

LINK Public Meeting - 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010 1.00pm – 4.45pm  
Essex Record Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM1 6YT

Notes of Breakout Group – Involving People – Sharon Wheeler (Southend Borough Council)

1. What changes can we propose? The government has committed to involving people – Local Government in Public Health Act.
2. The benefits of LINK:
  - work with everyone
  - work with care professionals
  - will not take over from existing groups:
    - user led organisations
    - community groups
    - individuals
  - people do not have to be a member of LINK to get involved
3. Who is involved? Is this enough?
4. How do we make it easier for people to have their say?
  - there is a need to do something different
  - have we taken on too much for the money available?
  - need to encourage other groups to join in
  - NHS people
  - we need to learn from exiting groups
  - people can assume that what they already belong to works better
  - numbers of people for each meeting is remaining the same
  - we need to get to a wider group
  - people who use services (because they have a long term condition) know about LINK. If they don't use services they don't know about LINK
  - what about young people?
  - mustn't assume that people have to turn up at meetings
  - people can get to know LINK members within their communities and so can represent them
  - logging on and registering views works for some
  - is it a political expedient to keep people happy?
  - have we any proof 'they' listen?
  - there are no services for alcohol – and don't intend to have any
  - LINKs has certain statutory powers:
    - can make recommendations to commissioners
    - commissioners are required to make a response
  - LINK has different powers to PPI (Public Patient Initiatives) which largely focused on health
  - LINK includes health AND social care
  - need to work together as a group
  - health and social care should be separate
  - social care – the majority of people are cared for at home

- need to spread knowledge that LINK exists
- we need to have direct advertising and piggy back on local issues to make people aware of LINK
- there is a new Young People's Unit (Local Authority Consultation in Colchester)
- Youth involvement does not involve traditional communication – we need to use new media, blogging, etc
- we can go adown to the shops, GP surgeries and talk to people
- social care – homes and services for older people
- social care is keeping people healthy, safe and well
- involving people needs publicity – door drop to every house in Essex
- radio – the Dave Monk show
- funding was originally for April 2008 – March 2011 (another 13 months) – future is not known
- people don't believe they can make a difference
- need to try different methods – one size does not fit all
- ask friends and family (because they don't have time) for their views and feed back
- you have to fill success
- people have to work together
- not enough on social care
- where do people with dementia have a voice?
- what has happened to free care at home?