



Learning Disability Partnership Board in Surrey

Minutes of our September 2023 Meeting.

Chaired by Anna Waterman and Debbie Taylor.



Held on Thursday 7 September 2023 using Teams and in person at Woodhatch Place in Reigate.

At our September 2023 meeting we talked about:



Wheelchair Services.

Alex Gournay updated us.



Experts by Experience.

Debbie Taylor updated us.



Direct Payments Strategy.

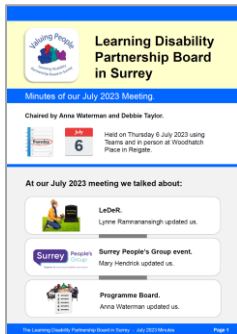
Chris Esson updated us.



Local Updates.

Members updated us.

Our July 2023 minutes were agreed.



The minutes are available on our website.

www.surreypb.org.uk



Actions from our July 2023 minutes



- Lynne Ramnanansingh will meet with providers to discuss issues hospital discharge. Her report will have an Easy Read summary.
- Jade Vallance will forward the report of Student Midwives training.

Keep updated about local events and news.



Up-to-date news about events and services can be seen in the [latest news section of our website.](#)



If you have any news or events to tell us about please email ldcommunications@surreycc.gov.uk and we will send it out in our weekly news email.

Wheelchair Services



Alex Gournay updated us.

Alexander Gournay is Community Health & Engagement Officer for Ross Care.

About Ross Care and Alex.

Ross Care provide the Surrey Wheelchair Service.

Alex is a wheelchair user himself and his role is to talk to people who use the Surrey Wheelchair Service and use the experiences people share to help to improve the service.



A professional needs to refer a person to the service if they haven't been referred before.

Contacting Ross Care.

The service operates from two sites in Woking and Redhill, assessments are usually carried out in our clinics, though they can do home visits.

Our main offices are open 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday:

- **Phone:** 0330 1248210
- **Email:** surreywcs@rosscare.co.uk
- **WhatsApp:** 07471 038 629.



Eligibility Criteria – Rules to get a Wheelchair.

To be able eligible for a wheelchair a person needs to:

- Have a long-term (defined as 6 months or longer) mobility problem and requires a wheelchair for permanent use because they are unable to walk functionally.



- Shorter loan periods may be considered for individuals with a prognosis of less than 6 months' life expectancy.



- Use the wheelchair frequently, defined as more than 4 days per week AND for more than 4 hours per day.



- Be permanently registered with a GP in Surrey.



- Live in an environment that is compatible with safe use of the wheelchair.



There are separate eligibility criteria for electric wheelchairs.



Concerns and complaints.

Concerns.

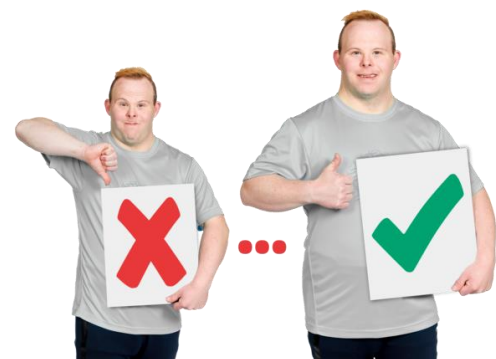
- If something doesn't seem right or you have a concerns talk to a member of the customer service team.



Complaints.

To make a complaint please contact us, we promise to:

- Give priority to respond at the quickest possible opportunity.
- Listen and take time to understand any concerns.
- Be fully committed to providing a satisfactory resolution.
- Be consistent in our approach and document and report concerns.
- Understand what lessons can be learnt from issues in order to prevent the problem happening again and improve our service and procedures.



Feedback and compliments.

We want to hear from people who use our service.

- Please ask a member of staff for a friends and family feedback form. We use the responses from these forms to improve our services. We also have four service user forums each year.
- Ross Care relies on feedback from users, carers and families to improve the services which we provide.
- If you want to give us a compliment please let us know.



We want people with lived experience to help make our service better. We know that this helps to:

- Make the way the service works better for service users and providers. Improve quality of services.
- Giving the service credibility, with the assurance that it is doing the right thing, and ensure services are fit for purpose.
- Let the service user know their voice is being heard. Probably most important of all – service users become part of the solution not just highlighting the issues in the first place.



Partnership Board members questions and comments about Surrey Wheelchair Service.

What is a person is not eligible for a wheelchair from Surrey Wheelchair Services?



If someone is turned down for a wheelchair Alex can help people to fund a wheelchair through a different route such as charity funding, Access To Work (for employment) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

On call engineer



Alex Gournay explained that there is an on call engineer available weekdays from 5pm to 11pm, and from 8am to 8pm at weekends.

Waiting times for repairs.



Alex Gournay explained that there have been difficulties getting the parts needed for repairs. There are two main manufacturers and the service is working to make sure they have a stock of the parts that are most commonly needed.

Gaynor Gibbins explained that her daughter has been waiting for 9 months for footplate straps. Alex agreed to look into this.

