

MINUTES OF MEETING

SUPPORTING PLEOPE LIAISON GROUP MEETING

TUESDAY 15TH MARCH 2011

Attendees:

Paul Baker (Chair)	Gwalia Care & Support
Pam Toms	Vale of Glamorgan Strategy & Supporting People Manager
Georgia Blackmore	Supporting People Contract Officer
Paul Bevan	Reach
Chloe Green	Llamau (Safehouse)
Karen Berry	Taff Housing
Lee Powell	The Wallich
Jennifer Garroway	Hafod Care
Rob Thompson	Vale of Glamorgan Homes4u Manager
Ian Jones	Vale of Glamorgan Accommodation + Options Officer
Christine Evans	United Welsh Housing Association
Carol Harris	Remploy
Morgan Bellamy	Remploy
Jemma White	Social Services
Neil Burridge	Progress 2 Work
Ann-Marie Curtis	Hafan Cymru
Benedicte Lepine	Pen Yr Enfys
Anthony Hearn	Llamau
Julie Jones	Gofal
Erica Reid	Gwalia Care & Support

Apologies:

Joanne Carter	Newydd Housing Association
Gurjit Kaur	Atal Y Fro
Kay Quinn	Atal Y Fro
John Porter	Older People Strategy Co-ordinator
Kim Hughes	Hafan Cymru
Lisa Doe	Vale of Glamorgan Homeless & Advice Manager
Sarah O'Keeffe	Wales and West Housing Association
Debbie Regan	Hafod Care
Janis Bell	Taff Housing Association
Delyth Thomas	Hafod Care
Amber Constant	Flying Start

Minutes:

There were no objections to the last minutes. However, if anyone has any comments, please contact the Supporting People Team on tel; 01446 709793 or email: supportingpeopleteam@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Matters Arising

PT informed the group that the Stock Transfer Ballot Papers have been sent out with the closing date 5th April 2011. We should be informed of the result by 6th/7th April 2011.

IJ informed the group that the Hostel refurbishment will hopefully be completed by May.

PT informed the group that the tender process has been delayed as TUPE information has not yet been provided by some providers. Providers however, can decide not to provide this information. Staying Put interviews are to take place 17/03/2011 and Independence Scheme interviews on 18/03/2011. TESS interviews are due to take place between 4th April and 21st April 2011.

Presentation- Carol Harris – Introduction to Remploy.

Carol gave a presentation on the Government Funded National Organisation Remploy. Carol explained the typical journey a client would make with Remploy into employment, where to start a profiling activity takes place to get as much information as possible on the client. An action plan is then developed with a Caseload Advisor. Carol advised that if a certain type of training is identified that Remploy are not able to provide, they can outsource and pay for the training.

Carol advised that Remploy can also be used by employers as a retention service, in the instance of an employee who is disabled and they are not able to fulfil their role. This could lead to re-deployment within the organisation or new employment elsewhere.

Remploy currently lease premises in the VOG within the Hub at the YMCA. A work placement candidate starts in the Vale of Glamorgan Council on 4th April 2011 via Remploy.

Remploy can no longer receive self referrals; they can only be received via two sources, Job Centre Plus and a Statutory Referral Organisation. The organisation needs to be nominated as an SRO to Remploy where the organisation has to be commissioned/contracted by a Primary Care Trust or a LA. PT to discuss internally and hopefully register SP Team as a SRO for all providers.

(Please see attached presentation).

Questions:

Christine Evans, UWHA, How is disabled defined with who can use the service?

Carol advised that the client would have to have multiple and complex barriers to work. Carol advised that someone with substance misuse issues or alcoholism would not be classed as having a disability, however if these issues had led to a liver transplant then the client could be considered. ADHD would be seen as a disability, and in some instances so can literacy issues. Clients do not need to be on benefits to receive support from Remploy.

Carol advised that if anyone queries the eligibility of a client, it would be best to still refer them and Remploy and Job Centre Plus can then make a decision.

Nominations should be made via Pam to become an SRO and the minimum age of a client is working age, 16 years.

Georgia Blackmore, VOGC, What times are Remploy based within the Hub, YMCA?

Carol advised that Remploy are currently there on Wednesdays at the moment, but the Cardiff office is open full time.

Neil Burrige, Progress 2 Work, Can Remploy joint fund with other organisations?

Carol informed Neil that Remploy can fund most things such as CSCS/CRB's etc.

Presentation – Rob Thompson, HomeSwapper

Rob explained that Homeswapper is a national website for exchanges of social housing, where all of the Homes4U partners are members.

Rob explained that the website is quite user friendly, however there is a dedicated number to call locally for help and assistance, 01446 704316.

Questions;

Paul Baker, Gwalia, asked if someone with rent arrears was looking to exchange could they?

Rob explained that when an exchange is requested, approval is needed from the current Landlord in order for the exchange to take place, and therefore that decision would rest with the Landlord.

Anthony Hearn, Llamau, asked if support providers of a client could be kept updated on the progress of an application.

