

**Oxfordshire Local Involvement Network  
Update for Adult Services Scrutiny Committee  
Tuesday 26 April 2011**



Public, patient and carer concerns, issues and compliments collected through LINK engagement and outreach activities have resulted in the following projects being taken forwards. Further Health and Social care issues will be prioritised to produce a workplan for 2011-12.

**LINK Host Contract**

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council is to take over as the 'Host' organisation for the Oxfordshire LINK from 1<sup>st</sup> May, following a tendering process that took place during the early part of the year. The contract will run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, when the new 'HealthWatch' arrangements will be introduced. Linda Watson, Chief Executive of ORCC, has warmly welcomed the opportunity to act as host. She says: "ORCC's staff team have a great deal of expertise about creative ways of involving communities and individuals, combined with an intimate knowledge of Oxfordshire. I am confident that our organisational strengths will mean we can provide a strong and supportive framework for the LINK to operate within".

The LINK office base will be moving to Jericho Farm, near Cassington. Details of how to contact the LINK team will be published as soon as possible.

**Ongoing projects and engagement:**

**Self Directed Support (Personal Budgets)**

Following the first phase of LINK-sponsored research into the experience and perceptions of clients of traditional social care services and Self Directed Support which was carried out in June 2010 and reported in September 2010, this additional piece of qualitative research will involve a small group of SDS clients from Black and Minority Ethnic groups.

The main questions for this research are:

1. What are the benefits to clients of SDS, what are the drawbacks?
2. How does the type of service available under SDS compare with previous experience of traditional support services?
3. Are there any specific issues with accessing Self Directed Support services that have been encountered by people from BME groups?

The sample for the research will be provided via the Council's Taking Part team, who will identify BME clients of SDS and will write to each (with a reply pre-paid envelope) asking permission to pass on their contact details to the LINK. We will then contact those willing to be interviewed to set up a discussion. The interviews may require the use of translators and we will seek OCC's help in finding people with experience of translation.

As in 2010 and where appropriate, the views of the client will be supplemented by (or provided by) a proxy such as a carer, family member or caring professional. The LINK budget for this work allows for 8 face-to-face interviews. If there are fewer than 8 Oxfordshire County Council BME clients willing to be interviewed then we will re-contact people who were interviewed in the 2010 research project for a follow-up discussion – as many as the time will allow. The findings and report will be available by the end of June 2011

### **Second ‘Social Care’ Hearsay event – 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011**

As members will know, this event is for people who use Adult Social Care services with their carers, friends and family members being given the opportunity to give their views directly to the Director and Senior officers in Social and Community Services. The 2011 event was very successful and substantially oversubscribed with approximately 50% of the audience who came last year and 50% of new clients. Service Users and their companions heard if the quality of services people receive has improved, were given an update from the 2010 key recommendations, explored what further the LINK working in partnership with Social and Community Services can do to change or improve services and to set further goals and made recommendations for 2011-12. The report detailing this years action plan with the priorities taken from the event will be presented to the leadership team in Social and Community Services on 12<sup>th</sup> May. The final report will be agreed and distributed by the end of May with a summary provided for the 7<sup>th</sup> June ASSC meeting. All reports and updates are available on the LINK website: <http://www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/hearsay-update.aspx> There is a proposal to hold additional Hearsay events to cover different parts of the county during this year subject to resources.

### **‘Enter and View’ visits to Care Homes**

The LINK has carried out a series of visits to 35 Care Homes, the criteria being size, locality to evenly cover the County and a range of service providers. The report will be available at the beginning of May with a view to carrying out a second series of visits shortly.

### **‘Health’ Hearsay in partnership with the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre**

The first progress update from the NOC is due in May from the ‘Making Change’ report’s 5 key priorities covering ‘before, during and after the appointment’, which patients and carers wished to see changes made. These are grouped under the general headings of: Communication, Environment and Clinic Issues. The full report can be obtained from the LINK office or <http://www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/health-hearsay-feedback.aspx>

**Other projects (ongoing or concluding):**

**Podiatry**

An information resource, comprising an attractively designed booklet, website pages and other means of communicating comprehensive information about Foot Care is about to go to print. This will be available by the end of April and widely circulated. The PCT, Age UK and local Podiatry & Chiropody practitioners are supporting the project.

**LINK Partnerships:**

Alongside the main project programme, the LINK is working alongside several Oxfordshire groups and organisations in order to improve or develop services and to provide the LINK with a wider base of interested participants:

Oxfordshire Unlimited

The six month membership project has now completed and has helped develop this User Led Organisation for those with physical disabilities in Oxfordshire. This project provided Unlimited with the ability to increase its membership and become better known in the county and hence to offer to the community a key reference base for information and services in the future.

Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance

LINK is providing ongoing support for the local branch, supporting ONA to publicise its work and raise public awareness, the LINK has helped to produce promotional materials, publish a website and to provide additional channels of contact with local people. LINK has funded the facilitation of a successful business planning workshop, from which a plan for the next stages of development is being taken forward following their AGM at the end of March.

Community Chest / 'Have a Say' Fund

Following an interesting and varied response to this grant fund, the LINK awarded 11 grants to local organisations to assist in their engagement with service users, carers and the public. Progress reports are being supplied at various stages in the different projects. The LINK has published a booklet to promote the work being carried out by the recipients made possible by the grants (attached).

**Current and past LINK newsletters and bulletins** can be found at  
[www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/latest-oxfordshire-link-newsletter.aspx](http://www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/latest-oxfordshire-link-newsletter.aspx)

*Adrian Chant (LINK Locality Manager)*  
 01993 862855  
[oxfordshirelink@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:oxfordshirelink@makesachange.org.uk)  
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