



Staffordshire LINK Co-ordinating Group
Friday 14th October 2011
10.30am – 12.30pm

Attendees:

Will Taylor (Chair)
David Loades
Dave Bassett
Lynne Gammon
Lynn Ashburner
Paul Jay

Apologies:

3 LINK participants

Jackie Owen (Manager)
Sue Baknak (Co-ordinator)

Julie Thompson-Edwards (Staffordshire County Council)
Dave Ellis (Engaging Communities Staffordshire Project)

MINUTES OF MEETING

Areas of Discussion	Action
<p>1. Welcome and formal co-option of Group members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• WT welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked JO to give an update on the process of the co-option of Group members.• JO gave feedback on the process. 5 candidates applied and 4 have been offered a place on the Group and 3 have accepted: Brenda Constable, Sue Adey and Bob Rankin. Elizabeth Jarrett was also offered a place but is also being interviewed for the position of LINK Development Worker and will depend on the outcome of that process. One other applicant is on holiday and will be seen on 24th November. New members of the Group will be joining by the next meeting on 11th November and is a welcome opportunity to strengthen the Group. An induction process is being developed for new members and will be meeting with LINK staff/Co-ordinating Group to discuss communication.• Comment from LINK participant present: Equality and social cohesion should be included in the training.	<p>WT response: the organisation is happy to evolve/change in order to work smarter.</p>

Areas of Discussion	Action
<p>2. Apologies and Minutes of last meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No apologies received. LG advised that she had sent through an email with apologies for the last Group meeting but this had not been received. Comment from LINK participant present: Are PPGs invited to attend these meetings? If a formal invitation was sent to PPGs this would encourage more public involvement. Minutes of the last meeting action points will be picked up through today's Agenda. Minutes agreed and accepted. 	<p>JO response: we recognise that there is a lot of work to do around engagement and targeting key groups and may look at inviting specific groups.</p>
<p>3. Declarations of interest</p> <p>DL – Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Councillor and OSC representative.</p>	
<p>4. LINK Activity Update</p> <p>JO updated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training. Discussions with PJ regarding training and induction programme development. Lead up to HealthWatch in October next year planning larger events about HealthWatch and what people want from it and assessing what we need to undertake/deliver. Any thoughts or suggestions to JO. Enter and view – further training/assessments sessions being run next week and now have a further 5 authorised representatives but we have lost 6 people due to other commitments/personal reasons. Undertook a visit to the Littleton Ward at Cannock Hospital and the enter and view report is available on the LINK website. A further piece of work is also being planned to look at intermediate care services in a broader context. Enter and view visit to Roller Mill Day Centre in Penkridge where Age UK provide services for people with dementia, was undertaken on 6th October and initial feedback is very positive and the report is being drafted and will be available shortly. Day services are unregulated and Roller Mill could set the standard for what we are looking at in day services. LG will go through the schedule in enter and view update. Review of the LINK. Part of the transition process to HealthWatch by the Local Authority is to review the LINK eg. How well it is known; what it has achieved; how useful as a vehicle for engagement. The Local Authority has developed a survey questionnaire which will be sent out to all individuals on the LINK database on their behalf. Invitations will also be sent out to a range of people asking if they would like to join one of two focus groups: one for stakeholder organisations and the other for individual participants. The focus groups will be facilitated by the Local Authority. This evaluation activity will take place from now to end of November 2011. 	

- The LINK is looking at what it needs to do in order to be more representative of Staffordshire and this work will be incorporated into the work brief for the LINK Development Workers. As we move towards HealthWatch we will know what we need to focus on to be representative of all communities of Staffordshire.
- WT advised that the contract monitoring report had been developed and picks up information on financial commitments, engagement activities and areas to be addressed and enter and view activity. JTE advised that this was a very useful tool and congratulated KFR/SB/JO/WT on developing and producing it. The report will be updated monthly and available on the LINK website.
- Comment from LINK participant: it would be useful to incorporate a 'you said/we did section' as well as a 'you said/we haven't done yet and set a timeframe for doing so'. Also more collaboration needed regarding consultations: the public are asked by many organisations on the same/similar topics eg. UHNS big conversations, PPGs/WMAS/LINK/HealthWatch.
- LINK is currently in the process of recruiting LINK Development Workers to go out and work in communities across Staffordshire. Each LDW will cover 2 districts each and focus on i) working with existing networks and ii) working with individuals who are not involved in networks around their particular health and social care issues and engage with people who are interested in health and social care services in their own localities as the LINK does not have a great presence in all areas – Leek being one of them. LDWs will be commencing shortly and will report back at the next meeting.
- In order to raise awareness of the LINK a 45 second advert to be broadcast in the A&E departments at UHNS and Cannock Hospitals every 20 minutes has been commissioned by the LINK. JO ran through the draft advert and asked for comments/feedback. Feedback from Group/LINK participants:
 - Use of the word 'voice' – some people do not have a voice or feel they don't have a voice – use different terminology. Agreed to use the word 'view' instead.
 - Text is too small under the photos of services.
 - Include a clearer photo of a residential care home/nursing home.
 - Emphasise that need the public's views in order to get changes made.
 - Share with the PPGs.
 - Include a freephone number if possible.

