

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LINK STEWARDSHIP GROUP**  
**Held in The Conference Room, HQ Building**  
**On 27<sup>th</sup> April 2011 at 6.00pm**

**Present:**

Vicky Shipway (LINK Support Team Manager)  
Sue Hodgson (Minutes)  
Barry Lucas (Vice Chair)  
Joe Dunn (Vice Chair)  
Chris Boote (Chair)  
Dot Throssell  
Fred Morton  
Lois Lloyd  
Geoff Marks

**Apologies:**

Gennifer Paul Gomez  
Peter Woodley  
Julie Paget  
Jake Paget  
John Miskelly  
Linda Tubbs

**Agenda Item**

**Action**

**1. Welcome and Apologies**

As Chris Boote was not present at the start of the meeting, (he had phoned to say he might not be able to attend) the meeting was chaired by Barry.

**2. Minutes of Meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> March**

The following comments were made:

- Bottom of page 1: “Julie Paget pointed out that . . . the public is unaware that they can carry out research . . .”. Fred said that his recent experience of being referred through Sentinel offered him no choice of venue, and it was assumed that he would only want Derriford. It was only when he pointed out his connection with the LINK that he was offered choice. Vicky said she would feed this back to Sentinel.
- Page 2: Geoff pointed out that some of the answers given by Sharon differed from those he had heard her give on a previous occasion. Dot said that the minutes accurately reflected what she had said on this particular occasion.
- Bottom of page 3: Fred proposed that the Host Team be congratulated and thanked for smashing the feedback target.
- Section 6: the minutes said that the question of whether or not Karen Morse should attend meetings would be discussed at the next meeting, but this was not on this meeting’s agenda.

**VS**

## Matters Arising

- \* *Website* – Vicky reported that quotes from other companies were very expensive, because of the amount of work involved in re-coding, so we will have to stay with the current provider for the immediate future, but try to negotiate with them to reduce the costs.
- \* *Equality and Diversity training* – Vicky reported that the company providing the training say it will be a full day.
- \* *Appointment of Steve Waite* – Dot pointed out that his current title is Chief Operating Officer, changing to Chief Executive later.
- \* *Chris Hall* – Vicky said that the Stewardship Group's thanks had been extended to him and that he will still be actively involved in the LINK as a volunteer.

There was a discussion about Karen Morse regularly attending Stewardship Group meetings. Barry was concerned that the hospital would be discussed at most meetings and Geoff thought she should be present, while Dot and Joe thought an occasional 'pop-in' to give news/updates would be enough. Joe suggested that Vicky should make a decision, based on staffing levels and other service needs. Barry agreed that questions from stewards about the hospital could be emailed to Karen prior to meetings, and a consensus was reached that Karen should regularly attend Issues meetings, attending Stewardship Group meetings only when need dictates.

## 3. Information Update

### Requests for Involvement:

- \* Devon, Torbay and Plymouth LINKs have agreed to compose a joint statement for the SWAST Quality Account priorities.
- \* Regional LINK Networking meetings – stewards advised to let Vicky know if they want to attend any of these.
- \* The *Improving Through Listening* group will be the main route to progress matters at the hospital. Karen will be attending bi-monthly meetings, and Barry and Lois said they would also like to attend. At the last meeting Sarah Watson-Fisher agreed that Plymouth Hospitals Trust would contribute £2,000.00 towards the *Healthy Plymouth* event.
- \* Interviews for security, parking and maintenance at Derriford – Barry said these had already begun and that he was involved. Lois asked him to point out that lighting in the bottom car park needs to be improved.
- \* Quality Accounts – Vicky and Karen are working on Plymouth LINK's response to the Primary Care and Hospitals Trusts' Quality Accounts, and trying to ensure that the LINK gets mentioned throughout each of them.
- \* Mount Gould Local Care Centre visit – the group agreed that the 7<sup>th</sup> June would be the preferred date, where senior members of the PCT Team would be available for a conducted visit of LINK members. Fred, Geoff and Joe said they would like to visit the Cumberland Centre, and Lois and Dot agreed to visit the Plympton Hospital.

### Events:

Ambassadors would be needed for all the events planned throughout the summer. Fred and Geoff said they would be at Carers Awareness Day on 17<sup>th</sup> June and Barry and Geoff said they would be at Armed Forces Day on 25<sup>th</sup> June.

### Community Involvement

Karen is meeting members of the gypsy and traveller community at The Ride on May 3<sup>rd</sup>,

## Action

**All  
Stewards**

with a possibility of staging some events for them on both legal and non-legal sites. This is a significant breakthrough, and other agencies have asked to join in, but as it is felt that a low-key approach is needed to gain trust, Karen has said that she will take leaflets, etc. for other organisations but that they should not have an actual presence.

**Action**

#### Volunteers

The new active volunteer will come for induction next week, while two other applications are being processed. Vicky also pointed out that Carol Rose would be joining the Stewardship Group in the next month or so. She was previously actively involved in PAPOP and will bring an interest in health and local care issues for older people.

#### Bulletins

Geoff and Joe agreed to be the members featured in the next two issues.

### **4. Volunteer Handbook**

Vicky requested that all stewards who have not already done so should sign off the revised handbook and return it to us. Confidentiality of the Conflict of Interest declarations was assured by Vicky, with only herself, Karen and the LINK Chair having access to completed forms.

**All  
stewards**

The group discussed how this would be raised during meetings and that stewards expected that each member would identify a conflict of interest during discussions. Vicky and Chris would also monitor.

