**LDPB Carers issues 2013 to 2017 – background paper for the Board for the meeting on 20th November 2017**

1. **Concerns rather than requested actions**

* People being offered supported living or day care, but not both (2013)
* New supported living units housing predatory and vulnerable people together (2013)
* How to link into / influence new Health structures (2013)
* Understanding personal health budgets, new GP contract implications etc (2013)
* After Winterbourne, if family carers ‘look out’ for others, how do they register concerns, and how are trends identified? (2015)
* Bus passes - those with learning disabilities have to apply in person, even for renewals. No online option available to them. (2015)
* CQC inspections — role for carers? (2013)

1. **Issues that requested action, but little or nothing has happened**

* Kirklees College offering fewer opportunities to people with learning disabilities, and for less days a week (with cost passing to Council for replacement activity?) (2013)
* involvement of Local Authority Members in the Board, at least at key moments (2013)
* Carers Champions in social work teams having no link to carers (2014)
* Council Day Centres — closure for two fixed weeks a year — yet carers are still invoiced for those weeks (2014 x 2)
* Council Day Centres - ever shortening day makes it difficult for carers to have a life of their own (or a job) (2015 and 2016)
* Work allocation system in Social work teams acts against continuity of staff for a family, and means they have to tell their story from new every time. (2014 and 2015)
* Why doesn't the Council adopt a ‘named social worker’ system, so that new requests for support can go to somebody who has been involved before? (2017)

1. **Issues where some action has taken place**

* No advocacy service for 17/18 year olds going through transition (2013)
* Healthwatch being about health but not enough about social care (2013)
* **Major and continuing issue** Consequences of staff shortages or inadequate systems in social work teams. Long delays in getting needs assessments. Long delays in converting support plans into action. Long delays in getting direct payments set up. Delays result in denials of service and support. Why not abandon reviews to ease the workload pressure? Why not contract out the assessment process? While delays are happening, there is no on-going communication, or anything to reassure you that you haven't been forgotten. Why not build occasional contact into the system during these delays? Duty social worker system needs to be far better informed and able to respond to queries about delays. (Raised 13 times between 2013 and 2017)
* Carers who plan for the long-term can be seen as ‘coping’, and therefore lower priority for help and support. (2015)
* Carers Cards- ensuring that they continue to be available.(2015)
* Reviews —infrequent or not happening at all. Review form is not ﬁt for purpose. Completed forms are not circulated. (2013 x 2)
* Resource Allocation Panel — shrouded in mystery. Used by social workers as something to hide behind. No access to influence its decisions. No impact on consistency of support offered. No evidence that it learns from experience. Does it actually exist? (2014)
* **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. (2015, 2016, 2017)
* Dealing with issues of concern in non-contracted services. Carers feel powerless to challenge unfair conditions in contracts. Real issue about double-charging for holiday periods etc — and this is Council money. Can the Council influence this, by emphasising quality standards / expectations at Providers Forum or elsewhere? (2015 x 2, 2017 x 2)
* Voting and people with a learning disability. Concern about mixed messages from Electoral Services, who encourage it with one hand and judge it as unsafe with the other (2016, 2017)
* Annual mental health checks as recommended by NICE. Whose responsibility is it to make them happen? (2017)
* Learning Disability Partnership Board – annual review of effectiveness. Must be able to create change and address issues. Full range of agencies need to attend. Must provide a platform for significant debates (2013-2017)

1. **Issues where change has clearly taken place**

* Castle & Minster failing to carry out their role, and small providers put at risk due to unpaid invoices (2013)
* Re-instatement of specialist accommodation social worker post (2013)
* Direct payments – surplus funds not being clawed back without consultation with carers, and a guaranteed amount left in the account when they are.(2014)
* Direct payments – increased allowances to account for the introduction of the living wage, pension contributions, and increased sleep-in rates. (2014 & 2016)
* Lack of a PIP Assessment Centre in Kirklees(2015)

1. **Wider concerns that cannot be solved by the Board, but which need debate**

* 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? (2013)
* 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 (2015 x 2)
* 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 (2013)
* 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 (2015 x 2)
* 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? (2015x2)
* Disparity in Health provision between North and South Kirklees, with no apparent commitment to change it (2015)
* ESA interviews (with all the stress these cause) having to be repeated even when the person's condition is never going to change (2016)
* Reduction of £30 a week in ESA for those in work-related group of ESA (on the assumption that this will drive people into work) - drastic effect on the individuals concerned (2016)
* As organisations re-organise and re-focus, who picks up the areas that are dropping ? The shortfall is often made up by carers, who feel they have no choice but to increase what they do.(2016)
* As organisations re-organise, they often fail to let people know where they are moving to, and how to make contact. (2016)
* NHS commitment to people with a learning disability, when they have pulled away from integrated services, and are reducing their input into shared funding (often without carers even knowing about it ) (2016 x 2)
* Reliance on the internet to apply for support, make appointments, respond to requests etc - a real pressure for many older carers who are not confident users of the internet. Fear that online will soon become the only way of communicating.(2016)
* 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? (2016)