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**Learning Disability Member Meet Up Notes**

**Thursday 07 October 2021**

**Attendees:**

Bronia Angove - Purple Patch Arts

Rachel Koivunen - People in Action

John Rozenstein - Chapeltown CAB

Ann Wilson - SLATE

Jude Woods - CHANGE

Erin Hodson - Caring For Life

Stephanie Harper, Sue Munday - Hft

Tina Turnbull, Sally Jude - People Matters

Rachel Kingdom, Ione Barton - Yorkshire Dance

Madeleine Fahy - Connect in the North

Jez Coram, Karen Fenton, Daisy Morgan - Forum Central

Darren Meade - Leeds Cancer Awareness Project

Megan Arundel - Leeds Cancer Awareness Project

Andy Rawnsley, Lou Cunningham - Aspire CBS

Bethany Livingstone

Cath Lee - Leeds Mencap

Claire Hawker - Specialist Autism Services

Laura Stott - United Response

Paul Sellers - Dimensions

John Preston - TCV

1. **Welcome & housekeeping - Jez**

Jez welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Member Knowledge Share – Break Out Rooms**

The meeting broke into groups to connect and share knowledge of current pressures, what’s happening in their organisations and for the people they support, any solutions or good practice gleaned. The main topics of discussion were:

* **Recruitment -** huge challenges in terms of finding staff and filling vacancies, trying to think of solutions and do things differently, people finding jobs elsewhere
	+ It’s been bubbling for a while but it’s the toughest it’s got; burnout amongst staff, frightening time especially going into Christmas - when does it end?
	+ Linked to Real Living Wage - how can we show that we value staff? Difficult to not be able to do that in the sector
	+ What can Leeds do - collective responses/ideas would be great, recognising we are stronger together
* **Training** - link to One Workforce and Transferable Training project
* **High sickness amongst staff**, isolation, and testing, feels tough, where’s the positivity?
* **People anxious about benefit reviews** that are taking place and going into another lockdown over winter
* **Lots of new referrals** and pressures on housing
* **Trend of balancing act in services**, still operating hybrid services, welcoming people back into services, transitioning of people in services based on new asks, negotiating guidelines and when to ease restrictions in services – negotiating family visits, family stays over xmas. People coming back when they decide to – some very anxious still, some very eager to return, face-to-face / hybrid delivery of services – staffing issues in hybrid services.
* **Ongoing Estates** - issues and room capacity and distancing, finding spaces that allow you to get back up to capacity whilst balancing staff needs and how comfortable people are changing, estates needs linked to this
* **Outbreaks in services -** easing in one service led to an outbreak
* **Contract negotiations** – moving away from block contracts
* **Managing mental health of staff -** Cited as a concern/time consuming for senior leaders supporting those working face to face in projects and the concerns around
* **Provider Information Returns** from CQC
* **Respite Crisis**

As the Forum Central rep for workforce, Tina suggested coming together to gather information through a survey and feedback on this issue rather than having individual conversations. LCC’s commitment to being a Living Wage employer and this to feed down supply chain to providers, and the increase in National Living Wage expected in April and time taken for uplift process in LCC were both also raised as considerations to feed into this discussion.

***ACTION****: Tina to pick up set up of survey with Jez; Karen to explore taking to the next Health and Care Leaders Network meeting*

1. **Mandatory Vaccinations and Exemptions - Andy Rawnsley**

Andy gave an overview of the requirements for mandatory vaccinations in care home settings that have recently come into effect.

* Following a consultation about making Covid vaccinations mandatory for staff who work in registered care homes, people who provide services in registered care homes won’t be able to deploy any staff that aren’t vaccinated by 11th November (and aren’t medically exempt)
* A permanent exemption process was agreed last week and people can get proof of exemption from their GP
* The Government has started a new round of consultation about extending mandatory vaccinations across health and social care, within CQC regulated services. They are also consulting about making flu vaccine also mandatory requirement
* It’s worth keeping this on the radar in case it is broadened out beyond CQC regulated services
* The consultation is still open in case anyone would like to contribute
1. **Aidan Smith (Head of Commissioning Working Age Adults) - Financial Challenge**

Aidan presented the financial challenges facing Leeds City Council over the coming three years. Adults and Health has a balanced budget for this year, but LCC is cutting costs, making efficiencies, and freezing recruitment across the board. Over the next 3 years there are budget pressures of £126m. £20m savings were identified at the September Exec Board meeting which impact on home care, direct payments, Continuing Health Care eligibility amongst other things. The papers from the meeting can be accessed online [here](https://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=102&MId=11358&Ver=4).

Aidan noted that the Council feels confident that it will be able to manage savings, service provision and high-quality services, and made clear that it wants to protect the third sector, highlighting positive work currently taking place including day services reopening and service development work.

Questions put to Aidan covered:

* Consultation with providers on proposed LCC cuts, will providers be engaged earlier in the process - discussions will be had from the outset this year
* Living Wage commitment - will that flow down to providers and contracts? Danger of having low paid workforce who get further behind as the years go on. Aidan confirmed that the workforce crisis and level of pay are significant issues in terms of attractiveness. There hasn’t been a position or policy yet but the aspiration is to have employers that can support the Real Living Wage.
	+ Aidan will find out whether LCC has signed up to the scheme
* A recruitment / staffing survey was proposed to collect a sector view, to be shared with Aidan as an opportunity to provide a better picture of what’s happening across providers
* Living Wage Rise in April 2022 to £9.42 and annual uplifts – issue of uplifts process falling in line with April increase - trying to streamline the process. Tina raised challenges about understanding the wage going up, national insurance going up - Aidan agreed we need to be able to have more certainty about what can be passed through to providers
* Real Living Wage, LCC as Living Wage Foundation, Social Value and scoring on tender contracts, small to medium sized organisations scored lower on tenders as not currently paying NLW to staff, affects providers coming into the market
* Nature of care packages, cost reducing, travel increasing, providers paying above NLW - Tina to feed information in about cost of care, which can be coordinated through Forum Central
1. **Member Updates**
* Leeds Cancer Awareness - Darren

One of the project’s target groups is people with a Learning Disability as screening rates are low. Darren and Megan can come along and deliver sessions to service users/groups including easy read resources, body part models - they are happy to adhere to covid rules. They can also do staff training. If you have any questions or would like to book in sessions please email megan.arundel@uni.uk.net.

1. **Close**

The next meeting is Wednesday 24 November from 1 – 2:30pm.