

**Supporting People Service User Group
Minutes
Monday 22 January 2008
11.30 am - 2.00 pm, ESDA Offices,
Faraday Road, Eastbourne**

Present:

David Price, Chair	Seldridge
Patricia Sorrell	Jane Smith
Amanda Bignell	Debbie Holcombe
Ina Ferguson	John Potter
Tudor Noble	Sue Kearton (Support Worker)
Faith Cordy	Olivia Wesson
Maureen Martini	Jo Fitch
Carolyn Lewis	Stephen Groom
Simon Bolton	Anthony Malson
Candice Miller	Elaine Stewart (Minutes)

1 Introductions

David Price welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

2 Minutes of the last meeting held on 1 October

David Price spoke about the main points of the last meeting and everyone agreed that the minutes were correct.

4 Feedback from the Supporting People Inspection Focus Group

David Price spoke about the Supporting People Inspection which was held by the Audit Commission in November 2007. Members of the Service User Group met with the inspectors and answered questions about Supporting People. The Inspectors were very nice and were interested to hear about what Supporting People were doing well and what could be improved.

Candice Miller told the meeting that the Inspection result should be known soon. Elaine Stewart will add this to the Agenda for the next meeting so that the Service User Group can share the findings of the report.

One of the members asked for an explanation of what services Supporting People provide. David asked Candice to explain this during the Any Other Business section of the Agenda.

5 Communication and information – newsletters

Candice informed the meeting that at the moment Supporting People provide two newsletters. One called SPLASH which is sent to all Providers and sent out four times per year and a Service User Newsletter which is sent to Service Users

twice per year. It has been suggested that it would be better to add the two newsletters together to provide one newsletter which would be sent out to all Providers and Service Users.

Candice asked the members for their views:

- It was felt that the publication should be renamed as the title doesn't really represent what the newsletter is about. One member said they had seen the SPLASH newsletter on their noticeboard but didn't read it as they assumed it was about swimming.
- It was suggested that the format of the newsletter should be changed to include larger type.
- A taped version of the new newsletter should be made available.

Decision:

Service Users to send Candice any good examples of newsletters.

The next SPLASH/Service User Newsletter will be combined and will be brought back to the next Service User Group for their views. The newsletter will be shown to different sorts of Service Users for their comments to see if they find it accessible.

6 Update on the service user group advocate and representative

David Price and Candice met recently to discuss the list of duties an advocate/representative would carry out for Service Users.

The service is being developed with the following partners:

- East Sussex County Council
- The District and Borough Councils of East Sussex
- East Sussex Probation Service
- Hastings and Rother PCT
- East Sussex Downs and Weald PCT
- Supporting People Service Providers

A draft list of the duties and responsibilities of the advocate are attached for your information. Candice read out the main responsibilities and asked the Service User Group if they would like any more duties added to the list.

The main duties are to be the voice of the Supporting People Service User Group and to be accountable to the Supporting People Service User Group. The Advocate will represent the Service User Group at strategic meetings such as the Strategic Forum (which makes decisions about how Supporting People money is spent, and the Core Strategy Group (which decides how services should be organised).

Candice will advertise the position in the newsletter which goes out to advocacy organisations. Candice will also contact Advocacy Organisations direct to see if

they would like to apply for the position. This part time position will be funded by Supporting People.

Comments:

- Need to make sure the successful person is good at speaking up for others.
- Mencap has an advocacy branch – they will send details to Candice.

Decision:

It was decided that it would be a good idea if two or three suitable advocates were selected by David and Candice and were invited to the Service User Group to explain what they could do for the group. The group could then decide who they would like to represent them.

7 Supporting People Five Year Strategy – discussion

Candice explained the Supporting People Five Year Strategy. This is a plan which explains what Supporting People want to do over the next five years. Supporting People spoke to Service User Groups and Providers and used information from them to update the Strategy.

We are now looking at how to make the changes. East Sussex Supporting People support about 8,000 people – of these about 6,500 are older people, mainly in sheltered housing. When Supporting People started in 2003 we took over the services which were already in place but they were not necessarily the services that were needed. We need to improve services. We want to provide more support that is not tied to buildings which is called Floating Support. This support follows you wherever you move.

The Service User Group asked how a person becomes eligible for Supporting People Services. Candice informed the meeting that Supporting People has an Eligibility Policy which explains this in detail. We will bring a copy to the next meeting.

Supporting People would like to ask the Service User Group what sort of support they think people need. A draft model will be published in May for a 12 week consultation period and SP would like the help of the Service User Group to decide how to offer a more flexible service.

It was decided that another meeting needs to be set up to discuss the subject in more detail. A working group will be set up to take this matter forward. Elaine/Candice to invite Service Users to attend once a new date is set.

It was felt that the ESDA offices in Eastbourne are a good venue for Service User Group meetings and we will use them again.

8 Any Other Business

1. Support Worker attendance at Service User Group meetings

The members of the Service User Group voted and it was decided that Support Workers were welcome to continue to attend Service User Group meetings.

2. Clarification about “What is Supporting People?”

Candice will send out SP leaflets to members of the Service User Group which explain what Supporting People do. A CD version of the leaflet has already been sent to Seaview and Candice will arrange for a CD version to be sent to Mencap, 24A Victoria Drive. If anybody else needs a CD version please contact Elaine on elaine.stewart@eastsussex.gov.uk or 01273 482805.

3. Visit from Supporting People

Amanda would like somebody from Supporting People to attend Redman King House to speak to the residents regarding the services Supporting People offer. Candice will arrange for this to happen.

Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held at ESDA’s offices on 26 March 2008, 10.00 am to 2.00 pm to discuss Supporting People’s Five Year Strategy. Please let us know if you are able to attend by sending back the reply slip attached to these minutes.

Further meeting dates for your diaries:

22nd April 11.30 - 2.00 pm, ESDA’s offices, Eastbourne

16th July 10.00 – 1.00 pm, ESDA’s offices, Eastbourne

22nd October 10.00 – 1.00 pm, ESDA’s offices, Eastbourne