- Transition. DL/LA are putting together a transition plan for the LINK to HealthWatch. DL gave a presentation on the transition and also distributed a PR/marketing brief in respect of raising awareness and increasing media coverage for the LINK and its transition to HealthWatch and asked for comments and feedback.
- Comments from LINK participant: there is too much duplication/lack of collaboration and this is something HealthWatch should address this with improved communication/collaboration. There is a conflict of interest if complaints received are about local authority service provision as the funding is granted by the local authority.
- DB advised that the PCT now engage with the public and there are 3 monthly meetings with Clinical Commissioning Groups and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In the north of the county the PPGs have 2000 members and the CCG are undertaking a new initiative which will give the public, patients and carers the opportunity to be involved in their local health services. South Staffs PCT are also looking at this initiative.
- Comment from LINK participant: as more layers are introduced to the system, the voice of the PPGs becomes diluted.
- DB advised that the Chair of the Co-ordinating Group sits on the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board; the Vice Chair sits on the County Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that DL sits on the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Health and Wellbeing Board and the Cannock OSC.
- Comment from LINK participant: Effective equality training should be given for everyone on these Boards/Committees.

Updates from the Group

Enter and View

LG gave an update as follows:

- Reviewed templates for enter and view visits to make completion of the documents easier and more consistent across the visits eg. environment – what is being looked at specifically. There is a burden on a select few of the volunteers who have more experience and so looking to help those volunteers who are new to health and social care visits so that producing the reports is easier.
- Schedule of visits is being reviewed and aiming to reach c.25 visits by Christmas and thanks to all the volunteers.
- Looking at doing announced visits in all districts in line with the LINK priorities of learning disability services; elderly care, hospital services and dementia services and in response to concerns raised.

DL to email powerpoint presentation to SB for distribution and to go on the LINK website.

Response: Funding streams are determined by central Government. Social care services will still have a statutory duty/legal requirement to resolve complaints but there is still potential for conflicts of interest.

- Timescale for a visit process from planning through to producing the final report is 3 months. Looking at the schedule for January to March 2012 to be completed by Christmas including follow-up activity on earlier visits.
- CQC asking LINK to look at a couple of areas to go in after their visits. Regular meetings with CQC/JCU contract monitoring officers to share concerns and align visits.
- Regular meetings with NHS acute trusts.
- JO/LG pre-visit meeting next week re: George Bryan visit.
- Focussing on the process as well in order to streamline the process to make it easier for volunteers.
- Comments from LINK participant: has anything changed as a result of visits?
- Great presentation on enter and view activity and the way feedback on the services is given is good. If the public are to participate they have to feel it is worthwhile and the information used.
- Would like a debate on euthanasia by HealthWatch.
- Pastoral care needed for those with no religion.
- Highlight the duplication of services being provided eg. HealthWatch, CVSs, Ramblers Association, County and District Councils and the NHS all providing services.
- There should be a clear route for getting views across once.

Engaging Communities Staffordshire

- WT attended the steering group meeting on 12th September and provided a feedback report.

Mid-Staffs NHS FT AGM

- WT attended the Trust AGM on 26th September and provided a feedback report highlighting the following:
 - LINK's enter and view process mentioned re: governor visits.
 - Resourcing – struggling to recruit staff; operating at a deficit c. £13m; reducing activity by 17%; 20% reduction in staff numbers and 25% reduction in estate. LINK's role – how will these changes affect the delivery of services? Pro-active role for LINK re: how the public will be informed/consulted about these changes and how will they be able to influence them.

Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board

- WT attended the first meeting of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and distributed draft Terms of Reference to the Group and highlighted the reference to LINK Representative:
 - Represent public and patient views about local health and social care needs and the performance of services
 - Embrace future role as HealthWatch, and

Response: issues raised have included social isolation/access to rehab/ therapy services and activities and recommendations included in the LINK report. Follow-up activity to check recommendations have been followed up will take place from January to March.

JO to contact LINK participant for any further comments/information.

