

ADVICE STRATEGY

Central Bedfordshire

Planning Group Meeting

Friday 10th December 2010

Amphill CAB, Woburn Street, Amphill

NOTES OF MEETING

Present

Liz Cray	Central Bedfordshire Council – Communications Team (Adult Services)
Jenny Hedges	Amphill / Biggleswade CAB
Giles Probert	Central Bedfordshire Council – Office of the Chief Executive
David Wood	Leighton Buzzard CAB
Len Simkins	Infotrain / BAF
Linda Wood	Infotrain / BAF

1. Apologies

Wendy Anderson-Welsh	Bedfordshire Race and Equalities Council
Carl Davies	Disability Resource Centre
Becky Kirby	Dunstable CAB
Liz Morgan	Disability Resource Centre
Janet Ridge	Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity
Irene Tindall	Age Concern Bedfordshire
Lola Williams	Central Bedfordshire Council – Transformation Team (Adult Services)

2. Update from last meeting (5th December 2010)

Len recapped on the last meeting.

Len had done some further work on the development report and the draft strategy. The latest draft of the strategy had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Linda had done some further work on the mapping of current advice services. A report on this was circulated at the meeting and will be inserted into the development report (as Section 2.8).

Linda reported on the mapping work. Gathering and interpreting the information had been very difficult. Information had been obtained from 8 BAF members but others had not returned the questionnaire. It was agreed that we should at least try to gather some extra information from: Welfare Rights Team (CBC), Age Concern and Aragon HA (Money Advice). Linda will do this.

Various suggested amendments were made to clarify the summary of the mapping. It was also agreed to add another gap in service (in Section 2.9). This will stress the lack of capacity (due to a lack of funding and a lack of office space) for advice agencies in Central Bedfordshire. Len will make these changes.

4. Advice Strategy

Len presented draft 3 of the strategy and this was discussed in detail.

Basic structure – OK

Page 2 – Janet had agreed Foreword – In 2nd paragraph, delete “for the first time” and change “very important” to “vital” or “essential”?

Page 3 – OK

Page 4 – OK

Page 5 – OK. The issue of developing a wider information and advice strategy needs to be discussed by the Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership and the LSP.

Page 6 – Vision and aims had been amended – Now OK

Page 7 – OK but need to correct typos

Page 8 – Len to add details from Report

Page 9 – There was some discussion on Action Point 3 – especially concerning the ownership of the funding plan. Would it be the advice sector’s plan or would it be a plan for Central Bedfordshire Council (which is the main local funder of advice services). Giles will suggest some amended wording for Action Point 3.

Page 10 – Len to add details from Report

Page 11 – Need to add “and funders” to note in Action Point 10

Page 12 – OK

Page 13 – OK

Page 14 – Len to add details from Report

Page 15 – Change Action Point 15 to “Identify information and advice providers that need support to enhance quality”. Change Action Point 17 to “Increase membership of Bedfordshire Advice Forum”. Change Action Point 18 to “Increase the number of information and advice providers with quality marks”.

Page 16 – Len to add details from Report

Page 17 - Change wording of 2nd bullet point to cover written information as a whole (both hardcopy leaflets and on the internet). Change note in Action Point 19 to link in with the pilot work on developing a Community Hub. Change “Ensure that” in Action Point 21 to “Promote the need for”. Change “Ensure that advice services are effectively provided...” in Action Point 22 to “Promote the need for advice services to be effectively provided”. Change the order of the Action Points: 21 to 19; 22 to 20; 19 to 21; and 20 to 22.

Page 18 – OK

4. Action Plan for completing the Advice Strategy

Len will finalise the Report and the Advice Strategy by the end of December. It will then be sent for final comments to the Planning Group. There may not need to be another meeting of the Group.

The documents will then be sent to BAF members in January.

Len will also contact Janet Ridge to discuss how and when the Report and Strategy should be presented to the Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership and the LSP. Giles advised that it will also be important to have a strong supporting document (eg letter / action plan) outlining what priority action needs to be taken to implement the Strategy and what the cost implications will be.

It is hoped to finalise all the documents in February.

NB All the documents relating to the work on the Advice Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Borough can be found on BAF's website at: www.bedsadviceforum.org.uk

Meeting facilitator - Len Simkins (Infotrain)

The Planning Group meeting was:

Organised by  **BEDFORDSHIRE
ADVICE FORUM**
Promoting and supporting
advice and information
services in Bedfordshire

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