

Health Campaigns Together Social Care Meeting Birmingham 28.2.19

Present:

Brian Fisher, (chair)SHA, **John Lister** ed. "Health Campaigns Together", **Ann Bannister**, **Ann Dean** and **Dave Lloyd**, Merseyside Pensioners, **Rod Downing** CWU, **Alex Leeder**, Worcester social worker and lecturer, **Mark Tiltston**, **Sian Vasey**, **Pat McClean**, **Pamela Franklin**, all from Ealing Social Care Action Group, **Bob Williams Findlay**, 'Being The Boss' and Reclaiming Our Futures Alliance, **Stuart Richardson**, Birmingham TUC, **Anne-Marie Sweeney**, Oxford KONP, **Gordon Peters**, Social Care Alliance Haringey, **Ian Hewitt**, Unite and New Lucas plan, **Valerie Hickinbottom** Sandwell Pensioners Convention, **Oliver Carter and Erika Wright** from Irwin Mitchell Solicitors, **Pat McGee** Coventry KONP and Unite, **Richard Hatcher**, Birmingham TUC, **Richard Bourne**, SHA, **Janet Moir** KONP, **Gilda Peterson**, Leeds KONP and Yorks HCT.

Apologies:

Coun. Pat McAllistair, Westminster councillor, **Carol Ackroyd**, KONP Exec and SHA, **Jan Shortt**, President NPC, **Jean Hardiman Smith**, SHA and NPC Health and Social Care working party, **Terry Day**, Waltham Forest Save our NHS, **Mike Roberts**, **Katy Gardener**, Liverpool SHA, **Hilary Cave**, Derbyshire NHS Campaign network, **Margaret Ruane** LP and KONP, **Liz Peretz**, KONP & SHA, **Prof Peter Beresford**, Shaping Our Lives, **Sandra Daniels**, Being the Boss, **Martin and Kim Drew**, Leamington Spa KONP & LP, **Larry Sanders** Green Party Health and Social Care working party & KONP, **Alan Marshall**, Unite Nottingham, **Pia Feig**, Manchester KONP & NPC

1. Welcome and Introductions – see above

2. Reports on Progress

2.1 'Social Care is Broken' leaflet produced. First 5,000 have gone – another 5,000 being printed.

ACTION re FLIER

Everyone can order bundles of free copies by e mailing campaigns@keepournhspublic.com and make a donation for the postage and packaging.

For donations you can make direct payments online to HCT Coop Bank account: Sort Code **08-92-99**, Account Number **65797921** but **please email healthcampaignstogether@gmail.com (and copy to reclaimsocialcare@gmail.com) to let us know how much you have paid and what the donation is for.** For those unable to make payments online, cheques are very welcome. Please make out to **Health Campaigns Together**, and send to Pete Gillard, c/o 102 Corve Street, Ludlow SY8 1EB.

2.2 Round up of action from local areas.

Ealing Social Care Action Group positive re the leaflet. They are facing massive cuts to personal budgets and are having a public meeting next week. They have a member on the Steering group of Ealing Social Care Co-op which is developing a new model of care with the support of Ealing Council.

Haringey Social Care Alliance is working on a possible public and social enterprise partnership which would look at providing home care in the first instance. The LA is interested. They are also involved in a pilot which could transform a nursing home scheduled for closure into an Aging Well/ Wellbeing centre. Their thinking is developing around the notion of a **Just Transition** which accepts that we can't shift immediately from the current highly marketised provision to public provision but can work out ways to start moving in the right direction.

Birmingham Care workers strike against cuts to pay and conditions is now in its 17th month. There have been 70 days of strike action. The Council is threatening workers with an injunction. The local LP and some Labour councillors are calling on the Council to withdraw the threat of an injunction and there was a lobby of the Council this week. Campaigners are keen to set up a broad coalition with the trade unions. Richard H. said that there are 106,000 care workers in the west midlands but their voice generally goes unheard.

Lewisham campaigners who had a successful campaign to save their local hospital are trying to build a campaign against swingeing cuts to social care.

