

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LINK STEWARDSHIP GROUP
Held in the Conference Room HQ Building,
21st October 2010 6.00 p.m.

Present:

Chris Boote (Chair)
Barry Lucas (Vice Chair)
Peter Woodley
Gennifer Paul-Gomez
Dan Spry
Joe Dunn (Vice Chair)
John Miskelly
Fred Morton
Julie Paget
Jake Paget
Lois Lloyd
Dot Throssell
Vicky Shipway (LINK Support Team Manager)
Christine Breckell (Minutes)

Apologies:

Geoff Marks
Karen Morse
Althea Morgan

Agenda Items

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 15th September 2010 were agreed, with the correction that in point 4, fourth point of the issues meeting follow up, head and neck cancer surgery should be corrected to sarcoma surgery.

A query was raised as to whether Link had received any contact from the Plymouth Herald for comments on any reports made on Plymouth ambulance service – Vicky replied that she had contacted the Herald, but had received no requests for comment as yet.

2. Requests for involvement

- ★ LINK has been asked to participate in a review of pharmacy services. This has a closing date of 7th December, and a newsflash is to be sent out to the membership to ask for their views and feedback.
- ★ LINK has been asked to comment on revisions to the NHS constitution policy on staff whistle blowing. As the cut off date for this document is imminent, the Stewardship Group gave verbal responses to the questions contained within the document, which were all in agreement with the rights of staff to be able to make reports without fear of reprisal by their employer, and also agreeing with the proposal that all organisations should expect their staff to raise concerns. These responses will be forwarded to the Department of Health by return.

- ★ LINK has been asked to participate in an autism strategy consultation. Due to time constraints in deadline dates, Vicky has responded on behalf of the Stewardship group members, but hard copies of the questions and the responses she gave were available for members to take away. Further to this the LINK has been invited to join a partnership board to drive forward the autism strategy, the representative preferably being someone with autism or a carer in this area, as someone with experience of the condition is required. The group raised concerns as to whether an official meeting would be the right venue to support someone with autism to join in constructively– more creativity may be required by the organisers to allow meaningful participation. Vicky is to forward these concerns.
- ★ Localities & neighbourhoods in Plymouth – Vicky is awaiting confirmation of the date when all Plymouth city council managers of neighbourhoods/localities are meeting together to try and obtain LINK stewardship group representation in these areas.
- ★ Vicky and Chris Boote had a meeting arranged with the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to brief them on the work of the LINK, but unfortunately the meeting was cancelled by Councillor Ricketts. Another date is to be arranged.

3. Healthy Plymouth Debrief

Chris asked for the views of the stewards upon the event. Joe said that he thought it was a good day, and he had met some wonderful people. There was a lot of interest in the LINK. David Connelly, chair of NHS Plymouth had spoken to him to offer to visit the LINK and update the stewards upon the work of the NHS trust. Peter Woodley expressed disappointment that the doctors and pharmacists of Plymouth had not chosen to be involved in the event. Gennifer thought that the day was a success, but was surprised at the numbers of people who said that they had not heard of the LINK after three events in quick succession.

Fred mentioned that when the tent was virtually empty as people were watching the break dancing, a group of children stole the majority of the pens/pencil giveaways. It was agreed that this point would be noted for future event planning.

Chris Boote stated that his target of reaching out together with Plymouth NHS had been achieved and that he thought that it had been a good event. Lois said that she would be pleased when LINK changes its name to HealthWatch, as it will help make it easier to explain LINK to the public, and ease confusion.

Julie Paget had spoken to the team conducting health MOT's, and reported that they had found the day very productive – over 50% of the people they had tested had been referred to their GP. Vicky said that she had spoken to David Connelly about the event, and he had been very pleased with the day; hopefully this will lead to its being repeated with more active participation and increased funding from the NHS next time.

Several lessons had been learned, which will improve future event planning, such as more preparation beforehand, to increase volunteer confidence and active involvement, especially regarding a quick, accurate explanation of the LINK. Extra clipboards will be purchased, so that volunteers find it quicker and easier to sign up new members, as much of the table space was too full to allow them to be used efficiently. The timescale of the day did not allow time for a team talk before the event began – next time have a meeting the day before the event. It was suggested that perhaps LINK could invest in an event planning workshop to increase efficiency for future events – costs are to be investigated and brought to the next meeting for discussion. Although the numbers of sign ups was lower than expected for such a busy day, the Stewardship group consensus was that the event had been a great success, and all agreed that it should be repeated at a future date.

A final point was made by Fred Morton, who said that although he has not long been a member, he has found all of the LINK events he has attended to be professional, and has enjoyed all he has attended.

An evaluation sheet has been prepared to send to contributors, which is currently with Sally Parker, Patient and Public Involvement Lead for NHS Plymouth for her input – when it is received back, it will be circulated, and the results fed back to the stewards.

