

### **Notes of meeting held 9 September 2011 and matters arising**

The notes of September's meeting were accepted as a fair record of the meeting and there were no matters arising, not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

#### **1 Crossroads Care – local support options by Claire Townshend**

Crossroads Care is a national charity that responds to the needs of its local members. Crossroads Care locally is based in the Forest of Dean but covers Herefordshire as well.

Crossroads works on a 'Can Do' basis if asked for specific forms of support. This includes shopping cleaning domiciliary palliative, adult and child care. Nationally Crossroads deliver 37,000 hours of support to 6 million Carers, through 5,000 staff, based in 100 schemes.

It employs 120 staff locally and has some contracts with Herefordshire Council, including one funded by Aiming High. Claire asked Parent Carer Voice if there were any gaps in local service provision that Crossroads could cover.

Members of the Voice said after school activities were a particular problem especially for working parents and suggested a 'Sitting Service' – to take children to activities. Some parents were concerned about the cost of such services. Crossroads charges an hourly rate of £14.25p though this price is negotiable when purchasing in bulk. Provision can be topped up by the Aiming High funding. (Aiming High is now known as the Early Intervention Grant). Parent Carers present were surprised to learn that Aiming High funds could be used in this way as this was not the case with Barnardo's.

Direct Payments were very inflexible with one Parent Carer reporting that she was unable to recruit a personal assistant to care for her child but was told she could not use the funds in the budget to buy other forms of support available locally. Herefordshire Council is now asking that the funds be repaid. She doubted if she could use them for support from Crossroads.

There was some discussion about whether Parents would be expected to pay for Carers costs such as food whilst taking children out on activities. Claire thought that sometimes this would be expected but depended on the time out of the home. The best thing would be to call Crossroads Care to find out.

Crossroads will forward information about their services for the next edition of Keeping in Touch magazine Crossroads contact details are

**Telephone:** 01594 823414 or by

**Email:** [admin@crossroadsfd.org.uk](mailto:admin@crossroadsfd.org.uk)

#### **2 Progress update on the Parent Carer Voice Work Plan**

The updated work plan was circulated.

**Short Breaks:** Some discussion followed about the current campaign led by Every Disabled Child Matters, to prod councils into giving information about

their eligibility criteria for Short Breaks and how these can be accessed. A duty (something local authorities must do) to provide Short Breaks came into force in April 2011, and was established as part of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008. £800 million has been allocated to local authorities to be spent on Short Breaks over the next four years.

Chair of Parent Carer Voice has written to Cllr Morgan to ask for details of how this duty is being implemented locally.

Members of Parent Carer Voice were urged to visit the website and fill in the campaign letter which will go to Cllr Morgan at Herefordshire Council.  
[http://www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/campaigns\\_and\\_policy/short\\_breaks/get\\_involved.aspx](http://www.ncb.org.uk/edcm/campaigns_and_policy/short_breaks/get_involved.aspx)

Other matters of progress not mentioned elsewhere on the agenda were that there had been a very productive meeting with the Herefordshire Learning Disability Trust (HLDT) about sharing information to go on the Break Out section of the Herefordshire Carers Support (HCS) website. HDLT's contribution will be acknowledged and they will put a link on their site to the relevant section of the HCS website.

### **3 Review of Services for Disabled Children**

A summary of the feedback meetings held in September was circulated. Michelle reported that she would be attending the Service Redesign meetings with Jacqui B and reporting back to the Parent Carer Voice.

Members asked if there had been any response to the questions put forward but unanswered at the 16 Sept feedback event. Some members also reported that the information that had been promised on the Herefordshire Council website was still not available.

Sue Black said that she had tried to get responses from the relevant officers within Herefordshire Council but had not been able to get one. She suspected that they were struggling to keep on top of their current work load and that Herefordshire Council and NHS was still adjusting to the restructuring and government funding cutbacks.

