

## Newcastle Learning Disabilities Partnership Board



### Notes of the meeting held 3 June 2008

#### Who was at the meeting?

Councillor Brenda Hindmarsh	Councillor , Chair
Chris Anderson	Self advocate, Co Chair
Tim Keilty	Person Centred Planning Co-ordinator
Bill Norman	Learning Disabilities Partnership Board
Rod Ferguson	Connexions
Graham Newton	Self Advocate, User Forum
Barbara Chapman	Self Advocate, User Forum, Deputy Co Chair
Dave Norman	Skills For People, User Forum support
Karen Inglis	Adult Social Services
Colin Douglas	Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Trust
Trevor Moon and his daughter Louise	Parent/Carer
Hazel Allen and Sally Young	Edward Lloyd Trust
Peter Miller	Self Advocate, User Forum
Annie Carden	Northeast Special Needs Network
Cath Williams	Adult Social Services
Les Pickering	Primary Care Trust
James Todd	Self Advocate, User Forum
Louise Telford	Social Worker Commisioning Team, Adult Services

Liz Langfield	City Councillor
Lynne Gray	Parent/Carer
Sally Gibbeson	Interactive Development
Ruby Mc Carron	Edward Lloyd Trust
Barbara Taylor	Mencap



### **Who could not make the meeting?**

These were members who gave their apologies

Jacqui Jobson	Newcastle Advocacy Centre
Doreen McCarthy	Adult Education
Hamish Hamilton	Newcastle College
Joanne Burke	Better Days
Helen Milner	Newcastle Special Needs Network
Allison Ferris	FANE
Janis White	Coquet Trust – Supported Living Forum representative
Van Brunning	Parent/Carer
Christine Walker	Jobcentre Plus
Liz Wright	Skills for People
Lesley Mountain	Better Days
Dr Rick Brannen	Learning and Skills Council
Nichola Hilson	Deputy Chief Exec Skills for People

### **Guests:**

**Paul Connelly, Children with Disabilities Team and his guests Daniel and Robert George Johnson  
Twisting Ducks Drama Group**

### **Venue**

Disability North, The Dene Centre, Castle Farm Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PH



## Rules

Chris read through the rules



## Message from Deputy Co Chair

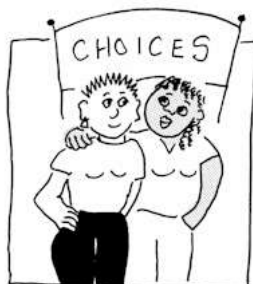
Barbara gave her message to the board.

Brenda welcomed everyone to the meeting.



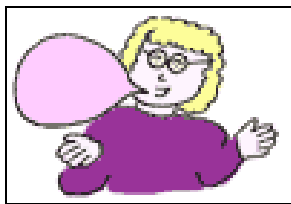
**User Forum – The report for the day was around today's theme "Growing Up".**

Discussion centred around how difficult it is for children leaving school and moving on. Everybody should have choice and support and if it's not received – keep asking.



- 14-16 year olds had been asked what they wanted and like other's in that age group did not know, it would be best to ask people in their 20's.
- There are lots of different staff and it would be good to have one keyworker to go to.
- Schools are sometimes not flexible and it can be hard to try out different things.
- It's easy to lose touch with friends when you have left school.

- More information is needed for young people and parents, as sometimes people only find out things by accident, from other families. A booklet would be useful.
- At ordinary schools, non disabled people get more chances to do after school activities than disabled pupils.
- People say “don’t keep asking us, get on with it”
- Nearly all those asked said a strong advocate was a great help.



- Youth Services need to change to include young people with learning disabilities and to include everyone.
- Welfare service to explain about practical work and DSS benefits. Information of this type is available in a leaflet. There is still work to be done at mainstream schools.

Brenda thanked the group for their report.

### **Barbara and Growing Up**

Bill had been to see Barbara before the Board meeting and had found out about Barbara and growing up. Barbara had moved around a lot when she was young and she had attended Welford quite early on.



She likes Welford and still goes one day a week but she did not have the same choices in the past as she has now and prefers her current package. Like all teenagers she

did not know what she wanted to do and it's important you are told about choices.

Plans with real choice are good but must be updated as people change their minds.

We then moved onto the main theme of the day **Growing Up** and we had presentations by Rod Ferguson and Paul Connelly.

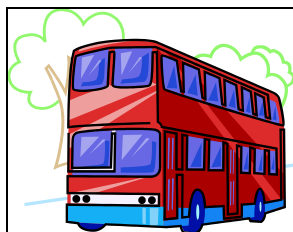
All young people face challenges when growing up not just young people with learning disabilities. Work is being done to help young people plan for the future as each year 25/30 young people with learning disabilities are coming through. Some improvements have been made but we still have a long way to go.

