

Sensory Impairment Partnership Board Notes

Thursday 23rd November 2023, 11:00am–1:00pm, online via Zoom.

(Pre-meeting for Independent Members from 10am).

Useful Acronyms

- CCC – Cambridgeshire County Council
- PCC – Peterborough City Council
- RNIB – Royal National Institute of Blind People
- SIPB – Sensory Impairment Partnership Board

What we talked about

- 1) Welcome, Introduction and Apologies – Mick Scadden, Chair
- 2) Thursday 17th August 2023 Notes Approval and Action Log Updates – Graham Lewis
- 3) Feedback from Independent Members:
 - ✓ Communication through chemotherapy treatment very difficult
 - ✓ Administration delays in surgery impacting health
 - ✓ Delays for prescribed procedures at Surgeries
- 4) Stagecoach/RNIB/CamSight meeting – Mick Scadden and all
- 6) Sensory Service Updates – Helen Kidd (Cambridge CC) and Ronak Gosai (Peterborough CC)
- 7) Future Meetings- Promotion of PB work & Independent Member Recruitment – Graham Lewis
- 8) Commissioner Update – Micheil Wilson (Commissioning Manager Peterborough CC)
- 9) Any Other Business – Next meeting Thursday 22nd February 2024, venue and time TBC.
 - ✓ CDA (Cambridgeshire Deaf Association) Peterborough Friendship Group – Launch

1) Welcome, Introductions, Apologies – Mick Scadden (Chair) and Graham Lewis

- Graham Lewis, Healthwatch Partnership Manager attending online rather than in person because of ongoing health issues. Rebecca Spalding-Green supporting MS at Maple Centre.
- RSG requested the boards consent for recording the meeting, for note taking purposes only.
- Chair Mick Scaddon welcomed all, confirmed resignations and introduced new members;
- ✓ Clare Vile, resigned from Blind Veterans UK for new role at Sensory Services Team CCC.
- ✓ Andrew Barnes, Sensory Support Officer Deaf Blind UK resigning as moving into new role with Catrina Creech – Networking Programme Manager Deaf Blind UK taking over.
- ✓ Rebecca Iddon replaces Tom Rawlings as new Hunts Blind CEO.

2) Thursday 17th August 2023 notes and Action Log Updates – Graham Lewis

- **121) E-Scooter Issues and Street Charter.** Since delivering presentations to Active Travel England and Combined Authority Mayor on barriers people face with travel. Having initial discussions with enthusiastic Anna Smith (Deputy Mayor) have not heard anything else. **BR, mentioned RNIB are part of a group of 12 organisations that have worked on 'Key principles of accessible street design' document that could help here.** Action: BR to send to GL.

- **131)** New electric busses concern ie potential dangers of busses being so quiet etc. **7th Sept 23 attended Stagecoach meeting, this is being discussed on todays agenda (23.11.23).**
- **132)** District nurses complaints are managed by CPFT and PALS Service, contact details:
 - **0800 376 0775 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm),**
 - <https://www.cpft.nhs.uk/patient-advice-and-liaison-service-pals>
 - palsandcomplaints@cpft.nhs.uk
- **133)** SIPB engaging with GCP as proposal developed. **September 23 Greater Cambridge Partnership Board decided not to progress Making Connections proposals.**
- **134)** Accessible Information Standard Relaunch. **GL following up with Alison Bourne (CCC Commissioning Manager) & Leesa Murray (PCC Commissioning Manager) to find out who SIPB needs to talk to ensure this is implemented through both health and social care.**

3) Feedback from Independent Members

Communication through chemotherapy treatment very difficult

- PB suggested a badge may help identification versus the deaf/blind wrist band.
- Chemotherapy affected PBs temperature so regular checks were required. However it was difficult to get medical professionals/ carers to visit PB at home. Eventually PB was seen and advised by district nurse to attend hospital. Following discharge and to avoid readmittance now relying on sisters goodwill (who are not local, not young and one is a carer).
- Raised concern that during hospital stay PBs medical notes were mixed up with another patients (records showed a fractured wrist – P has not broken any bones).
- AWB Deafblind UK and McMillian have focused work around improving access for people who are deaf/blind and how to improve patients experience with treatments etc.

Administration delays in surgery impacting health

- After long waits for appointments, patients with severe health issues (escalating heart issue and another having had a hernia operation) were recommended by GP to see consultants asap. However, surgery is taking 6-10 days to write recommendation letters to consultants. (PMC is encouraging patients to share their experiences with Healthwatch in more detail).
- MS people are by passing surgeries, taking themselves straight to hospital to avoid the difficulty and delays you can face when attempting to book doctor appointments.

Delays for prescribed procedures at Surgeries

- PMC, long delays in surgeries between doctors prescribing services and GPN's (general practice nursing) delivering them. PMC advised to have an urgent blood test, but Riverport surgery could only offer appointment in 12days time.
- PMC suggested he go directly to Hinchingsbrooke but told Hospitals are discouraging this.

