

1 **Welcome and Apologies**

Present at the meeting were Annette, Michelle, Nick, Sally and Heather (Chair), Cathy Hayes, Chrissy Dunlop, Jacqui Bremner and Sue Black (minutes). Apologies from Janet and Sheridan

2 **Notes of meeting held 13 April 2011 and matters arising**

The notes of the meeting were agreed subject to changing name of Short Breaks data-base from 'PCVDB to 'Break Out'.

3 **Update on Review of Services for Disabled Children**

The review has entered the implementation phase with the setting up of a 'Task and Finish Group' which will meet on 1<sup>st</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> June. Michelle has kindly agreed to be the PCV representative on this group, supported by Susan and then Jacqui. This is a deviation from our normal model of participation. However it was thought to be the right thing to do on this occasion.

The work of the Task and Finish Group will be fed back to Parent Carers at an event on Thursday 7 June at the Kindle Centre. Parent Carers will be asked to identify what's working, what needs changed and what is likely to work.

4 **Green Paper on Special Educational Needs**

The Easy Read version of the Green Paper was circulated to members of PCV, who were reminded that the **closing date for comments is 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011**.

Members were asked whether they would like to make an individual or collective response to the green paper. It was agreed that members would like to do both but doubted that there was enough time to do more than submit their own individual replies.

Nick raised his concerns about the softening of the language used in the Green Paper and his worries that it is really about removing the bias towards inclusion and reducing the number of statements.

Statements are not ideal but they do give a child a legal entitlement to a minimum level of support. Will the new single assessment process carry the same force in law?

Other concerns relate to plans to transfer power to front line services and communities. Does this mean that parents will have to set up their own schools to get the education they want for their children? Who will be responsible for ensuring that Disabled Children receive the education they deserve? How can parents have a real choice of school without support in place such as help with transport costs? What does the Government have in mind when it states:

*"Parents of children with statements of SEN will be able to express a preference for any state funded school including special schools ...unless:*

- *It would not meet the needs of the child*
- *Be incompatible with the efficient education of other children*

- *Or would be an inefficient use of resources”*

These ‘get out’ clauses could see a reversal in recent moves towards greater inclusion. Sue to summarise this discussion for a formal response and circulate to members electronically

## **5 Carers Week – 13 – 18 June 2011 and opening of Play Park 4 All**

Chrissy Dunlop outlined the range of events through out Carers Week. Jacqui urged members of PVC to come along to the Garden Party where they can raise issues directly with local politicians and MPs. It was pointed out that the timing of the Garden Party was not very convenient for Parent Carers who have to be back for end of school day. However it was acknowledged that there was a good range of events on different days so there should be something for everyone.

Cathy Hayes invited parents to contact her about the meal out which will be held on the evening of Thursday 16 June 2011.

Sue Black outlined arrangements for the opening of the Play Park 4 All on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> June. Events will begin at 10 am and finish at 14:30. There will be a range of taster sessions from Aiming High providers such as Herefordshire United, The Outbase, Taste for Adventure, Aspire, Halo etc.

The official opening will be at 13:00 pm by the new Chair of Herefordshire Council, (whose name won't be known until 27<sup>th</sup> May), and Oliver Madge, son of Caroline Madge. Sue has been asked to write a speech for the Chair of the Council. Members of PCV suggested that the speech reflect that the Play Park 4 All was long overdue facility which should be replicated in all the market towns. The multi sensory nature of the play park should also be featured.

Heather requested that disabled toilet facilities at the opening be radar controlled to limit use by able bodied people and keep them clean.

## **6 Sports Survey**

Sue reported that there had been a very good response to the survey with over 70 returns to date. There had not been the opportunity to circulate the survey with the special schools or through Marches Family Network. The next task is to input the data and share the findings with the Sports Network. Ultimately we need to put pressure on the main sports organisations in Herefordshire to demonstrate how they are delivering an inclusive service in line with their national equal opportunity policies.

## **7 ~~Outbase Family Fun Day – Saturday 9 July~~**

~~The Outbase have invited HCS to use their next family fun day to consult parents. It was agreed that it would be a good opportunity to take the findings from the ‘Review of Services for Children with a Disability’ Task and Finish Group to this event to ask for parents views. **Cancelled**~~

## **8 Carers Charter & HCS AGM**

Chrissy updated the meeting on the steady progress towards a Herefordshire Carers Charter. The group guiding this process is meeting monthly and has agreed that it should be a set of Carer Expectations that

organisation will sign up to meeting, supported by action plans and training logs. Jacqui reported that she has had conversations with local commissioners about including compliance with the Carers Charter as a quality criterion.

The Carers Charter group has met with Sara Keetley, Carers Lead within Wye Valley NHS Trust. Jacqui and Chrissy will be meeting with Dr Jane Melton, Carers Lead within 2Gether in the week following this meeting. It was also agreed that there needs to be further follow up on the Hospital Passport system, supported by in house training for Trust staff.

HCS AGM will be on 14 September. It will take the form of Carers talking to Carers about their experience and perhaps their journey; how they have grown through their experiences as a Carer. Michelle and Annette volunteered to speak at the AGM.

### **9 HCS Website and new Forum**

The HCS Website now features a form on the Break Out data-base where parents can recommend activities and give their feedback on things they have tried. Please use it.

A further new feature of the website will be a Forum where parents can share their views and raise issues. It will be moderated though comments will be posted live! Michelle, Rachel and Sue will be the moderators, charged with removing any comments that third parties may find offensive.

### **10 Any Other Business**

I Count Cards – need to follow up on finding out if supermarkets will offer free delivery to Carers

Worcester University is keen to involve Carers in training student social workers. This may be extended to nursing training.

Locally Downs Syndrome support group needs a bit of a boost. It was proposed that an event targeted at parents of children with Downs would be useful to highlight that there is no clinical lead locally. It was also felt that local practice did not reflect best practice nationally. Jacqui suggested that families with other conditions may have similar issues and that perhaps these needs could be met using briefing sessions for parents and professionals.

### **11 Date of Future Meetings**

10 am on Friday 8 July 2011	Kindle Centre
10 am on Friday 9 September 2011	Kindle Centre