Leeds KONP et al gave out the HCT Social care flier on Dignity Day 1st March. Leeds Hospital Alert has met with lead councillors to press them to start reversing the outsourcing of home care without much success. Unison has been pressing the Council to extend the living wage to groups currently excluded and they have committed to increasing the personal allowance to enable people getting direct payment to pay the living wage to PAs. They say that they can't insist private contractors pay the living wage.

is pressing the Council to pay the living wage to The Yorkshire HCT network has agreed to hold a Northern HCT conference on 29th June which will divide time fairly equally between health and social care and look at how they intersect.

Salford Activists, Unison and staff are campaigning for the Council to bring services back in house.

Manchester: Pia reported by e mail that campaigners had given out the HCT 'Social Care is Broken' flier on Dignity Day 1st April.

Merseyside are going to give out the fliers on their own Dignity Day at the end of March. Cleaners, security and catering staff at Liverpool Women's Hospital, employed by OCS held a one day strike on 25th February over pay.

Green Party: Larry Sanders advised by e mail that "the Social Wellbeing Working Group of the Green Party will report to their June Conference. They are largely focused on making Public Health, a la Marmot, a central focus for our health policy. They will also be recommending that Social Care be publicly funded and provided at all ages. Our general policy is that the 40 year shift in income, wealth and taxes in favour of the very rich makes it necessary to significantly increase taxes on their income and wealth".

Social work teachers Larry has had some useful discussions with social work teachers/ academics and is getting info re important and relevant developments in Social Work education.

Solicitors Irwin Mitchell (Birmingham office) advised that they do lots of work in health and social care supporting individuals challenging public bodies. They were involved in challenging the closure of Fairway Day Centre. They would be happy to talk to our group about using judicial reviews and may be able to help with a meeting venue in Leeds.

ACTION ARISING FROM LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

- 1) **People to send John Lister info re developments, challenges and fight back around local social care issues for publication on the HCT website and/or in the HCT quarterly newspaper**
- 2) **We need to discuss how to publicise and fight cuts to Personal Budgets which are particularly draconian in some areas. The Ealing group offered to help by producing some video clips based on personal experiences.**
- 3) **We might also explore more widespread take up of the ethical charter and living wage campaign.**

2.3 Potential meeting with MPs. Eleanor Smith has confirmed that she is still happy to facilitate a meeting but is holding fire for the moment. No news re publication of the Green Paper yet.

2.4 Funding the Social Care group

Ann Bannister noted that donations towards the cost of the Conference outweighed costs by approx. £400. However, since then we have had to pay 2 x £100 to book the follow up meetings at Carrs Lane and printing costs for the fliers, leaving a balance of approx. £70. The money is being held by HCT. There have been no other affiliations to HCT via the Social Care Group.

ACTION RE FUNDING

Ann to send out a draft letter we can all use requesting donations towards funding.

2.5 HCT newspaper and website. The latest HCT newspaper carried a 2 page report on the Conference and there is a thread on the website for posting info and articles re social care.

2.6 Subgroups.

A subgroup looking at funding issues is getting off the ground with Brian leading, Ann B, Gordon Peters et al. John Lipetz volunteered to join at this meeting.

Another group on legal issues including a possible Social Care Bill hasn't formed yet. Larry Sanders who offered to lead it has been ill. He still wishes to be involved and hopes he is recuperating but if anyone else would be happy to co-ordinate this group please volunteer.

We hope to be able to set up a group to take forward the issue of getting the market out of the NHS. This may get off the ground after a presentation from Gordon Peters at the next meeting.

ACTION re SUBGROUPS

- 1) Brian is arranging a meeting on funding which may be via SKYPE and will give a brief report on progress at the next meeting**
- 2) At the next meeting we will review where we are at with getting people together who want to look at legal issues and see if we are in a position to set up a group on getting the market out of the NHS.**

3. Our relationship with HCT – motion to HCT AGM on 6th April proposed by John Lister

(see attached)

John suggested that the broad, large and lively forum on social care which has grown out of the Conference and is debating policy as well as campaigning cannot be fitted in as a subgroup of HCT as HCT is a broad coalition united round shared action. He suggested that it would be better for the Social Care Group to become an affiliate of HCT which would give it freedom to develop while remaining under the umbrella of HCT. He is proposing that HCT offer up to £500 seed funding and continue to publish material and report on the work of the group on the HCT website and in the quarterly newspaper.