- 2 years ago a group was set up to help young people and a DVD called "It's your future" was funded by LDDF.
- Youth Services will listen to young people, but need to develop.
- Independent travel has also been looked at.
- The same issues keep coming up, what is happening in schools? And plans need to be more person centred.

There was to be a meeting the next day and the messages from the Partnership Board needed to be given to that meeting.

### **Growing Up and Travel**

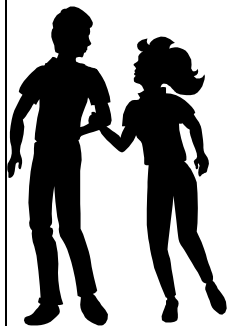
Daniel and Robert, the guests of Paul Connelly then told us about their experiences about travelling on their own.



- It changes your life and when you get used to it it's easy.
- They did a course at school concentrating on

travelling from home to college.

- There are some good things and some bad.
- You can go to town with your friends, go to the cinema and see your girlfriend.



- You learn how to use money and bus timetables.
- Some people are good and helpful.
- You must learn to keep safe and take care of yourself and others around you. Learn the rules and keep out of trouble.
- Some worries are – bullying, losing you bus pass, getting lost, and not all bus stops have timetables.
- It gets easier when you have learnt what to do and you get confident.
- You can do ordinary things like go for a pint.



- Their parents were worried at first but are OK now.
- Bullying is not too bad, they ignore people like that.

### **Tim Keilty then told us about “The Big Plan”**

This plan involves families in group sessions working together to help young people with learning disabilities have an interesting and fulfilling life. The families were invited initially but also word gets round to get others involved.



### **Session 1**

Thinks about who they are? Labels, relationships – who is in your life? Try and bring more people along.

### **Session 2**

What is a good life? Independence, being safe, friends, dreams. What are their dreams of the future?

### **Session 3**

The gifts they bring the community. A gentleman called John Obrien says there are 5 accomplishments to a better life

- Go places
- Know people
- Have respect
- Make choices
- Be somebody

People think about who they are? What they do? Their skills, qualities, what they can share, bring to their communities.



### **Session 4**

Pulls everything together, clarify what they want life to be like.

Families are very positive about the experience, saying it helps them learn about their sons/daughters, vocalise what they want for the future and remember that people can change their minds.

Someone asked if this approach could be done with older people. Tim said that it has not been tried because it's mostly about energy. North Tyneside are trying it out with older carers so there may be more information in the

future.

### **Paul then did a brief session on Self Directed Support and the Dynamite Project**

This is different from In Control which was talked about at the last meeting.

It is targeted at 15-17 year olds. A pilot had happened to test out the system to see if it could work

People on the scheme were given £200 to plan a best day – where to go? Who to involve? Examples included York Railway Museum, St James Park and a Speedboat ride



The feedback received was positive, but not all families took up the offer.

- It's important to have input from outside the family
- Support plans have been agreed and are getting set up.
- It's good to share experiences with other families
- Freedom

There will be an evaluation at the end of June to see how this is taken forward. A lot has been learnt but there is still a lot to do. There is no new money it's just using it differently.

### **After coffee Rod did a talk on Growing up themes – what needs to change based on –**

- Evidence – how do we know? We need to talk to people in their 20's who've been through it.
- Responsibility – No one agency can improve the lives of young people, need to join up
- Planning – schools, colleges should plan



Transition could get better by shared ownership, strategic approach and high level commitment. The process happens but in reviews which are more about the past. “Every Child Matters” should be not just about education but all aspects of life

**A common vision** could be with young people and families at the centre of it, setting standards so they know what to expect

**Newcastle Sharing Vision** Rod said there were two ways forward – multi agency group reporting twice a year and a multi agency transitional team.

**Growing up matters** – We want successful transition, commitment, involvement planning and commissioning, multi-agency, co-ordinated and monitored.

The Growing Up gaps are mainly

- Commitment from agencies
- Clarity of responsibilities
- Person centred reviews and plans
- Links to Learning and employment

Overall families want a focal point for referral and accessible information.



**We then moved onto Annie Carden who looked at the viewpoint from parents and carers.**

Families like and want –

- Clear, timely, appropriate information

- Support through transition e.g. keyworker who is involved, meetings and getting the young person involved. Information before meetings so they can prepare and confirmation as to what will be followed up.
- Clear planning
- Clear accountability
- To see what the young person wants happening
- Appropriate and individual services to meet needs
- Enough time to consider options
- Housing, leisure and transport covered.
- There are gaps around socialising, friendship and a lack of opportunity to meet people.
- It would be good to begin the planning at year 9 (aged 14) and focus on individual skills get a chance to try things and be able to change their minds.
- An appropriate plan after school to support them to achieve their goals.