Rob explained that there is a facility for a secondary contact; if the client was happy to add that then there should not be a problem.

Pam Toms, VOGC, asked if rent accounts could be checked for support provider's names of supported clients when the approval is being decided by the current Landlord and support providers informed.

Rob said this is something they can look into. PT to take forward with Housing Management.

**Website: www.homeswapper.co.uk
(Please see attached presentation)**

Presentation – Ian Jones, Social Lettings Scheme

Ian Jones explained that part of his new role is to increase the options available for accommodation, both permanent and temporary.

Ian explained that the existing Vale Assisted Tenancy Scheme (VATS) will come to an end in April and so will the Bond Scheme operated by the Homeless Department.

A social lettings scheme is being developed, with Cadwyn Housing Association as the partner. A scheme manager and senior negotiator have been recruited and hopefully the scheme will be up and running in April. Ian explained that the scheme will be very similar to a letting agent, where the Vale of Glamorgan Council will fund it for one year and it should then be self financing. The referral process will remain the same via the Homeless Department.

The name of the scheme is Cando Lettings, and a website will be developed for both clients and landlords.

Rents will be set as LHA level or lower and the tenant will be required to pay a bond of £250 per single applicant or £500 for families and couples. VOGC will assist with bonds; however there will be in house support for other financial options such as social fund applications etc.

Ian advised that temporary accommodation is very scarce in the Vale of Glamorgan and B+B's are still being used as the hostel is closed for refurbishment. Cando Lettings will also be used for temporary accommodation.

Ian went on to advise the group that the Homeless Department along with Environmental Health, planning and building control have been working with a private developer to develop a building with 15 self contained rooms with CCTV and door entry system to be used with the current leasing scheme in partnership with Hafod.

Information has been sent to the 6 ward members concerned, where the department is now waiting for approval from these members.

Ian advised the property will be managed 5 days a week, for general needs clients and they will be eligible for the TESS scheme.

Questions;

Pam Toms asked once the social lettings scheme is up and running can support providers be informed, and if the new team can attend the next SPLG. Ian said this should not be a problem.

Anthony Hearn asked if the 15 units were to be used as temporary accommodation.

Ian advised that they will be used for temporary accommodation initially, and the tenure held would be a licence with Hafod, but this could then lead to private rented accommodation in the future.

Chloe Greene asked if support needs of clients will be assessed before being placed in the new building.

Ian advised that yes support needs will be assessed prior to allocation, and the clients will need to meet criteria similar to the current leasing scheme.

Benedicte Lepine asked if there was a minimum age, Ian advised 16 years of age.

Training opportunities or Feedback

Julie Jones from Gofal advised that the Aspire project was due to be run again shortly and that she would welcome any referrals from all RSL tenants.

Georgia Blackmore explained about a volunteer scheme that she had heard about from Hafan Cymru called Job Centre Plus 5,000 where staff from the Job Centre volunteer their time to clients receiving benefits. Hafan Cymru's Young Women's Project based in RCT received the service not so long ago where staff helped to dig allotments and decorate the project. Georgia will find more information on this scheme and invite Job centre Plus to the next SPLG.

Paul Baker advised the group that Llamau, Wales & West and Cadwyn made the top 100 employers in Wales list.

Anthony Hearn from Llamau advised the group that the organisation had undertaken a staff survey using an external company, who then advised the organisation that the results were very high and would they like to enter the competition. Anthony advised this was of a cost to the organisation but less than an independent staff survey.

Anthony went on to tell the group that there is now a new office within the Vale of Glamorgan; 236 Holton Road, Barry. Anthony advised that all services now run from this office (the old pet shop) including the Learning 4 Life project. Llamau have also had a reorganisation within the company as £700,000 of savings needed to be found. Management have been affected, and Gary Browne of the SAFEhouse has now become Area Manager of Vale of Glamorgan. Anthony will now manage the Bridgend area, and he advised that front line services have not been affected.

Questions:

None

Suggestions for future meetings

Anthony Hearn asked if the impacts from the Assembly Elections due to take place on 5th May 2011 could be discussed at the next meeting.

Neil Burrige suggested if someone could attend the next meeting from the Back to Work program from the DWP as this would affect nearly all clients. Neil advised that Progress 2 Work is in place until the end of June 2011. Neil to provide contact details when known for invitation to be sent.

AOB

Karen Berry asked if the INAM consultation period had now ended. Pam advised that it had and the new INAM will be sent out shortly. This has been distributed and will be attached to the minutes also. The new INAM is to be used from 1st April 2011.

Pam advised the group that the Supporting People Directory of Services is available online, where the Supporting People pages have been updated. Service users (both current and ex) are able to complete an online questionnaire regarding the service they receive/received as part of the Supporting People User Framework. Leaflets and a newsletter have been developed by the SP team and will go out to all service users shortly.

Chair of next meeting, date and time.

Sarah O’Keeffe, Wales and West Housing Association, 23rd June 2011
2:30pm Committee Room 2, Civic Offices.