

Chorleywood & Loudwater

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

Date: 17th May 2011

Venue: Chorleywood & Loudwater Children's Centre, Chorleywood.

Time: 1.30 pm to 3 pm

Attendees:

Name

Sandra Mooney
Martin Trevett
Nina Parker Hughes
Gaynore Fletcher
Mandy Summers
Simone Tyson
Katie Beckman
Duncan Gauld
Emily Jacques
Emma Weidner
Karen Woodhead
Helen Jones
Christine Freeman

Organisation

Children's Centre
Three Rivers District Council
Children's Centre
Home-Start
Parent
Parent
Chorleywood Primary School
Christ Church School
Hertfordshire Library Service
Hillside Pre-school
Ruspini House Pre-school RMS
PSLA
St Andrew's Toddlers

Apologies:

Name.

Katharine Maxwell
Jan Andrews
Emma Kay
Emma Roadnight
Jenny Franklin
Jane Herman

Organisation

Carpenters Community Church
Chorleywood Library
Health Visitor
Christ Church Toddlers
Childminder
Rickmansworth Nursery

MEETING OPENED

1. WELCOME

The Chair, MT, opened the meeting and welcomed those in attendance. A special welcome was given to those who attended for the first time, including representatives from Christ Church School, Chorleywood Primary, Hillside Pre-school, Ruspini House, and Simone Tyson.

2. INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

All attendees were introduced, and apologies were noted. It was observed that this meeting was well attended.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING & MATTERS ARISING

The minutes were confirmed as correct. All actions agreed at the last meeting have been delivered.

It was agreed that agenda items 4 and 5 would be reversed.

The matters arising had been circulated in advance on a report.

Outdoor Play – SM has contacted the Three Rivers outdoor play officer. Because the Centre is not in an area of deprivation they are not able to work in this area, however the funding structure is changing in September so there may be an opportunity to buy in their services.

Therefore SM has organised for 'Down In The Woods' to run two outdoor play sessions in the summer. There will be nature trails, bug hunts and natural constructions. They work with both parents and the children. Because they charge £150 for 2 hours there will probably be a small charge made for these activities. The Board agreed to this. SM agreed to ask the Parish Council for permission to use the Common for these sessions.

Play Area – MT outlined that £95k had been secured to spend in 2012/13 on a play area. As the council owns Chorleywood House Grounds this was currently the preferred location for this play area. ST summarised the result of the local consultation she has undertaken on the type of play equipment installed and the preferred location and said this would be reviewed by the Open Spaces Committee on 24th May.

As had been agreed at the last Advisory Board meeting, the over-spend from last year's budget was used to purchase eight parenting workshops. These have been offered in rotation to local pre-schools and schools to try to meet as many families as possible in the area.

4. PARENTS FEEDBACK AND LOCAL VIEWS

SM said that the CC needed feedback in order to shape future services and hence it consulted quarterly. A parent's 'wish list' had been derived from the latest consultation, but this did not necessarily meet the needs in the area.

Christ Church Toddlers had reported that wrap-around care is increasingly becoming an issue due to parental redundancies. SM said that the CC was willing to support professionals in their return to work.

Christ Church School agreed that there had been similar feedback about wrap-around care in his school, particularly from Nursery parents.

SM suggested that she could contact local providers of childcare to ascertain what was being offered in the area. HJ reported that childcare sufficiently data had been collected in March and April of this year and should be available soon.

ST thought there was a need for more mixed age group sessions as most toddler groups only take children up to the age of 3. CF said that leaders had some discretion and could allow children to stay on for a term after they turn three so long as they behave appropriately. SM suggested Our Lady's Toddler Group in Rickmansworth as being suitable for mixed age children and open to over 3s.

The other items on the 'wish list' were debated in turn. It was decided that it wasn't appropriate to start a 'bring and swap' session for baby equipment as there are already long established Lots For Tots sales in Rickmansworth, and there is a forum on the Chorleywood Mums website for selling or giving away children's toys and equipment.

With regard to the provision of First Aid course, the CC offers a subsidised course each quarter. It is always popular, and usually fully booked. The Children's Centre will also signpost to other courses running within Three Rivers if applicable.

With regards to Speech and Language, SM explained that the CC is allocated 4-hours per year of a Speech Therapists time per year. So far this has been used to provide a free workshop for parents about speech development, delays, disorders and when to refer.

The Board felt that there is an increasing number of families living in the area for whom English is a second language. However, the pre-schools and schools reported that although the number of bi-lingual children in their settings was increasing, they generally had an acceptable level of English and did not need additional support.

It was suggested that many local instances of speech delay were attributable to hearing loss, and that this may be going undetected for longer as children are not all assessed at age 2. Tests do occur when the children are in Reception.

With regards to a Nutritionist visiting, SM explained that the CC did not have one allocated because it is a Phase 3 Centre. She had offered cooking workshops last summer, and could commission in a Nutritionist if the Board felt that was a priority. The Board decided not to pursue this at the moment.

With regard to the provision of exercise classes, it was found that there are already numerous classes available within the area and hence the CC would only be duplicating existing services by offering another. The CC produce a timetable of local activities that includes classes for new Mum's to which babies can be taken.

5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

In conclusion to the discussions about local views it was decided that the Focussed Activities for the CC should be:

- The Children's Centre to consult with families and local community providers to establish whether there is sufficient wrap around care in the area.
- To produce a list of wrap around care available in area and within a 5 mile radius.
- From these findings seek ways to increase wrap around care (if needed).
- The Children's Centre to find ways to establish an improved range of services for families which allows access as and when needed.

The 'Annual Conversation' inspection had given the CC six actions, and these were set out in the report circulated in advance of the meeting. This is one of the three inspection visits carried out by Herts CC each year. Every CC has been given an action relating to reaching more families.

HJ outlined the PSLA targets, which were improving the carbon footprint of the CC and increased networking of CC services in order to respond to changing SureStart priorities.

Finance

Copies of the budget were circulated. The total budget has been reduced by 10% this year, and will face a further 10% reduction next year. Expected expenditure remained largely unchanged.

Because of the budget cuts it may be necessary to introduce charges for some CC services. The Board agreed to this.

SM hoped that it may be possible to reduce some of the costs associated with using remote venues by hiring the Library on the days when it is closed and running services there with consequentially reduced travelling and set up times. The Board agreed to this.

Full Core Offer

HJ congratulated the CC for achieving Full Core Offer status in February, one year ahead of schedule.

Safeguarding

In future Safeguarding will be on the agenda of every Advisory Board meeting. All members of the Board were requested to provide details of a current CRB certificate if they held one, or agree to undergo a CRB check.

They were informed about CC Policies and Procedures and each presented with a brochure explaining more about the role and requirements of the Advisory Board.

6. A.O. B.

Home-Start has supported one family in Chorleywood and sent details of the outcomes to the CC. They have a new service specification focussed on early intervention, and other criteria are attached to funding.

EJ reported that the reduced Library opening hours would be effective from July. Rhyme Time and Story Time slots will be changed.

7. DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meetings will be held on:

- Tuesday 12th July 2011, 1.30 pm to 3 pm in the Children's Centre.
- Tuesday 11th October 2011, 1.30 pm to 3 pm in the Children's Centre.

Signed:

Date:

*“Pre-school Learning Alliance Sure Start Children’s Centres Hertfordshire.
Working together with families to give children the best start in life.”*

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