**We then talked about what we had heard in three groups and answered some questions:**

**1. Why is planning important for young people and their families?**

- Opportunities for informed choices
- Needs to be started earlier
- Give direction
- Give the young person and their families the opportunity to identify the role they will have, who else they may need and the roles of others.
- Acknowledge families & teenagers difficult time – planning stops wheel coming off – get it right
- Gives a framework
- Gives opportunity for person to say what they want and the family to say what they want and marry the two.
- Identify and explore benefits and financial issues
- Important to have the right people and keep a record.

- Planning is important it gives us more choices about work and other things
- Want things to run smoothly and not be a shock
- Planning ahead might help you set something up if it does not happen now.
- Make sure it is right for you
- So they know what colleges and social events there are
- So things don't get forced on you
- Planning soon so you get what you want
- You need enough time to set it up

### **What should transition planning be trying to achieve?**

- Record of decisions
- Choice/options
- Right people are at the planning
- Process
  1. exploring information in general
  2. exploring more details
  3. Clear pathway that is flexible for change, that offers experiences that can change (real life experiences).
- Clarity what is education between 14-19 working towards for the young person
- Planning must not be prescriptive
- Options to explore, make mistakes and change
- It is not about making decisions for the rest of your life!!

### **What are the Issues we need to be thinking about?**

- Interim arrangements are not always available for people to explore options.
- Looking at whole life.
- Help us make the best of ourselves
- Professionals need to be right
- Do not forget the long term plans
- We need Can do attitude
- Everyone getting the same chance, whether disabled

or not

- So young people, their families and people who work with them agree on the way forward
- Transition planning should be improving choices as well as offering choices.

### **What's working well? And what's not working well?**

#### **Well**

- Some planning for some young people
- Travel training
- Things are happening, reviews are getting better. Big Plan etc

#### **Not Well**

- Options sometimes do not match
- City buy in, to achieving education and work for all
- Connexions from 19+ in planning, funding etc as not linked to transition plans
- Lots of information but in different places – no central point.
- Sometimes families force young people to do things they don't want to do
- Families aren't made aware how important the year 9 review is.

### **How to make things better for young people growing up and how the Partnership Board Can help?**

- Range of choices across all colleges
- Looking at wider support to achieve aims
- Pathways to health need to continue 14-19+
- Planning happens in all schools
- Same opportunities for experiences/placements.
- Advertise in shopping centres to tell young people – not just leaflets
- One person to speak to – a single point of contact
- Partnership Board – this is a must do not optional
- Partnership board to put pressure on "society" to offer more access and mainstream services.

### **During discussion it was thought to be a good idea to**

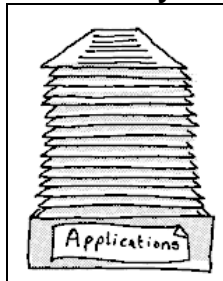
get the Head of Youth Services to a future Partnership Board meeting.

Paul and Rod will discuss anything further with anyone who wants to so get in touch with them if you have any questions.

Bill will also be doing a bulletin – so let him know any news.

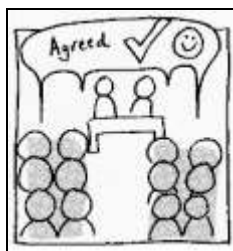
### Bill did a presentation on the LDDF

- How much money is left
- How to make bids – what are priorities, please state fully. Must be in by 4<sup>th</sup> July



- How to consider bids
- Do we have an extra Board meeting to make decisions about the Fund?

It was agreed a July meeting to take place for the board to decide. Date to be arranged.



### Citizens First Feedback

- Not many responses received but those we have received have been very positive and helpful
- Everyone agreed with Priorities agreed
- Ewen Weir – to sell to rest of council and other partners
- Launch Day – do we have one? **Yes maybe include Barbara with sound beam** if this is what is needed

## **Involvement with the Board**

As discussed last month we are changing how people get involved. Some roles will need to go to tender. It was hoped that the new arrangements would start 1st October.



## **Good News Stories**

### **Twisting Ducks Theatre Company “Changing Lives Through Theatre”**

**Come along to the above performance on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2008 at The Peoples Theatre, Stephenson Road, Heaton.**

**Doors open 6:15pm and the performance begins at 7pm**

**Tickets only £2.50 available on the door or by calling 07925167775**

## **What we will talk about next time**

Nexus are coming to the August meeting to update on transport.

Brenda thanked everyone for attending



## **Date, time and venue of next meeting**

Tuesday 5 August 2008 10am start, 9.40 for coffee,  
At Disability North, The Dene Centre, Castle Farm Road,  
Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PH