Areas of Discussion	Action
<p>5. Finance</p> <p>WT provided an update as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend to date as at 5th October is £96,878. Peter Shakespear (SCC finance officer) has provided forward projections including staffing costs, LINK Development Workers, rent and overheads which leaves c.£61,000 to be committed up to 31st March 2012 eg. marketing and events. LG expressed the need to be clear on the ‘joining-up’ of the marketing/communications/consultations and events and be informed from the review of the LINK. DL suggested looking at portable units for town centres. Discussions/decisions need to be made as soon as possible. • Contract monitoring report has been developed. WT thanks SB/KFR for a job well done. The report will be a useful tool to identify key areas for activity/work planning/enter and view and make it easier to track progress. Looking to show that events/meetings that are mapped in Stafford also cover service delivery in other areas. The report is embryonic and WT welcomes any feedback/comments/ideas. The report will be available on the LINK website. • Audit Report. The final audit report has now been received and will copy on to the LINK website with paper copies being available on request. The audit report picked up 4 areas:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Procurement/tendering system. The need for the LINK to develop its own procurement arrangements rather than using the county council’s arrangements. Draft procurement arrangements have now been developed and these were circulated for discussion. 3 levels of expenditure £1-£750, £751-£3,000 and £3,001 and above. Tender Board to be formed to assess tenders and WT not to be a member of that Board. Volunteers from the Group for the Board. Peter Shakespear will act as an observer. SB to provide admin support to the Board. Level 2 of £751-£3,000 will seek 3 competitive quotes – procurement arrangements to include JO and Chair of the Tender Board will assess the quotes against set criteria and reach a decision. Procurement arrangements were agreed by the Group with this revision. LG would like to sit on the Board. ○ Volunteer mileage claims. Discrepancies of 1 or 2 miles were identified over the course of the year for the same return journey. All mileage claims are checked and will continue to be so. ○ Conflicts of interest of the Group. WT explained the full process of declaring conflicts of interest at the time of the audit and it was agreed to also conduct an annual declaration of interests by the Group members at the AGM (even if a nil return). 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Petty cash. LINK has a petty cash float of £100 for smallscale disbursements. Audit has recommended that this is reconciled by a third party. Peter Shakespear has agreed to do this on a 3 monthly basis. ○ Group members accepted the final report and responses proposed. ● Funding Allocations Consultation. A joint response with Staffordshire County Council will be submitted. JTE is formulating the response and this will be shared with the Group. 	
<p>5. AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● LG advised that she has been working through the Safeguarding Policy with SB and proposed that she be named as the operational safeguarding lead for the LINK. The Group agreed this. LG is sending out the policy to the Group and it will go on to the LINK website. ● LG is arranging a workshop event for all LINK enter and view visitors including lunch in early December. ● LG asked how the LINK captures comments, views etc. SB advised that we use a variety of formats eg. website, views/concerns forms, feedback from events/workshops and meetings, Patient Opinion which is entered into the LINK database from which reports can be run in order to identify themes/areas of concern to inform the LINK work plan. ● George Bryan Mental Health service visit is taking place on Thursday 27th October. LG would like all volunteers to have training on mental health capacity/learning disabilities training. ● JO advised that SSPCT cluster have issued dates for consultations on 3 events to be facilitated by LINK in November – Burton, Stafford and Tamworth but these have yet to be confirmed/details released. The PCT will give presentations and details of the proposals and the LINK will facilitate the table discussions, take comments and submit feedback to the PCT. ● JO advised that an application form for Co-option on to the Co-ordinating Group was received from POhWER (ICAS). Group felt that a partnership arrangement with POhWER would be more appropriate particularly in view of the transition to HealthWatch re: capability/capacity and resources. ● LG asked how the Engagement Communities Project/LINK (HealthWatch) transition plans were going to be aligned and what would the partnership arrangements terms of reference be and how will these be discussed. ● DE advised that the public consultation for Engaging Communities is being led by the Health and Wellbeing Board. A questionnaire is being distributed to capture people’s views about key issues on complaints/information/signposting services and will be targeting the public and PPGs rather than 	<p>JO speaking to Paul Jay about this when the meet on 24th October.</p> <p>JO will provide details to the Group and if anyone is interested in facilitating please let JO know.</p> <p>DL to read the document and feedback to the next meeting.</p> <p>Agenda item for the next Business Planning meeting of the Group.</p>

<p>organisations. Community Council of Staffordshire and SCIO will be helping to facilitate this engagement.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any Questions • No questions were submitted prior to the meeting. • Questions raised at the meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are the Co-ordinating Group meetings advertised in the press? ○ Engaging Communities meeting venue? ○ Are the voluntary sector involved. ○ Mission statement references local for Local HealthWatch. What is your interpretation of local. ○ Need 8 LINK Development Workers – 1 for each district. The LINK has a budget and could afford it. The SCC have developed its new structure and local district commissioners. 	<p>Response: Not in the press but they are in the LINK Bulletin and on the LINK website. It is costly to do so but will look into it again.</p> <p>Response: Oak Room, Stafford County Council, Stafford. Yes, via SCIO (Dave Bengel).</p> <p>Response: Local will be the whole of Staffordshire except Stoke on Trent and will look to PPGs to start to influence local districts. WT advised that the Group welcome this feedback and it will be considered when looking at budget allocations.</p>
<p>Meeting closed. Next meeting Friday 11th November 2011. Please note the start of this meeting 10.30am and the venue is Beacon International Centre, Staffordshire Technology Park, Stafford.</p>	