

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>LINK Update</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 November 2012
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific

# WOKINGHAM LINK

## LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK

### **General Matters**

In the summer of 2012 a document tracing the Legacy of the Wokingham LINK was initiated by a committee consisting of members of both organisations and Marlena O'Donnell and Michelle Wooff planned and produced a draft report, which was then circulated to stakeholders in October. Some feedback was finalised last month and is attached to this report.

The Final report will be published later in November. The Wokingham LINK Steering Group will, as a statutory requirement, produce a Final Annual report by the end of the year

### **Projects**

#### **1. Survey on services for people with neurological conditions**

Following a Needs Assessment and Service Review by NHS Berkshire West in 2011- 2012, in which the Neurological-Alliance and LINK report was acknowledged, including recommendations and future plans to improve the services for those with neurological conditions were presented to the PCT Board in May. TL reports that funding has been allocated for a specialist epilepsy nurse, a part-time neuro-nurse and services adviser.

#### **2. CAMHS and Autism**

It was brought to the LINK that very little seems to have happened in Wokingham since Wokingham Learning Disability Partnership commissioned the Wokingham Autism Strategy in May 2009.

Wokingham Borough Council responded to the LINK letter asking what progress is being made in implementing the Adult Autism Strategy and how they were meeting their legal duties set out in the Statutory Guidance published by the Government in Dec 2010.

Michelle Wooff attended a meeting of Wokingham Action4Autism which is now supported by Karen Jackson whose role it is to monitor the action plans drawn up to monitor the action plans drawn up to address the Autism Strategy. The letter from Andrew Couldrick in reply has been considered by Michelle and Karen.

### **3. Review of Adult Social Care**

The report following the Review of Adult Social Care has been made public. The report was welcomed by WBC and an action plan is being drawn up to address the recommendations made. There has been a lot of interest from LINK participants asking for copies of the report.

The LINK will now monitor how the action plan is being followed up.

### **4. NHS Dentists Patients Information**

The project to review patient information made available by NHS Dentists is underway. All the Dental Surgeries involved have been visited. The aim of the project is to recommend good practice to NHS Dentists across the county

### **5. Dignity and Care**

- a. The Dignity and Care survey has been distributed in RBH and the Wokingham LINK will support the West Berks LINK which is leading on this.
- b. The new Dignity in Care Board for Wokingham has funding for a support officer to help with development. The LINK Enter and View role will be promoted as a resource to the Board.
- c. A Steering Group member is planning a paper considering the Dignity and Care paperwork issued by Foundation Trusts on admission to hospital.

### **6. Support to the Westmead Group**

Tony Lloyd is involved and reports progress in plans for new centre in Woodley.

### **7. Healthwatch**

The LINK will support activities raising awareness and involvement in the formation of Healthwatch Wokingham.

## **Wokingham LINK (Local Involvement Network) Legacy Project**

### **Brief summary for HOSC**

A survey designed jointly by Wokingham Borough Council and the LINK was distributed to a wide range of stakeholders, 200 copies of the questionnaire were sent out by post and around 500 electronically to LINK participants, the LINK Steering Group and a range of voluntary sector organisations as well as representatives of Wokingham Borough Council and NHS.

46 people gave their comments (30 people returned the questionnaire and 16 people gave their comments in face-to-face or telephone interviews).

**Based on the feedback received the main findings for each section are:**

### **Engagement and Involvement with the LINK**

#### **Key points**

- **Close working relationship with NHS**
- **Voluntary sector organisations and WBC are mainly engaged with the LINK through public events and information bulletins**
- **Low level of awareness and understanding of the LINK among members of the public**

### **Strengths of the LINK**

#### **Key points**

- **Positive relationships and joint working arrangements with a number of local organisations**
- **Local knowledge and signposting to relevant services**
- **Independent voice**
- **Dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers**
- **Visibility at key community events and networks**

### **The Achievements of the LINKs**

#### **Key points**

- **Public events and sharing information about changes to health and social care services**
- **Carried out several projects that led to improvements to services**
- **Holds services to account**

## Things that have not worked well

### Key points

- **Not representing diverse communities**
- **Difficulties with recruiting and retaining active volunteers**
- **Diverse expectations of the LINK's role**
- **Sharing the name with another organisation that provides services to patients and social care customers (Link Befriending Service)**
- **Inconsistency of resources and support arrangements**

## What can be done differently in the future

### Key points

- **Ensure clarity of roles, responsibilities and expectations**
- **Create diverse opportunities for all stakeholders to be engaged**
- **Provide clear and accessible information about the benefits of public engagement in a variety of formats**
- **Allocate sufficient resources and support for public engagement and projects**

## Report conclusion

The Wokingham LINK carried out several projects that led to improvements in health services and has been successful in raising awareness of some of the changes in health and social care services through public events and information bulletins. The LINK has also developed and maintained successful partnership working arrangements with a number of public and voluntary sector organisations. This has been achieved thanks to the dedicated volunteers as well as support given by host organisations. However, the LINK has been less successful in engaging with and representing a diverse group of stakeholders and therefore influencing the development of a wider range of health and social care services.

**The report is currently in draft with the aim of making this public by 30/11/12.**

Christine Holland 5/11/12