



Report of the

March 2, 2009 meeting of the Learning Disability Forum in Tynebank Resource Centre.

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Who was there?

Seonid Stevenson	Carer
Margaret Cessford	Smart Talk and LD Forum Rep
Noreen Russell	Carer
Todd Holloron	Scottish Society for Autism
Kevin Ramsay	Service User
Kirstin Doherty	Service User
Michael Foley	Support Worker, Tynebank
Sue van der Broek	Carers of East Lothian and LD Forum Rep
Shannon Leslie	Planning and Commissioning, ELC
George Paterson	ELCCF Communications Worker
Lesley Aitkenhead	ELCCF Development Manager

Report of last meeting; matters arising:

Procurement: In February, the LD Forum focussed on the new Procurement strategy and the issues which arose from the new way in which services were being rethought and 'bought in'.

East Lothian Council were at the first stage of the new Procurement system; tendering for Generic 'Care at Home' Services, such as home helps. Tendering for Specialist Services is the next step.

Members were unhappy that this process had not been approved through any of the joint planning groups. Service users and carers have only been involved in the procurement of 'generic' services at the very late stage of interviewing, and there was general agreement that members were unclear why the Council is pursuing this method of procurement and do not fully understand the implications for their care.

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Members all agreed that the Council should take stock of the procurement process for generic services and ensure that there is full discussion with the all the planning groups and forums before embarking on procurement of 'specialist' services.

There was long discussion on how specialist services would be brought in and which criteria be used to determine provision of services with the local authority's limited budget.

Social Workers: Forum members voiced concern over the current allocation of social workers and the notice given to service users as to having familiar contacts withdrawn.

There were worries that responsibilities for allocation lay with an already overworked social work team, and that no 'exit strategy' seemed to be in operation notifying the service user as to a change, reduction, or withdrawal of service.

One voice at the Forum said: "If any social worker's off long term sick you get a letter saying to contact their senior in the meantime and that you're on waiting list for review. I didn't understand you were on a waiting list for a social worker and that you hadn't been allocated one at all. It was back to square one. It was upsetting knowing you didn't have anybody."

Procurement:

Sometimes people working outside East Lothian Council are hired by the council to do specialised work for the council. This 'hiring' is called procurement, or, how the council 'buys-in' services.

The Council are changing the way it **procures 'care-at-home' services**, such as home helps. This is bound to effect the people of the ELCCF Forum communities.

A paper on how the council is going about changing its procurement policy for care-at-home services, is added to the end of this LD Forum Report.

If you, your family or carer have any response of opinion on the procurement issue, you can let us know on the **Learning Disability Have Your Say** page on the **ELCCF website**,

Or, contact ELCCF at ELCCF, c/o Tynepark House, Poldrate, Haddington, EH41 4DA, email info@elccf.org, or phone 01620 822 212.

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Fears were expressed that the long term complex care team were overwhelmed, and that there were not enough field workers.

"The Council used to have social workers placed with the same person for years, and it was great - but we'll never hear of that again."

Forum members suggested ELC Services Manager Linda Young be invited to the next Forum meeting and be asked to give a picture of how services are to be restructured.

Report from Joint Planning Group

Shannon reported on the **Partnership in Practice** document which was signed off in February and going to print. JPG are finalising the Action Plan for the PiP agreement. Copies of the PiP should be available on the council's website and made available to the Forum for its next meeting. The PiP contains six themes and the JPG are to decide which to tackle first. One theme particularly sensitive to the Forum was that of Respite.

"I have to travel through to the West for any kind of respite, but for my Mum and Dad's sake I wish it could be more local."

"Councillor Ruth Currie has said that if people want a purpose build respite centre in East Lothian, there is money to do that. But it would be unrealistic to suggest it would be able to answer all the diverse respite needs."

Forum members discussed the range of respite needs, the limited amount of opportunities and the 'wish lists' of carers and service users.

It was suggested that Vanessa Strong, the council's newly appointed respite officer be invited to a future meeting of the Forum to hear and discuss future plans and provision.

