

**Meeting held on Thursday 21 January 2010**

**Grange View**

**Present:** Lisa Willcox – Modernisation and Development Manager  
Sara Pearson – Admin Co-ordinator Valuing People  
Lynne Thomas – Clerical Officer Modernisation Team  
Darren Portman – Independent Living Manager (On behalf of Sarah Roxby)  
Ann-Marie Gibson – CTLD North Social Worker  
Tony Leatherbarrow – CTLD East Manager  
Clair Jenkins – CTLD South Social Worker  
Kairen Shearon – Partnership Manager, Strategic Housing  
Sarah Machin – Specialist Accommodation Officer Open Door

**Apologies:** Di Button – Social Worker Modernisation and Development  
Chris Lord – Area Manager, Yorkshire Met Housing  
Sarah Roxby – Vulnerable Service Manager WDH  
Garry Richards – Supported Housing Manager, Chevin Housing  
Siobhan Morris – Open Door

**Copy for Information:**

Robert Hall – Partnership and Programmes Manager, Strategic Housing

**1. Introductions and apologies**

Lisa opened the meeting and everyone introduced themselves and explained their role.

It was agreed that future agendas will be shorter and focus more on specific topics.

**2. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 11 November 2009 were agreed as a true record.

**3. Matters arising**

All matters arising are on the agenda.

**4. Action Plan**

**Updated and agreed by the group**

**Item 12 - Review In-house Supported Living Services to ensure the best use of resources allocated to the service – We will invite**

Sharon Watson Service Manager Provision, to the delivery group as and when required to update on this.

## **5. Housing Survey**

Some useful information was collected from the survey. Out of the approx 400 questionnaires returned 285 were of good quality. More work still needs to be done to analyse the forms in more detail.

The initial figures from the survey were interesting, Lisa will circulate preliminary findings. Other ways of gathering useful information needs to be developed so that people get the housing they would like.

Clair noted that two of her service users had been anxious about filling the questionnaire in.

## **6. Housing DVD**

Di will work with Lift Up Advocacy to ensure they produce the accessible Housing Choices DVD for service users and carers within LDDF timescales.

## **7. Training for Care Managers**

Training days will be held for care managers on housing choices on 4<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March. They are held over two days, so that all care managers can attend one session. A flyer will be produced to promote this event to CTLD's.

## **8. Information Pack(s)**

Ann Marie has been asked to work on producing a useful information pack on housing. Di has also been working on a flow chart 'How to get a House'.

It was agreed that this piece of work should be led by the Housing Delivery Group, and various ways of achieving this was discussed. It was agreed that the compilation of relevant information would be the main topic for the next meeting.

It is important that information distributed ensures that everyone understands the importance of using a housing application form, both to access social housing but also in order to gather statistical information on housing need. Forms can go direct to WDH marked learning disability and Sarah will check to ensure the details are being passed onto her. Information will also be needed on what housing types are available and how to access them. .

The housing nominations process is being revamped and it is probable that Sarah Machin will be co-ordinating it. This should enable a more co-ordinated and more effective filling of vacancies, where the council has nominations rights. Lisa will be informing Team Managers of the processes involved.

## **9. Residential Reduction Strategy**

Lisa has produced a draft action plan which she will email to the group.

Di is working on gathering detailed information of who is living in residential care. She has sent a letter to every registered care home, to confirm who is living in the home, she will then compare this to the RAISE system.

There are different styles of residential care within Wakefield District (eg. 3 bed residential care or 16 bed residential care)., which will need different approaches in order to reduce residential places, whilst ensuring service quality if maintained for improved for service users.

A range of housing provision will therefore be needed to accommodate people currently living in residential care. It is important also that people know how to access different housing options in order to avoid more admissions to residential care.

Darren explained that there are 53 Independent Living Schemes (previously sheltered housing) throughout Wakefield with most having vacancies; there are no age restrictions. Every person who applies has to have a support need (confirmed through assessment). The schemes are now attracting some younger people with learning disabilities and offer good social activities. Any level of disability is considered. Referral route is through Homesearch with an independent living assessment. There are some really good success stories, particularly from young people as there are different strengths and skills involved.

## **10. Shared Ownership**

The Shared Ownership launch event held in December at Kings Croft was a success. The 5 service users from Featherstone who took part in the scheme now part own their homes. They were invited to the event along with local press and pictures from the event have appeared in The Citizen and Think Family publications to promote awareness and publicise the scheme.

Tony will soon be meeting all the new homeowners, to undertake their reviews.

## **11. South Kirkby Flats**

The project team meeting was cancelled due to the bad weather. The 8 flats due for completion in October 2010 are now behind schedule, but it is hoped this will be made back up.

Lisa met with Jim and Jayne and the client group has yet to be finally decided. There are:

- 2 Flats – medium term (18 – 24 months)
- 6 Flats – long term (ie permanent)

It is likely that 5 of the flats will be used for people who need to develop independence and skills, and that 3 will be used in conjunction with high level support to meet complex behavioural needs.

## **12. Accredited Landlord Scheme**

The launch event that was to be held at Woolley Hall on the evening of 13 January had to be cancelled due to severe weather conditions. This scheme will hopefully enable people with learning disabilities to access private sector housing, with an assurance of standards and safety.

## **13. Support from Housing Options**

We have access to 3 days training/ support through Valuing People, in addition to a days training through our Housing Options Membership. Two days are to be used to provide the Care Manager training (Item 7)

Kairen felt Housing Options time could usefully be used to discuss how to link into housing strategy. This could possibly take up half a day. Lisa will meet with Housing Options to finalise how to use the time.

## **14. PSA 16 Toolkit – Learning Disabilities Housing**

PSA 16 is a target for local government and public authorities regarding tackling social exclusion i.e. people with learning disabilities, mental illnesses, offenders. This has specific local targets set within it.

NI145 relates to Housing (separating it into settled and unsettled accommodation). Wakefield needs to reduce the amount of people in unsettled accommodation – which is primarily made up of people in residential care.

We really need to know what the residential numbers are and how accurate. Tony Leatherbarrow attended a meeting and the number of people said to be living in residential homes in Wakefield was 157. These figures can become complicated and are not always accurate as people in residential homes can be funded from a number of different local authorities, or placed out of district, or only in temporary placements. The work Di is doing, directly contacting homes, should provide further clarification.

## **15. Housing Benefit Consultation**

This is a government consultation document. Lisa agreed to put everything together and asked for any comments before the deadline of 22 February.

Lisa noted that there are difficulties with the LHA allowance which does not have discretionary ability to cover a room for staff to sleep in, when this is necessary.

## **16. Service User and Carer Involvement**

The group decided not to involve service users and carers directly in meetings, unless a carer has a particular interest or has previous housing

knowledge. This is because the meetings are quite long, quite technical, and therefore not very accessible.

Lisa agreed to go to a Hear Our Thoughts (HOT) group meeting and talk to them about housing. She will also bring a draft consultation plan to the next meeting about how we can ensure we are engaging with service users and their carers.

Lisa will also put a housing update in the next Partnership Board Newsletter.

### **17. Any Other Business**

A future meeting will be dedicated to the Accredited Landlord Scheme.

Choice based lettings- a questionnaire has been sent out.

Sarah Machin agreed to ensure that CTLD's had housing forms available. .

### **18. Date of the next meeting –**

**Wednesday 10 March 3pm at 82 Batley Road.**

(change due to a clash with Housing Options training)