

## **NCAN Strategic Partnership**

18 May 2016

### **Present**

Dan Mobbs (DM) – MAP (Chair)  
Ros Brown (RB) - Norfolk Community Law Service  
Julie Kemmy (JK) - Equal Lives  
Janka Rodziewicz (JR) – NCAN  
Francesca Uragallo (FU) – NCAN  
Lin Matthews (LM) - Age UK Norfolk  
Jo Willingham (JW) - Age UK Norwich  
Simon Pickering (SP) – Norfolk Family Mediation Service  
Kate Kingdon (KK) - SCG/Age UK Norfolk  
Adam Clark (AC) – Norwich City Council

### **Apologies**

Jo Huxtable (JH) - Stonham Homestay  
Lesley Burdett (LB) – Shelter  
Boyd Taylor (BT) – Norwich City Council  
Liam Pickering (LP) – South Norfolk Council  
Mat Armitage (MA) - Norfolk Citizens Advice  
Lorna Bright - Norfolk County Council  
Neil Ricketts (NR) - Norfolk County Council  
Rob Lancaster (RL) - MAP  
Liz Codling (LC) - North Norfolk Council  
Louise Humphries (LH) – GYROS  
Nicky Bristow (NB) – Norwich City Council  
Sean P Knight (SK) – North Norfolk Council  
Janice Dane (JD) – Norfolk County Council  
Kerrie Gallagher (KG) – South Norfolk Council

## **1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising**

**ACTION – FU to alter Simon Pickering's name on Page 1 of March minutes from Simon Armitage.**

- Discussion around why statutory colleagues' attendance has reduced over recent months.

**ACTION – JR & FU to contact statutory colleagues and ask whether a change in the location or content of the meeting would improve attendance. Also due to the recent changes, check whether they are still the correct person within the organisation to invite.**

**ACTION – Amend KK attendance error on Page 1 of March minutes.**

- Update from RB – Hannah Hill has been appointed as the NCLS Coordinator of the Family Court Support Service.
- JK asked AC whether there was an update from Norwich City Council regarding support for offenders leaving prison.

**ACTION – JR to raise this at the rehab board next week and RB to ask Vicky Day at 4Women event on 19.5.16**

## **2. NCAN updates**

- Community Clinic Engagement – KK, LM and JR have been working with them and encouraging them to link in with the Early Help Hubs and usage of the referral system. It has also been agreed in principle that the referral system will be embedded in the SKI call centre.
- Community Clinics are currently held in South Norfolk at Harleston Information Plus, in Broadland at Aylsham Care Trust and in West Norfolk at the King's Centre in King's Lynn. In Great Yarmouth there are some sessions planned at Shrublands and in Norwich it is looking probable that the first one may be at Vauxhall Centre.
- JR and FU are meeting with the Early Help Hub Implementation board on Thursday 19 May to discuss the use of the CRS in the early help hubs.
- The Health Symposium event which took place on Friday 21 April was successful. A good cross section of health professionals attended the event and feedback was very positive.

**ACTION – JR to email attendees and follow up on the commitments made by health professionals at the event.**

- The Outcomes survey is continuing and the second stage follow up will begin in the next couple of weeks.
- JR and KK met with the Anglican Church regarding advice the clergy give to parishioners in need. The Anglican Church are holding a debt conference in the autumn.

**ACTION – JR to look into NCAN attending this conference.**

- There are new EU guidelines which have been agreed regarding data protection. These guidelines are called the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). These guidelines will become UK law in 2018. NCAN and NCLS data protection policy will be amended to comply.
- NCAN still gathering feedback on benefit sanctions in order to feed into the National Audit Office survey.

