

Camden Carers' Voice meeting
DRAFT Minutes – 31 January, 10.30 am – 12.30pm
Charlie Ratchford Centre, Belmont Street NW1 8HF

Attendance: (Steering Group) Jacky Spigel (chair) Kate Harwood (vice chair), Jessica Buck, Janet Cabot, Sue Parry-Davies, Costas Louis - 26 carers. Allegra Lynch, CCS, Cath Collins, CCS, Naomi Feather, CCS, Ibifiri Udochukwu, Carly Halpin - CDA, Tom McDonough – CDA, Philippa Russell, CCS, **Apologies:** 2 carers, Kathy Elliot, **Speakers:** Cllr Simon Pearson, Cllr Alison Kelly, Cllr Lorraine Revah, Anita Gundecha, Philip Darby

Minutes from last meeting were accepted. A link to fraud prevention and support is being put on the Camden Carers Service website.

Cllr Simon Pearson. How can a councillor help you and the person you care for?

Simon is a newly elected councillor for Swiss Cottage and can help with issues like housing, rubbish / recycling, SEN and schools, facilities, sports and leisure, committee groups and residents associations.

- To get in touch - Send a member's enquiry and you should get response within 10 days. Find out about your ward and contact your councillor for surgeries for help with problems and advice. For advice around benefits, go to a professional eg: CCS, C404, Welfare Rights. Suggestion to have signposting document for benefits – **Action:** Philippa to check this / collate information.

- Number of meetings and committees – Simon is on Health and Adult Social Care scrutiny committee. They don't make policy but try to improve it. Executive Committee – audit and Corporate governance, Disability Oversight Panel, champion for deaf and hard of hearing.

- All meetings are on the Council calendar:
<http://democracy.camden.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1>

A carer asked how councillors call providers to account. Scrutiny panel aims to do that.

Cllr Alison Kelly – Cllr for Haverstock Ward and has great experience in her personal life and through working with Camden and Islington Mental Health Trust and is active calling to account on values, outcomes and impact on issues in Camden. eg S. Pancras mental health site and bed provision and the way the mental health hubs will work to ensure they are part of a community. She is the Older People's champion and supports the Camden work connecting people with communities.

- Alison chairs 9 committees and 3 community working groups and will help residents get the best for them and their families – whether its fighting for garden access or exposing collusion from a company.

- Carer asked about carers being more visible to the Council – **Action:** Alison actively encourages carers to make deputations and to be involved as part of the community conversation, HealthWatch Camden, at councillor surgeries and Scrutiny Committees.

Cllr Lorraine Revah – Cllr for Gospel Oak. Sits on Health and Adult Social Care, Housing Scrutiny panel, vice chair of Disability Oversight Panel and champion for learning disability and carers. Working around employability for people with disabilities.

- Has helped many residents move home, be safe from harassment. Every first Wednesday of the month, Lorraine runs a surgery for people with learning disabilities and their carers.

- A carer noted she did not get the help she needed.
- Carers noted how much work councillors do.
- What about working with young carers where the impact on their schoolwork can be great? They do more work in schools to identify young carers. However cuts in provision have affected support to young carers.

Anita Gundecha, Head of Integrated Adult Services Camden

Anita heads up community services which are part of the NHS with UCLH, the Royal Free and Whittington to provide care closer to home. They provide 13 different services – eg district nursing, OT, stroke and neuro services, respiratory, palliative care, podiatry, CareLink. Referral is mainly via the GP. Findings show that 30% of people don't know how to access them, so Anita is keen to change this.

- Question about patient record system which is not joined up Anita agreed and they are looking at a single IT system for community providers and GPs.
- A carer suggested more self-referral as GPs can be over-burdened.
- There were questions around mental health services but this is not Anita's remit, though services may refer patients to them.
- Talk about the 10 year plan and social prescribing. A carer noted problems with an increasing aging population and a long strategy when his concerns are how to plan for end of life now and ensure the person he cares for is okay. Its firefighting.
- Another carer said GPs aren't offering support and carers self-medicate. For the carer, as someone else depends on them they should get priority when they need help. Anita said it will be registered if a carer is not coping and they work closely with social workers.

Philip Darby – Strategic Commissioner gave an update about the new Camden Carers Centre due to open April 2021. Charlie Ratchford will remain until the new building is open.

Action: Philip will make plans available to Philippa to pass on.

- A carer noted that the building will be smaller. There is sheltered housing and the Carer's Centre on the ground floor but it is smaller. Some activities like art or music may run elsewhere, eg Greenwood Place - it may be easier for some carers to have the choice

Elections – Statements for the nominations were distributed. Allegra introduced the Camden Carers voice elections for the Steering Group. There are 9 nominations for up to 12 places.

Jessica was seconded by Sue, **Janet** was seconded by Jacky, **Kate** was seconded by Alice, **Constantine** was seconded by Sue, **Galatea** was seconded by Peter, **Jacky** was seconded by Costas, **Terry** was seconded by Kate, **Sue** was seconded by Janet. As Helena was not present, her nomination was not endorsed at this meeting.

All other nominations were accepted by carers at the meeting.

Allegra noted that if anybody else is interested, they can speak to Philippa.

Any other business

- Costas noted that Water rates are going to change and will all go through Thames Water from 1 April with a 4% increase. There is a phoneline for any queries (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm and Sat 8-6pm) **0800 0094238**
- The speakers were thanked for their time and stayed to chat with carers over lunch and cake made by Kate, to celebrate 9 years of Camden Carers' Voice.