Alex agreed to send us the waiting times for both repairs and also new referrals to the service.



Electric Wheelchairs.



Christina Earl told us about a Surrey person who was not able to store their electric wheelchair in their stairwell due to fire safety concerns. They stored their wheelchair in their shed and it was stolen.

Alex Gournay said that this was the only case that happened in Surrey but that he had heard of this happening elsewhere. There needs to be campaign about this.

Amanda Aldridge mentioned that a person she knew had been having problems with their electric wheelchair for months and Alex has got the problem sorted.

Easy Read information.



Alex Gournay is aware that their service needs to produce Easy Read information and Ross Care have sent their chief designer on an Easy Read training course.

Personal wheelchair budgets.



Alex Gournay is keen to explore personal wheelchair budgets and how people may be able to use their direct payments to add features such as USB charging ports to their wheelchair.

Other mobility equipment.

Alex Gournay explained that their service provides, wheelchairs and buggies. Surrey Equipment Service provide other mobility aids.



Cars parked on pavements.



Matt Leadbetter mentioned the problem of cars parking across dropped kerbs and on pavements which makes it difficult for wheelchair users.

Mary Hendrick suggested that Surrey Coalition might be able to do some awareness raising work on this problem. Councillor Bernadette Muir suggested that people get in touch with their local councillor to raise concerns.

Swimming.



Steve Denman helps run the Swans swimming sessions in Leatherhead. He mentioned that they need funding for equipment like hoists to enable some people who use wheelchairs to use the swimming pool.

Councillor Bernadette Muir suggested that Steve write to Surrey County Councillors local to the area as they each have grant money they can give for projects such as this.

Lyanne Yeo mentioned that Donyngs Leisure Centre in Redhill is getting a hoist for their swimming pool.

Experts by Experience



Debbie Taylor and Amanda Aldridge updated us.

Debbie Taylor has been working to improve the experience of people with learning disabilities visiting hospital.



Debbie has been nominated for a Star of Surrey award.

Mary presented Debbie with our own Partnership Board mug to congratulate Debbie on all the work she has done.

Direct Payments strategy



Chris Esson updated us.

Direct Payments offer people more choice & control.

Direct Payments can be used for all or part of someone's support plan and include:

- Personal Assistants (PAs)
- Home Based Care
- Respite / Short Breaks
- Community Services
- Day Care



Surrey performance on Direct payments is poor.

Only 20% of Community Packages are funded through a direct payment. Better performing councils have around 25% of people using Direct Payments.



Support that is available.

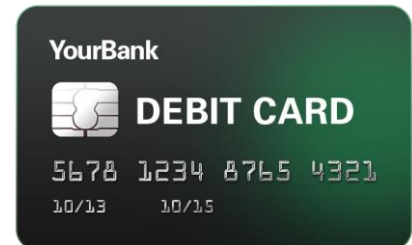
Surrey Independent Living Charity provide:

- Peer Support
- Personal Assistant Support Service



Pre Paid Accounts.

With a pre paid account people have a separate bank account for their Direct payment money. 2000 people in Surrey have a pre paid account and 420 have support to manage their account.



Surrey also has Direct Payment Champions and can offer people advice and guidance.

Issues that have been identified by the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People.

- No clear Direct Payments Strategy for Surrey
- The rate of pay for Personal Assistants (PAs)
- Shortage of PAs
- Recruitment of PAs has been on ongoing challenge
- Varying degrees of knowledge in locality



Groups who use Direct Payments in Surrey.



Older people.

18% use direct payments



People with physical disabilities.

39% use direct payments



People with mental health problems.

4% use direct payments



People with a learning disability and/or autism.

13% use direct payments



Young people in transition.

26% use direct payments



Carers.

93% use direct payments

About the research.

Talked with people in receipt of Direct Payments, people working in the system, service providers, voluntary sector organisations.

The overall number of people involved in the engagements is over **230** individuals.



What the research found out:.

- **Confusion** - frustration, and anxiety about doing the wrong thing. The worry of 'getting it wrong'.
- **Discrepancies** - Being told one thing then something different by another party.
- **Poor relationships** between recipients and the system.
- **Navigation** - A widespread feeling that more support in navigating the system is needed.
- A lack of **independent support** to find services and advise when there are problems.



We are using the feedback to help shape a new Direct Payments Strategy.



Have your say about our Direct Payments Strategy

We want to gather views on what works well, what could be better and ideas for change or improvement.

Partners and people with lived experience are encouraged to review the Draft Direct Payments Strategy and complete the Direct Payments Survey.



The survey is open until Sunday 29 October 2023.

[Click here to go to the survey and give your views](#)



Alternative versions of the Direct Payments Survey including easy read are also available on the website.



Our strategy work projects

- Advice and Guidance
- Promotion and Information
- Review what the provider market can offer
- Staff Direct Payment competency
- How Adult Social Care offer Direct Payments.



Partnership Board members questions and comments about Direct Payments.

What a Direct payment can be used for.



Chris Esson explained that many people employ a personal assistant with their direct payment. People can also use their direct payment to access community activities, including wellbeing activities such as swimming, as long as the activity is meeting an eligible need.

