. It helps having geographical bases as the knowledge for those areas can be best used.

We are running a # “we love social workers” campaign across adult social care to try and get more social workers into Cambridgeshire.

DD- do adults with autism come under your umbrella?

PA- No these have moved back to Learning disability team.

MT- If you are employing staff yourself via a direct payment, are we able to do electronic transfer for staff wages because at present it takes several days for chqs to clear and my staff have asked to have it paid electronically?

DD- I pay my daughters staff by electronic transfer.

PA- there is also going to be a prepayment card introduced for direct payments, but I do not think this is what you would need.

LM- yes pre- payment cards are being introduced but I am not sure of how they will run. Not everyone will have to sign up for it but it will help people who have previously had problems setting up a bank account.

**ACTION-** Philipa to send link for this information to Graham who will circulate.

## 7. Commissioner Update- Lee McManus

Our early intervention and prevention review, has been looking at services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. These services can prevent the need for long term social care. For some smaller organisations applying for contracts (going through the tender process which takes time) for small amounts of monies is just not worth the time, so we have made the tendering process simpler.

This is not a cost saving measure, it is about trying to keep some services local and ensuring they are effective.

The review will finish at the end of March, so we have asked for an extension of current contracts until 2020 which will ensure security of services.

LM attended a meeting “East of England Long Term Vision Strategy- mainly around health. The aim is to improve the service people get from acute services and their GPs. The council went along to talk about how they will be helping with this.

## **8. New Build Housing Applications and Disability Access. Mark Taylor Cambridge City Council**

Housing law is improving when it comes to disabled facilities. New housing now has to have flat entrance and at entrance level there needs to be a toilet.

Code 2 (what used to be called life time homes) means the housing needs to be suitable for adaptation if the owner becomes disabled. So parking nearby, the width of the doorways needs to be able to accommodate a wheelchair, walls must be able to take hand rails and ceilings to support hoists and needs to have a downstairs toilet or a place where a lift can go.

Code 1 is housing at a higher criteria and must be able to accommodate large wheelchairs.

In the new local plan 5% of new builds must meet code 3 and all others must be a code 2 even those above ground level. Some small flats though by putting a lift in these premises are no longer functional due to lack of space. Since Nov 18 all Cambridge housing applications have to meet code 2 or 3. This is not the same for every council.

For more information on The Building Regulations 2010

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/540330/BR\\_PDF\\_AD\\_M1\\_2015\\_with\\_2016\\_amendments\\_V3.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/540330/BR_PDF_AD_M1_2015_with_2016_amendments_V3.pdf)

Commercial facilities will also come under scrutiny. Recently a case was taken to court when a wheelchair user complained that she was unable to access a takeaway shop. The shop had said other wheelchair user had been able to

access the facility so they deemed it suitable. However the courts agreed with the wheelchair user and 8k damages were paid.

The onus is though on the person who finds fault with the premises to prove that the lack of access or facility impaired their use of such. An individual can not just report a premises that has not made allowances they have to take them to court.

PB- would someone be able to get legal aid to help with this?

MT- No county court action is not free however some solicitors will do the work pro bono or there are organisations that do a no win no fee service.

PB- In the plans for social housing do all the areas have to come to same standards.

MT- No but Cambridge is taking the higher standards. All accommodations above ground level though will now need a lift.

WT- the job centre in Cambridge (Chesterton Rd) would not allow me to use their lift- fire regulations they said.

MT- they would have to provide the same service on ground level for you if this was the case.

## **9. Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency- Aaron Clarke**

The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) covers Cambridge City Council, South Cambs and Huntingdon District Council. It is a not for profit organisation that do adaptations in homes to make them accessible for disabled occupants.

To access the facilities grant people need to be assessed by an occupational therapist. This can delay things, so we are looking at ways to improve this. In the last year 46% of the work was on bathing assistance ie wet rooms, 16% hoists, 13% access, and 3% extensions or conversions.

We fitted 200 level access showers, 39 lifts or stair lifts and 15 extensions or garage conversions (up to £30) if this is not enough and the customer can not pay then there are some charities that may help.

We also have a budget for relocation grants- so costs associated with moving into suitable premises.

The grants that are available are different for each council and different depending on whether the home is rented or owned etc.

South Cambs are going to double their grants from £5k to £10k.

You can call the Home Improvement Agency direct 03450455202

MS- If someone in a private owned home needs a wet room is the cost set as a charge against the home?

ANS- In some councils this is the case, but the charge usually is collected only if the disabled person moves out of the home before 7 years.

If you are having adaptations done, then you need to agree to not move within 5years. There are some costs to the person too and people's abilities to pay towards this are assessed.

PB- If people move into retirement homes that are set up for better access, this would help. Should there be more of these types of property?

ANS- not many people use the relocation grant to move into these types of property.

## **10. Adult Social Care Forum**

Nothing to report

## **11. Action Log**

44. Siobhan MacBean has told us that there is a new board for SEN. It is multi agency and Pinpoint will be representing parent carers.

47. The organisations that were involved with the partnership review were those who were at the meeting that Jo attended.

48. Completed

## **12. AOB**

**Date of next meeting 21<sup>st</sup> May**  
**Dobbie Garden Centre Huntingdon**