Sheridan asked members of Parent Carer Voice if they still supported the HCS model of participation. This model differs from other models in that rather than Parent Carers attending meetings on behalf of the Voice and other Parent Carers, the Voice invites service providers and policy makers to attend meetings to explain and consult with parents. With regard to the Service Redesign task group, this meant that Jacqui and Michelle would be reporting back to the Voice. Members present strongly endorsed this way of operating and some commented that the issue under discussion required a high level of knowledge and confidence to contribute to such meetings.

Sheridan also reported that some providers had criticised the allocation of seats on this body to Parent Carer Voice as it is not representative of Parent Carers, especially those attending special schools within Herefordshire. Members of the Voice strongly rejected this view as a majority of parents present at the meeting had children who had attended Blackmarston and Barrs Court Schools.

Herefordshire Carers Support model of representation to be an agenda topic at the next meeting in November

#### **4 Carers Rights Day and launch of the Carers Charter**

Carers Rights Day falls on Friday 2 December 2011 and it will be held in the Kindle Centre. The theme is Carers Shaping Services which fits well with the launch of the Herefordshire Carers Charter.

Sheridan circulated a copy of the Charter and members of the Voice commented that it was a very good piece of work.

There will be a Carers Questions Time to a panel of experts.

Parent Carers to submit their questions to Sue Black by email, or via the Forum or Facebook Group before 28 November 2011.

#### **5 Sports Survey**

Sue reported that the HCS Disability Sports Survey was being used as evidence of need for various bids locally. There had been a fairly productive meeting of the Disability Sports Forum on 5 October.

Amy Jenkins is to contact specialist training providers to book a Disability Coaching course for providers that better fits their schedule. A list of advantages for those individuals and clubs that undertake the training is being compiled to go out with the publicity for the training sessions. Teaching staff and Parent Carers will also be invited to attend the course.

Community games are being planned by the Affinity Trust for next summer. Sue Black will attend the first planning meeting in November to find out more.

A final report has yet to be produce because of the above actions which are still pending.

#### **6 Website and Forum**

HCS has updated its website with new logo and colour scheme. Carers were urged to visit the site to see what they think of the changes.

The Forum is being used a bit but not very much so plans are underway to create a Facebook Group for HCS. Members of the Voice liked this idea and thought this would be a more user friendly way forward.

#### **7 Any Other Business**

**Aspire's Music Gym** was thought to be too expensive and that dates were a bit erratic. Though some children thought it was brilliant, the 90 minute sessions were thought to be too long. Some parents questioned it being classed as respite as Carers have to be there throughout the session.

Janet said she thought that this was currently being looked at by Aspire.

### **Recruiting Parents of Younger Children with a Disability**

Sheridan said that she had been thinking about the composition of the Voice and was concerned that most of the Parents who currently attend regular meetings have older children. She would like a campaign in the New Year to recruit parents of younger children. Members of the Voice agreed that this was a good idea.

Janet suggested that all members of The Voice try to recruit Carers to register with HCS and promote the work of the Voice.

An annual meeting with the Support Groups was also suggested as way of getting more Carers involved.

### **Changes to DLA Benefits**

Sheridan requested that the next edition of Keeping in Touch include an article from Welfare Rights about proposed changes to Disability Living Allowance. The changes will place many more responsibilities on Carers and Disabled People to gather information to support their claim.

### **Carers UK Conference on 2 November**

Sally Booton and Michelle Baillon will be attending on behalf of the Voice and Herefordshire Parent Carers. If there are specific issues that members would like them to raise at this event, please contact Michelle or Sally.

## **8 Dates of Future Meetings**

Sue Black circulated the results of her survey of members of Parent Carer Voice and it was decided to go with the planned schedule for 2012.

**Date of next PCV:** 12:30 at Point 4 on Tuesday 22 November 2011

**Carers Rights Day 2011:** 9:30 -14:30 at The Kindle Centre on Friday 2 December 2011

### **Schedule of Parent Carer Voice Meetings for 2012**

Wednesday 25 January	Morning
Wednesday 21 March	Morning
Thursday 3 May	Evening
	Carers Week 18 – 25 June
Wednesday 11 July	Morning
Wednesday 19 September	Morning
Thursday 18 October	Evening
Wednesday 21 November	Morning
	Carers Rights Day 2012
	Friday 7 December