How much personal assistants are paid.



Chris Esson explained that Surrey County Council increased the pay rate for personal assistants to match the London Living Wage of £11.95hr. This was an 8% pay increase and will hopefully attract more people to become a personal assistant.

How much care providers charge people.



Chris Esson explained that Surrey County Council have agreed charges that care providers charge Surrey County Council. It is important that if someone is paying a care provider through their Direct Payment they should be charged the same rate and not a more expensive rate.

One member commented that they have heard of people who do not have enough money in their Direct Payment account to pay for the support they need. Chris Esson advised people to discuss this with their social care team.

If a person uses their Direct Payment to pay for a day service the day service with charge them directly.

Recruiting personal assistants.



Joyce Smith commented that it can be hard for people to recruit and retain personal assistants, and the pay rate was an issue.

Chris Esson explained that for some people who need specialist support Surrey County Council can agree for a personal assistant to be paid more. He also said that people can employ a family member or friend as a personal assistant as long as they don't live in the same house.

Local updates.



Members updated us.

Our next Partnership Board Meeting.



Our meetings will be in person, and people will be able to join online as well. Our next meeting will be on:

Thursday 2nd November 2023 - from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

ALDAG Coffee Shop.

Joyce Smith told us that the coffee shop ALDAG run in Dorking is going well, although their manager left suddenly so if anyone knows anyone who may be interested in this role, please contact ALDAG.



Arundel House.

Mary Hendrick told us that residents living at Arundel House are having assessments of their needs and providers are looking into options for new homes. Larchwood is also closing and the Operations Support Team are offering help.



Houses of Parliament.

Chris Esson told us that he went on a tour of the Houses of Parliament and that this is something that people can do. Just contact your local MP to ask for a visit.



Health information.

Steve Denman mentioned that he'd found it hard to find Easy Read health information – he struggled to find the Partnership Board web pages on the Surrey County Council website.

Mike Leat advised using www.surreypb.org.uk to go to the Partnership Board web pages.

Mike also signposted Steven to www.Easyhealth.org.uk



Disability Taxi Charter.

Lynne Yeo told us about a taxi charter that Active Prospects have developed.

This charter has been sent out to three taxi firms that Active Proects use.



Refugees.

Sally Dubery told us about how they are supporting refugees from Ukraine and other countries who have a learning disability in Surrey.



Ticket offices at train stations.

Jasmine Broome told us about the Surrey Coalition of Disabled People's campaign to stop the closure of ticket offices. The decision to close ticket offices has now been delayed.

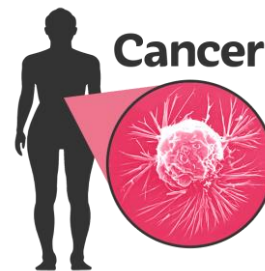


Active Prospects.

Active Prospects have been working with the University of Surrey to do some research around cancer diagnosis and treatment for people with a learning disability. This work will start in 2024.

Easy Read information will be produced.

Also, the delivery of training to Student Midwives has completed and 109 people were trained.



Surrey Choices.

Christina Earl told us that they can offer travel training to adults, and also that they are planning an awards ceremony for staff who have done exceptional work.



Summary of actions from our September 2023 meeting.



Surrey Wheelchair Services

Alex Gournay agreed to send us the waiting times for both repairs and also new referrals to the service.

Members who came to our September 2023 meeting.

Co – Chairs

- Anna Waterman
 - Debbie Taylor
-

Local Valuing People Group Chairs

- Sally Dubery – Central Surrey Voluntary Action – Mid Surrey
-

People with a learning disability

- Leanne Yeo - Valuing People Group co-chair
 - Matt Leadbetter - Chair of the Proactive Community
 - Dexter James – Surrey Choices
 - Carinder Malhi
-

Family Carer Representatives

- Joyce Smith
 - Gaynor Gibbins
 - Steve Denman
-

Voluntary Organisation Representatives

- Yasmin Broome – Surrey Coalition of Disabled People
- Helen Guest – Active Prospects
- Jade Vallance – Active Prospects
- Maria Mills – Active Prospects / Surrey Care Association
- Tracey Jeal – DEA, Redhill Jobcentre
- Christine May – Shooting Stars Hospice
- Christina Earl – Surrey Choices
- Joanna Grudzinska Dmowska / Hugh Skeil – The Grange
- Matt Seaby – Sunnybank Trust

Members who came to our September 2023 meeting.

Surrey County Council representatives

- Amanda Aldridge – Engagement Officer
 - Mary Hendrick – Senior Commissioner
 - Anna Waterman - Head of Commissioning for Disabilities, Autism, Direct Payments and for Mid Surrey
 - Alison Caraccio – Surrey Adult Learning
 - Cllr Bernadette Muir – SCC Councillor
-

Health representatives

- Jane Owens – Surrey Healthwatch
-

Observers and Presenters

- Mike Leat – CCP Ltd.
- Alexander Gournay
- Chris Esson
- Marnie Cotterill
- Laurie Baker