



South West Surrey Local Valuing People Group Discussion Notes



The meeting was chaired by Thomas Moore

Thomas Moore

Please refer to our Valuing People Group Presentation Summary, January 2023.

Questions Answers and Comments on Direct Payments for Chris Esson.



Pauline asked: if Surrey County Council knows it is hard to find and employ a personal assistant?

Chris replied that Surrey County Council are aware of this.



Pauline asked: How many people from the Personal Assistant recruitment campaign engaged and became personal assistants?



Chris replied: The campaign took place in Mid Surrey, in Dorking by the Surrey independent living council. Around 300 people engaged with the webpages, 60 of those 300 went on to book a place for the personal assistant training course. However, they aren't sure how many of the 60 became formal personal assistants.

Pauline asked, how much flexibility is there to for people to pay Personal Assistants themselves?

Chris replied – there is flexibility if people would like to contribute more, they can.



Pauline asked, does the budget allow for agency rates, which tend to be higher?



Chris replied: The direct payment budget can adapt to the agency rate. It is common for people to use care agencies to start with, until they find a personal assistant. So, there is flexibility.



Pauline asked what the hourly rate is now, and what it will go up to in April 2023?

Chris replied: the current hourly rate is £11.05 this will go up to £11.95 in April 2023.



Chris said that letters should be sent just before April notifying people of any increase in their budgets.



Pauline replied that the cost of services will increase too, especially given the cost-of-living crisis, how will this impact people's budget?



Chris replied, if say for example, day care services' cost increased, go to social care. They will do a social care review and increase the budget to the correct level, to match the increase. This is mainly applicable to services that Surrey County Council are already aware of.



Pauline noted that there is no warning to service costs going up.



Chris replied to sometimes Surrey County Council also have the same issue. It is best to challenge unreasonable rates with the provider.



Dan from Post 19 asked: if direct payments and benefit payments are the same?



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Chris replied with no benefits are paid by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Direct Payments are paid through Adult Social care from the local authority.



Tony asked Chris- how do you see training going forward, to meet legislation?

Chris replied: How personal assistants are trained is to help them be better at their jobs. This is done through



Surrey Skills Academy. They offer formal, but not mandatory training, Surrey County Council are able to offer more training if Tony commented that on the 1st of May the Care Quality Commission (CQC) are enforcing quality checks how do we monitor that no one is left behind?

Chris replied: Direct payments, and agencies are subjected to inspection. However, personal assistants are not subjected to CQC inspection. This is unlikely to change going forward.



When people hire a personal assistant, they are effectively the employer, therefore, can judge the quality of performance. Therefore, they are responsible, this is a risk of hiring a personal assistant.



Julie asked what safeguards are in place? Such as a DBS check.

refer Surrey Independent living council (SILC) undertake DBS checks.

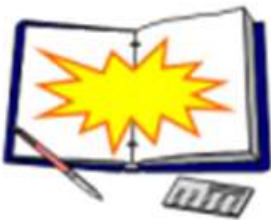


Julie commented: that there is a lack of formal/ regulated quality checks for personal assistants. What if someone lacks the capacity, and practitioners review a case once a year. How do we know if someone is being exploited?



Chris – where someone lacks capacity to have a direct payment, unless they have a power of attorney, who will act in the person's best interests we do not offer Direct Payments to them (not eligible).

ACTION



Action: Link the consultation and circulate easy read version of direct payment strategy with the group, once available.

Contact information for [Direct Payments on Surrey County Council Website.](#)

Questions, Answers and Comments on Surrey People's Group for Amanda Aldridge and Dexter James:



Tony commented – saying well done on the event, it seems very worthwhile. Is there a chance for areas such as Surrey Heath to be invited to the next event?

Amanda commented that this is a possibility. She asked the group to hold the date for the 30th of March for the event.

This has been featured on our [Latest News Page](#).

Julie asked where the feedback from the event went to?



Amanda replied: sent to the relevant colleagues, for example, the liaison nurses that attended the event, were able to capture the health feedback.



Health feedback was also given to Liz Williams who has used the feedback in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The travel feedback went to transport colleagues.



Post 19 commented, saying that at the next event, they can come to speak about their experience with Hate Crime, and the Police's response to this.

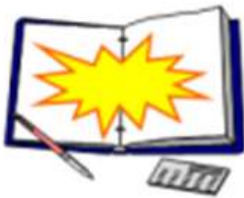
Amanda replied that this will be very beneficial.

Amanda said that if anyone wants to get involved or can offer help, they can contact her at

ldcommunications@surreycc.gov.uk



ACTION



Action: The new Surrey people's group, form to be sent out.

If anyone has any venues, they'd like to offer us, for the Surrey people's group please email us at:

ldcommunication@surreycc.gov.uk



Surrey Heath and wider areas of Surrey to be invited to the next event



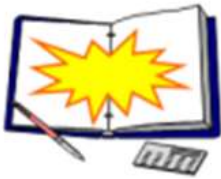
Post 19 to speak at the next event about Hate Crime and their experience with the Police.

Questions, Answers and Comments on Learning Disability Partnership Board



It was commented that it will be good to get the breakdown of the budget next year.

ACTION



**Action: Budget update/
breakdown to feature in the
next set of Valuing People
group meetings.**

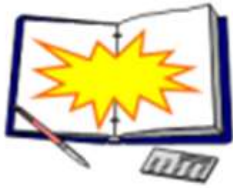
Local Updates and Any Other Business:



Amanda mentioned the new ID requirements for the elections as of May 2023. This information will be sent to all groups.

John commented saying he enjoyed the meeting.

ACTION



Action: Samantha to share vote ID need on [Latest News webpage](#). To gather and send out any other relevant information.

Upcoming Meeting date