**ACTION – FU to send out details of the Welfare Conditionality study released recently around benefit sanctions.**

**ACTION – JR to look into a list of the community clinics to circulate.**

### **3. Universal Credit Update – Adam Clark (AC)**

- All Local Authorities are now involved in Universal Credit as of 27 April.
- Each local authority has signed a contract with the DWP in which they commit they will offer a certain level of support to claimants.
- Norwich City Council have established a cross council working group. People have identified in each area to be Universal Credit 'champions'. Nicky Bristow is the team leader for Universal credit and has overview of this.
- Norwich City Council have found that so far, claimants have been far more self-sufficient than anticipated. It is thought that this is due to the cohort that UC has been rolled out to so far. Most are computer literate and many have not been out of work for long periods etc.
- AC observed that it would be interesting to see what happens when Universal Credit goes completely digital (as Great Yarmouth has). Norwich City Council expects to see a greater demand for support when this rollout occurs.
- Budgeting support for Norwich City Council property tenants will continue. Norwich City Council will need to look who will provide budgeting support to those who are not Norwich City Council property tenants.
- There is no timeline for the full digital service as yet.
- A triage form has been created which will tell claimants what they are entitled to. This has been underused so far but usage may increase as more claimants move to UC.

**ACTION – AC to look into how much support is being requested for bank account setup etc.**

- Simon Pickering asked whether Norwich City Council have looked into whether claimants are going elsewhere for assistance. Norwich City Council have looked into this and as yet there does not seem to be evidence of this occurring however they will continue to monitor this.
- JK going to visit the Great Yarmouth job centre in August to discuss Universal Credit with them. JK happy to take any questions to this meeting on NCANs behalf.

#### 4. Universal Credit Update – Gaye Clarke (GC), Department of Work and Pension

- Broadland doesn't have a job centre so the Broadland area use the Norwich job centre.
- The DWP are holding monthly meetings to go through contracts with district councils and to check how they're getting on.
- The DWP have found that around 95% of claimants used their own device or PC to access the online system.
- The DWP are in a 'test and learn' environment and welcome feedback during this process.
- By the end of the month (May) the DWP should know how many claimants have required support with budgeting in Great Yarmouth.
- Social housing landlords should be notified if their tenant is moved onto Universal Credit. However it does not appear that this is always occurring.

**ACTION – Please bring any feedback on Universal Credit to the next Strategic Partnership meeting. NCAN will then collate and send through to GC.**

- Over the next couple of years, social housing rent will reduce. Claimants must notify the DWP when this occurs to avoid overpayment of UC.

**ACTION – NCAN to circulate 'How to Apply for Universal Credit' DWP video when the rest of Norfolk moves to the full service. It is felt that it will be confusing to circulate prior to the rest of Norfolk moving over to the full service.**

- It was suggested that the DWP provide training to all local authorities on the full service as soon as possible in case they begin to see claimants from full service areas.
- There was discussion around when legacy claimants will move to Universal Credit. GC said that next year they will begin to pilot moving legacy claimants over to Universal Credit. The aim is for everybody to have moved over to Universal Credit by 2020/2021.
- UC paydays are on different days on the month. This is to mitigate the risk of there being a problem with the banks or similar on a particular day which could result in nobody receiving payment.
- If a claimant has a change of circumstance which would have impacted their benefits previously, then they will be moved onto Universal Credit.
- JK expressed concern over use of sanctions under UC. Discussion around sanctions for those deemed not to be working enough hours, single parents for

example.

**ACTION** – GC to look into getting guidance on single parents which NCAN can circulate.

**ACTION** – Francesca to send GC details of future NCAN meetings through calendar invites.

## **5. Welfare Benefit Appeals – Lack of Resources**

- The NCLS welfare benefits team is overwhelmed at present. Ros Brown asked that all referrals to the NCLS welfare benefits team be sent via the NCAN referral system.

## **6. Regional updates**

- LM – Age UK Norfolk have lost funding for housing options but the board have agreed to fund the service for another year. It may need to move to a paid service after that but LM will update in due course.
- DM – visited an organisation similar to MAP based in Southampton and they experience exactly the same issues as MAP.
- GC – There is a benefits forum taking place on 5 July at 10am.

**ACTION** – Email Gaye ([gaye.clarke@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:gaye.clarke@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)) if you wish to attend.

## **7. Future Meetings**

- The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 13 July, 10am – 12pm in Mancroft Room, City Hall, Norwich