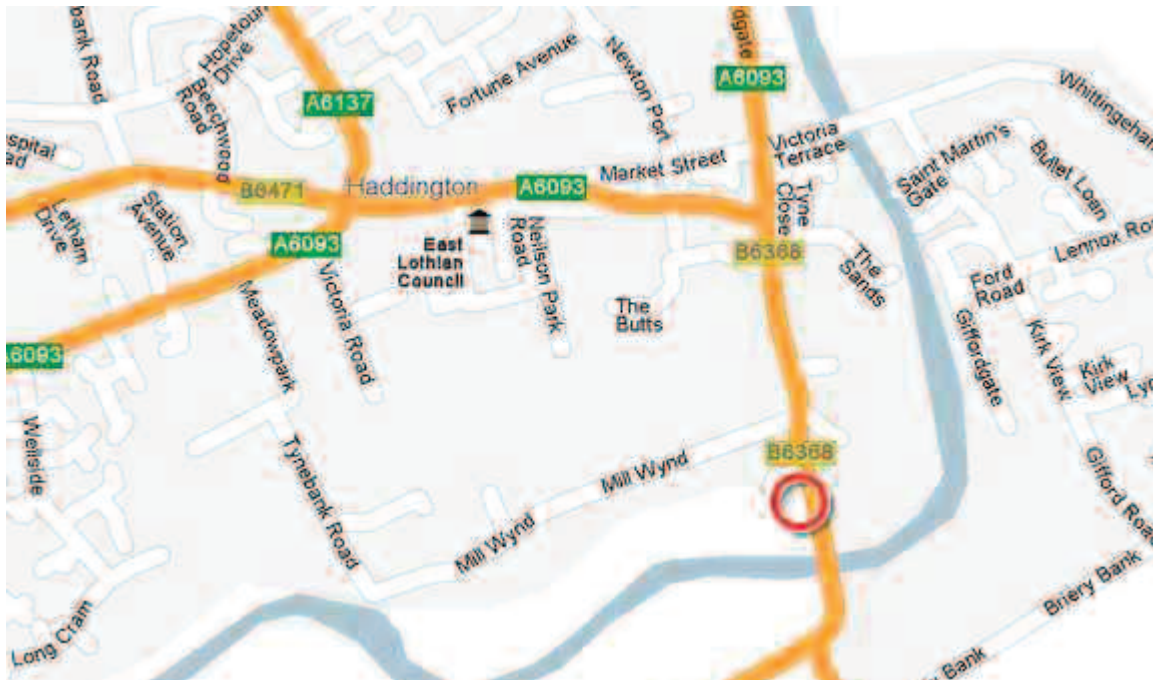
AOB

Margaret reported on the recent Smart Talk group's attendance at the recent Partners in Advocacy 10th annual conference in Dundee. Members had the chance to hear speakers and lectures and mingle with learning disabled people from all over Scotland.

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East Lothian Community Health Partnership wants the Forum to be involved in consultation on the new East Lothian primary care centre on the Wireworks site in Musselburgh. Lesley said it was important the Forum offer suggestions on design and services because often the learning disabled community and carers tend to be overlooked.

The next meeting of East Lothian Learning Disability Forum will be 10.30 - 12.00 on Monday, 11th May at Tynepark House, Poldrate, Haddington.



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**Contact ELCCF c/o Tynepark House, Poldrate. Haddington
EH41 4DA. Tel: 01620 822212, email info@elcccf.org.
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Addition to Report:

Procurement of 'care at home' services

Procurement – purchasing quality services at best value.

East Lothian Council are changing the way they purchase 'care at home' services. The reason they are changing is because the old system did not allow them to show if they were getting value for money nor did it show quality of the service people were getting.

In this new system private or voluntary providers can tender to provide a 'care at home' service and will have to show positive outcomes for people who use the service as well as the quality of service.

The new home care provision will be split geographically into three areas of equal population where at least two providers will operate in any one area.

These are the stages of procurement...

1. The Council puts together a specification of the services.

This means detailing all the requirements you expect the service provider to deliver.

2. The Council puts the specification out to tender.

This means they advertise the specification and invite costed tenders/proposals from service providers.

3. The providers will complete a quality and price combination tender.

This means providers have to show in their tender the quality of service they will provide for a price.

4. The Council will choose which provider offers the best value for money. This does not necessarily mean they will choose the cheapest tender or the most expensive.

5. Providers who are awarded the contract must show how well their service operates in terms of quality and best value by filling out performance indicators and having regular reviews with the Local Authority.

6. Service users and carers will be involved at all stages of the procurement process including the reviews.

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Care at home services

The Council are carrying out the procurement process in 3 stages:

- 1. Generic Services (Domiciliary Care Services)**
- 2. Specialist Services (Personal Care & working with people needing specialist care)**
- 3. In House Services (Services provided by the Council)**

A group of people who use services and carers will be involved in the procurement process at each stage, feeding in the views and ideas from the wider membership.

Outcomes

It would be helpful for people who receive a care at home service and their carers to tell the East Lothian Community Care Forum what outcomes services should be asked to report on.

Some of the things people at Forums have said in the past about quality of service are:

Flexibility of work. Staff who are able to do what you want when you want within the parameters identified when you were assessed/reviewed.

Not having too many different people caring for you. You have said that you like to have the same people who you get to know and trust.

Code of conduct. You have said that you like to establish a code of conduct that ensures that when appointments or arrangements are changed you are informed in plenty of time. If a different person is coming than you are expecting you would like to know in advance.

Flexibility with time. You have said that you don't like to be rushed. Sometimes staff try to do things such as bathing in a hurry if they are running late. This can be very upsetting.

You can contact the office with any comments or views at info@elccf.org or Tell us at the new **Have Your Say section of the **ELCCF** website.**

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