Radio Devon interview – Chris congratulated Vicky on raising the profile of Healthy Plymouth and the Plymouth LINK through this highly successful interview. Vicky responded that Radio Devon is conducting a health series in the near future, and that she is hoping to become involved in it on behalf of the LINK to increase the organisations's public exposure.

4. Response to White Paper

- ★ Two new consultation documents have been received: 'Information Revolution' – IT streamlining and 'Greater Choice and Control' – increasing patient choice in hospital decisions. Vicky asked the group how they would like to give input. It was decided that the full document 'Greater choice and control' be sent via email to the stewards to read, as this is the topic most relevant to LINK. The stewards will then send in their feedback, which will be collated and brought to the next full meeting to discuss and produce a response.
- ★ Vicky will read through the 'Information Revolution' document and pick out the relevant points to bring to a subsequent meeting to be discussed and a response decided. The content of the extra stewardship group meeting set for 9th November was discussed, and a brief overview was given of the PCT splitting the commissioning of services and the provision of those same services. A talk is to be given at the meeting about both roles and what the changes will mean.

5. HealthWatch Update

There is a 12 month period between the end of LINK and the beginning of HealthWatch. Vicky has had a contract monitoring meeting this week with the local authority, which is pleased with LINK results and successes. Link will have its contract extended by one year to cover the period up to the beginning of HealthWatch, and on 18th November Vicky will attend a meeting following Plymouth City Council's spending review, at which point she will be told the LINK budget for the next financial year 2011/2012.

6. Opportunities for Involvement

An updated document was circulated, and Stewards invited to attend events. Vicky gave an overview of the work Chris Hall is involved in with volunteers

.7. Update on recent areas of work

Disabled access – Vicky has invited DAN to join forces on this issue. A task group is to be put together, which Vicky suggested interfaced with other disabled users organisations/groups within the city. Joe, John and Lois are to meet with Vicky to progress the work. Chris Boote emphasised that it is vital to involve disabled people with any visits that are carried out to ensure all aspects of concern are covered. A subgroup meeting date has been set on 23 November 10am at the HQ Building.

Mental health feedback – Fred has made suggestions on this. Vicky suggested that Fred, Julie and Dot review the feedback and Fred's suggestions, and liaise with PIPS to take the results to the LIT meeting, which connects to the service commissioners. A sub group meeting date has been set for 22 November at 10am.

LINK and PCT Team – access to GP's, dentists etc still a problem. PCT and LINK to host a meeting to invite other bodies to gather and collate information. Julie Paget is to provide feedback/issues raised

from a meeting hosted by the Racial Equality Council with BME women regarding health service access.

The CQC wants to use Plymouth LINK's work as a learning set. The task group now needs to meet with representatives from the PCT and CQC to progress the work. The next meeting is to be held in London on 12th January – Vicky and a LINK representative are to attend. Costings are to be obtained for an overnight stay in London as the travel time makes a day trip so long. Costs are to be taken to the next full meeting in November.

A clarification of the full role of the Visiting Team function was requested by John Miskelly. Problems arise when he is preparing reports and recommendations, as he is unsure of the remit.

The council Overview & Scrutiny panel had received a petition with 2.5 thousand signatures against the proposed (Winter 2010) consultation on a centralised gynaecological cancer surgery unit centred on Truro.

Chris Boote reported that at the Adult Health & Social Care overview & Scrutiny panel meeting on 13th October, Dr Simon Rule, Director Peninsula Cancer Network, indicated that the criteria against which the process for service change of the kind proposed had now been set out by the coalition government and took into account patient choice and the impact of choice. There were currently no new models for gynaecological cancer surgery in the Peninsula proposed. Patient choice was paramount but the service could improve. All cancer surgery however is regularly reviewed and in the event of any proposed change the new criteria would have to be met. An integral part of the process is to ensure patient and public involvement is engaged at the earliest opportunity.

8. Budget

A current budget sheet was circulated, and a breakdown of expenditure was given by Vicky. Chris Boote suggested a review be conducted at the next meeting to see where funds should be relocated if necessary to ensure an even flow. The website was discussed, and the decision for PAPOP and PIPS to each have a page on the LINK website and share costs approved. The stewards thought it a good idea as all of the services interlink.

At the next full meeting Vicky will know definite figures of any changes to the LINK budget, but Chris requested that scenarios also be prepared for a 20% reduction of the budget plus one for the true figures, to allow discussion of possible strategies. These are to be brought to the 25th November meeting.

Lois suggested that a possible reduction in outgoings could be achieved by participating in events run by other organisations.

9. Any other business

Chris Boote announced that he will not be available for the next 2 months, but has arranged with Joe Dunn for him to take over while Chris is away.

The meeting then entered Part 2.

13. Next meeting date

Tuesday 9th November 6-8pm - Stewardship Group Special meeting
Thursday 25th November 6-8pm – Stewardship Group meeting