4) Stagecoach, RNIB, CamSight Meeting – Mick Scadden and all

- Good attendance, many partner organisations, as well as Sight Concerned Bedfordshire (local society) and Thomas Pocklington Trust (Sight loss council based in Bedfordshire).

Raising issues faced by blind/ partially sighted people when using bus services, including:

- Staff not recognising/allowing the use of 24hour/7days aweek concessionary bus passes.
- Audible announcements (ensuring turned on all the time).
- Multiple services using stops, so when 2 turn up, 1 bus will not be at the correct stop.
- Electric busses and the lack of noise they make.
- Busses driving away too soon from bus stop ie before people are sat down.

Staff Training

- Organised by the DVLA, Stagecoach roll out yearly staff training around a variety of equality, diversity and inclusion points of view, all agreed important to keep training fresh.
- Planning in early December 2023 RNIB, CambSight, Thomas Pocklington Trust and Sight Concerned Bedfordshire to visit bus depots in Bedford, Fenstanton, Cambridge and Peterborough for informal awareness discussions with drivers, to share both points of view.
- Conversations with Stagecoach suggest they are happy for this trial, to see how can work on this moving forward – so fingers crossed for a long term relationship.
- ✓ MS agreed, felt Stagecoach were listening to feedback and are wanting to provide a service that sensory impaired people will want to use.

Comments, Questions and Answers

- GL was invited to a Combined Authorities transport round table event to talk about electric vehicles and how they impact people with disabilities. Discussed electric busses and how audible alerts would be good (ie like ‘this vehicle is reversing’).
- Combined Authority confirmed they are in talks with Stagecoach about this.
- Agreeing with MS encouraging all to share good driver experience. HK advised that a lady waiting at a bus stop on Emmanuel Street, Cambridge was approached by a driver who got off the bus to ask if she needed any help, so training is helping to make a difference.
- JC mentioned had worked with bus organisations in the past, pushing for improvements but high staff turnover does not help (45% of drivers in contract for less than 1year at Stagecoach). MS agreed, noting they pushed for years for voiceover announcements that has now come to fruition, so watch this space for more.

Q Was there discussion on support for people with hearing loss, people who are deafblind?

A Not specifically at meeting, but encouraged Deafblind UK to attend the awareness drop ins.

ACTION: Sam Wool to add Deafblind UK into email regarding these training/ awareness days.

- In addition to dropping into depot awareness days, BR suggested organisations could team up and offer ‘Swap with me’ events or sensory impaired mystery shopper days.

5) Sensory Service Updates – Helen Kidd (Cambs) and Ronak Gosai (Peterborough)

Helen Kidd, Visionary Rehabilitation Specialist, Sensory Services Team Cambridgeshire CC

- Waiting list times have reduced from 6months to 4months.
- Claire Vile (from Blind Veterans UK) joining the team in December 2023.
- Referrals for carelines are still on hold with no planned changes to this.

Ronak Gosai, Senior Vision Rehab Specialist, Sensory Services Team Peterborough

- Ronak Gosai covers Peterborough, no longer has apprentice. Waiting list is approx. 3months.
- On World Sight Day created an article on the importance of regular eye sights.
- Delivering visual impairment awareness training and the impact it has on peoples lives.

6) Sensory Impairment Partnership Future Meetings – Graham Lewis

- GL confirmed will be looking at taking the SIPB on tour 2024, aiming to get across the local area, to join other visual/ sensory impairment groups (technology dependant).
- Asked by NWAFT (North West Anglia Foundation Trust) for feedback from people with sensory impairments about the technology being used around the virtual wards system.
- Planning Thursday 22nd February 2024 meeting venue to be at RNIBs Northminster House, Peterborough, where virtual wards will be the meetings main focus (to be confirmed).
- GL asked organisations to encourage their members to attend the day (do not have to be members of the SIPB, though they are more than welcome to join!) for NWAFT feedback.
- **ACTION: when venue and date confirmed, email Warren Wilson with names and numbers.**
- RI invited GL and anyone local to the area to attend the Hunts Society coffee morning at the Huntingdon Library, Princes St, Huntingdon PE29 3PA 1st Friday of each month 10-12am.
- **ACTION: RI to send confirmation of meeting dates to GL.**

7) Commissioner Update– Micheil Wilson (PCC)

- New Advocacy Service (for Peterborough and to be confirmed shortly) transferring 5th February 2024. (Expectation is Cambridgeshire will have similar service but are separate).

8) Any Other Business

CDA (Cambridgeshire Deaf Association) Peterborough Friendship Group – Launch

- Invited to the launch of new 2024 Friendship Club, **Thursday 14th December, 11am to 1pm Peterborough Cathedral**, (Refreshments provided).
- Club then every second Monday of the month – **Monday January 8th 2024, 1pm to 3pm at The Park Inn, Peterborough.** **ACTION: GL to circulate CDA invite follow the meeting.**

Date of next meeting

Date: Thursday 22nd February 2023.

Time: 11am to 1pm, (10am onwards Independent Members Pre-meeting).

Venue: To be confirmed.