**LDPB Carers issues – proposals for priority action in 2018**

* **Council Day Centres**

Ever shortening day makes it difficult for carers to have a life of their own (or a job). Closure for two fixed weeks a year — yet carers are still invoiced for those weeks.

* **Continuity of staff**

Work allocation system acts against continuity of staff for a family, and means they have to tell their story from new every time. Why not adopt a ‘named social worker’ system, so that new requests for support can go to somebody who has been involved before?

* **Assessments**

Long delays in getting assessments, converting support plans into action, getting direct payments set up. Delays result in denials of service and support. Social workers uninformed about Kirklees policies and therefore giving wrong advice

Why not abandon reviews? Why not contract out the assessment process? Why not build occasional contact into the system during delays to reassure you that you haven't been forgotten? Duty social worker system needs to be far better informed and able to respond to queries about delays.

* **Person-led assessment form**

Totally unfit for purpose, and making it difficult for people to contribute. Not user friendly, no space to note differences in view between carers and the person they care for. Nowhere to register long-term plans, which would be really useful for commissioning. The final insult — carers worked extensively with social workers two years ago to completely redesign the form, and produced a final result - which has never been put into operation.

* **Disappearing agencies – a small but important point**

As organisations re-organise, they often fail to let people know where they are moving to, and how to make contact

* **An action point for GPs**

Impact of caring on carers’mental and physical health – need for a system that alerts GPs to carers on their caseloads, and perhaps explore the idea of carers diaries to note down the sources of additional stress

* **The wider picture – tracking the impact of cuts**

If the Board is about getting a fair deal for people with a learning disability, and we are living through ‘death by a thousand cuts’, is there an area on which we could concentrate to reduce the negative impact? Major challenge to the Board – collecting information about the impact of local and national budget cuts on people with a learning disability and their carers, and find ways of telling their stories to politicians and others with the power to make a difference. Combined impact of PIP assessments, ESA assessments, and Council support needs assessments can be overwhelming, as well as very time consuming – and all against the fear that assessments will result in support being reduced.

* **The wider picture – helping people deal with welfare benefit changes**

People often need somebody to help with applications for benefits etc. Carers Count are struggling to provide enough as the volume of need increases. Can the Board create something to help?

* **The wider picture – building the care workforce**

Building up the care workforce, when Lidl pays more for shelf-stacking. Will the Council enable contracted services to pay the living wage, as it intends to do for its own staff? How can we make a career in caring more attractive and sustainable?