### **5. Annual Report**

John Miskelly has closely read the DoH guidance on the content and presentation of LINKs' Annual Reports, and based on his advice the Host Team has begun preparation of this year's report. An early draft was shown to the group and several amendments were suggested. It is intended that the report should be sent to the printer on May 15<sup>th</sup>, ready to be presented at the AGM on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

At this point Chris Boote joined the meeting

### **6. HealthWatch Pathfinder/Commissioning Task Group/Away Day**

*Pathfinder status:* Plymouth City Council are keen for us to become a Pathfinder local HealthWatch. Vicky has already had an initial meeting with them, and on 28<sup>th</sup> April is meeting with Craig McArdle to discuss ideas, plans and implications. However, the legislation on health and social care is now being further debated and it would seem that local HealthWatches will not begin until July 2012, leaving a gap in funding after the transitional year. This will be discussed at the meeting, with a suggestion that the contract be expanded to account for the gap. Vicky will inform the stewards on the priorities for gaining Pathfinder status after the meeting.

**VS**

*Commissioning Task Group:* Vicky put forward a proposal that the LINK should be involved in GP commissioning through a Commissioning Task Group, as a key measure to ensure that all parties are working together. The Torbay LINK is already working closely with the GP commissioning consortium in Torbay, with a Public & Patient Group making sure that patients are at the heart of commissioning. She has suggested that this should also happen with Plymouth LINK and Sentinel, with support from Sally Parker – who says she can feed current commissioners into this as part of the transition process. Sentinel have not responded enthusiastically to this proposal so far, possibly because this is not one of their highest priorities at present, so it might be better to work

with other groups to push the idea forward. Fred recommended caution, as the LINK might appear in a bad light if any problems arose in the early stages, but Lois thought that it would be a good idea as long as the LINK appeared as a 'critical friend'. It was suggested that in the interim the LINK could chair such a group, with representatives from other public and patients groups as members, and this would also serve to make these groups feel reassured about their future influence. If the LINK then represented the group on the commissioning board it would establish them as a core leader. Vicky said we need to map other patient groups and continue to sow seeds for this idea with Sentinel.

#### Host Team Away Day

This is planned for May 26<sup>th</sup> and its main focus will be how the team will work through the transition and as a Pathfinder.

### **7. Annual General Meeting**

This year's AGM will replace the normal monthly Stewardship Group meeting on May 25<sup>th</sup>. A draft invitation and agenda were distributed for the group's consideration.

#### Agenda:

This proposed that the first hour would be given over to the AGM, followed by 30 minutes for coffee and networking and that the last 30 minutes would be used for a Stewardship Group meeting. The group decided to drop the last item, only doing SG business if attendance was low and the opportunity presented itself. The agenda will be revised accordingly.

#### Invitation:

The invitation will also be revised to reflect these changes and to publicise the event.

#### Presentation:

The group was asked for choices of format for presenting the AGM. Chris suggested that it should take the form of a walk through of the Annual Report, with stewards presenting different aspects. He agreed to present the *Welcome* and *Future* sections, with John presenting *The City and the LINK*, Vicky the *Budget* and *Statutory Activities*, Barry presenting *Priorities (Working with Services)* and Geoff, Joe, Fred and other stewards contributing as well. Information on these presentations will be notified in due course.

### **8. Budgets**

The end of year (2010-11) budget was presented.

Chris asked why expenditure for Newsletters, Adverts and Media had risen sharply in March, and Vicky explained that this includes spending on re-stocking promotional materials.

Chris proposed acceptance of the budget and was seconded by Fred. It was then unanimously agreed.

### **9. Any Other Business**

- a. *Healthy Plymouth event* – So far the costs for this will be met through contributions of £2,000.00 each from Plymouth LINK, NHS Plymouth and the Hospitals Trust, totalling £6,000.00, with a possibility for further contributions from other parties.

**Action**

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**VS**

## Action

- b. *The Patients Association* – We were visited by a representative from this organisation. They are starting an office for the Southwest of England and stress that, as a charity, they are independent. However, they charge a fee for membership and for publications and some of their funding comes from private sponsorship. They are keen to work with us and the team are doing some research currently.
- c. *Future Stewardship Group Meetings* – Vicky handed out a schedule for meetings that would include planned presentations/and information inserts. Already pencilled in are:  
Craig McArdle - *Healthwatch Pathfinder plans and joint work with local authority* on 23<sup>rd</sup> June;  
• Steve Waite - *New provider update and public involvement strategy (Plymouth Community Health)* on July 26<sup>th</sup>;  
• Neil Parsons - *Sentinel update and public involvement strategy* on 28<sup>th</sup> September. This was approved by the group, but Chris raised concern about the lack of Stewardship Group members for them to speak to. Lois suggested opening these meetings to the wider membership, but Chris said we really need to boost the number of stewards, by appealing for new ones in the next Bulletin and inviting suitable people. There are a few in the pipeline and Fred suggested inviting Richard Wakerell to join.
- d. *Specialist community cardiac nurse* – Joe told the group about a British Heart Foundation campaign to raise funds for a specialist cardiac nurse. They believe that the new emphasis on community – rather than hospital – based care makes the creation of the post an urgent priority, and would like Plymouth LINK's support for seeking funding.
- Chris suggested that we need to see their proposal, which could be sent to the wider membership for feedback. Joe agreed to get a summary and bring it along to the next meeting. The Support Team will help get this together.
- e. *LINK promotional material at Derriford Hospital* – Fred reported that he had seen no LINK material on his recent visit to the hospital, which involved several departments on different floors. Lois agreed to do a 'Secret Shopper' visit.
- f. *Birmingham Council* – Lois distributed, for information, a handout about cuts in funding of social care services and how this breaches the law. This may be a growing concern as councils make cuts and one we need to watch out for locally.

**Host  
&  
Stewards**

**Joe  
&  
Host  
Team**

**Lois**

## **10. Next meeting – date and agenda.**

**Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> May – AGM (see item above for agenda)**