

HEREFORDSHIRE SUPPORTED HOUSING FORUM

NOTES OF MEETING WEDNESDAY 27.9.06

Present: Nick Comley (Herefordshire Mind), Tracey Davis (New Dawn), Polly Hearsey (Shelter), Ian Gardner (Herefordshire Council), Sue Ralph (Stonham), Angela Olsen (Stonham), Diane Rooney (Carr Gomm), Dave Hider (SHYPP), Richard Kelly (Herefordshire Lifestyles), Michael King (Kemble Care), Helen Horton (The Alliance), Jan Frances (Women's Aid), Sandra Lawrence (Adult Placement), Jill Farmer (Aspire Support), Dawn Stradling (Supporting People), Sharon Roleston (Stonham), Dawn Hunt Stonham), Andrew Strong (Herefordshire Mind)

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

All introduced themselves.

2. **Notes of the previous meeting, 15.3.06**

Nothing to discuss.

3. **acquA , The Alliance Accreditation – Helen Horton**

This quality review process is intended to demonstrate that providers are fit for purpose. A successful review will enable providers to join the list of approved providers in Herefordshire. After 1.4.07 Herefordshire Council and PCT will not commission social or health care to any provider that has not been through acquA.

The review process is unique in that it is led and delivered by the third sector and accepted by statutory bodies as a benchmark.

The review is not of individual services but of organisations.

Exemptions: 1) Organisations that have achieved level C or above with QAF where this covers all activities and services they deliver, 2) Organisations that are CSCI registered where this covers all the activities and services they deliver.

Exemptions status is decided by the acquA team – all organisations must apply first!

4. **SP Update – Ian Gardner**

Whilst there is ongoing uncertainty in respect of future funding for the national SP programme. What is certain is that the budget will be subject to "further efficiency

savings". The question is the extent and speed of the implementation of the envisaged reduction. This will not be known until the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review are announced.

However, in a recent speech the Minister indicated his support for the retention of the ring fence. However, the same speech focussed on SP's contribution in the reduction of social exclusion.

The following "opinions" are a reflection of the views of other SP managers and Consultants engaged with the SP agenda.

The reduction in the national budget will be between £ 200- £400 Million

There is a perception within HM Treasury that SP is a 'bloated' budget. There is also a view that Local Authorities have been paid twice as Health and social care costs were 'shunted' into SP budgets.

The DCLG are moving away from the distribution formula and may reduce the budget by taking away the funding for the care with support services as described in the National Strategy document. This could mean a reduction of £5-600,000 in Herefordshire.

The West Mercia Group aspires to a consistent approach to contracting in order to facilitate effective cross authority commissioning. This should also enable a reduction in administration and the associated transaction costs.

Opportunities for cross- authority commissioning have been identified. These considerations presently include services for gypsies/travellers' and community alarm services

Alternative arrangements for contracting are under consideration any changes will be subject to consultation. The revised contract will be consistent with the Compact.

Herefordshire will use a 'measured approach' to realigning SP services to support emerging strategic priorities. The strategic assessments will be undertaken in partnership with providers and commissioners and will be done on a sector-by-sector basis having regard for the model in the National Strategy Consultation.

The identified priority areas are homelessness, sheltered housing and learning disability.

Ian stated that the envisaged reduction in the SP grant would mean that without further efficiency savings the high cost schemes would become unsustainable. As Herefordshire SP provision has yet to be "market tested" due consideration will be given to procurement via competitive tendering.

Herefordshire SP's commissioning framework is on their website and is based on the DCLG's guide on procurement.

Ian is given to understand that Worcestershire Provider Forum has been involved in the development of an outcomes model. Ian is keen for Herefordshire Providers to give this consideration.

The meeting agreed to the following actions:

- To approach the Chair of the Worcestershire Provider Forum and invite someone to an open forum meeting to present their outcomes' model (Andrew to arrange)
- To reconvene a Strategic Group to discuss issues including the contract model, eligibility, procurement (linked to the Compact process) and outcomes. A representative (s) of this group to represent the Forum at the Core Strategy Group

BREAK.