There was some discussion re the proposal. Gilda supported the proposal and clarified that the original small group who organised the Social Care Conference were participants in a workshop at HCT's Conference in 2017 and wanted to go on meeting to try to take forward key issues highlighted in the workshop. At the time it made sense to tag into HCT as a subgroup although HCT had no other subgroups. G was keen to stay within the umbrella of HCT and avoid having a clunky structure but appreciated that as the current group has developed its own life and needs the freedom to move forward, the affiliation route seems a reasonable.

The meeting agreed to support the motion and affiliation to HCT.

Ann B was concerned that if we are a separate organisation we will need our own bank account which probably also requires us to have membership and a constitution. She supported the resolution but wondered if it might be possible for HCT to manage our expenses within their bank account. If not she hoped that arrangements for the group could remain as loose and flexible as possible.

ACTION TO SORT OUR ORGANISATIONAL STATUS

- 1) John's resolution should go forward from this group to the HCT AGM on 6th April and we will seek affiliation to HCT.**
- 2) John will check out with the HCT treasurer whether HCT could manage the Social Care account.**
- 3) Ann, Brian, Gilda and John will draft a proposal for the shape of the organisation and bring it back to the next meeting**

4. Labour Party Model Resolution

Brian acknowledged that this has generated controversy and the group has had to catapult together some thoughts while still in the very early stages of developing ideas. However he suggested it is very useful to get a draft motion out to Labour Party CLPs and branches fairly speedily in order to stand a fair chance of getting something on to the Conference floor in the autumn. Last year there was a social care motion from a number of branches which did get accepted as an emergency motion but didn't get through to be debated. There was a feeling/ rumour that the trade unions were not enthused.

The meeting was presented with 3 iterations of the motion. The third one had been amended to try to make it more “attractive” to trade unions. Thanks to Carol Ackroyd, Brian, Bob and many others who pitched in with criticism, comments and suggested amendments via the google group

An important thread of debate both in the e mail exchanges and at this meeting was what we might want public provision to look like. Bob said that ‘Reclaim Our Futures’ (ROFA) was keen that Social Care should not be based on medical models as many people with impairments are not ill but also considered that previous Local authority provision didn’t deliver what was needed. Therefore, they couldn’t agree to the suggestion that social care should be “publicly provided through Local Authorities and the NHS or just local Authorities as that sounds like going back to previous LA provision. ROFA wants nationally organised but locally delivered provision which involves Local authorities and the NHS but where possible sets up centres for Independent Living working in partnership with other organisations. They are also keen that disabled people should be involved not just in designing services but also in delivering them. Where they are conscious that one size doesn’t fit all they feel that there is huge scope for embodying this principle and practice in a wide range of services. They feel that Unison doesn’t really understand the ROFA position and think it means that disabled people want to privatise services. Bob suggested we can and must totally reject neoliberalism and the market but find new ways of delivering services not just return to municipal provision.

Gordon said that he completely accepted Bob’s argument but there are many people suffering for dementia or who have learning disability where independence isn’t the goal. Carers for children with severe learning disability want to be involved in service provision but want to be assured that their children will be looked after properly in adulthood when they may no longer be here or in a position to care for them.

Richard Bourne suggested that when talking about Social Care you have to talk about Housing. He also said that it is not difficult to get agreement on principles but people have no idea how to make it all work in practice. To complicate matters Councils are probably on their way out as providers as Integrated care Systems take hold. The debate about the role of Local Authorities is taking place in relation Education as well. , in fact the whole role of Local government is being discussed by Labour.

Gilda suggested that the main point of a draft motion is to get the issues discussed at branch and Constituency level. People will adapt any draft circulated as they see fit. She didn’t think we should bend over backwards to second guess what the trade unions would support by suggesting social care would be provided by the Local Authority and NHS given we have been talking about a wider vision of provision.

Richard also suggested that that there are other ways to influence LP policy. The LP Social Care Commission have produced a 100 page document and are meeting on 1st April. The doc is on line and anyone can contribute comments and ideas on the Policy Forum website. Locally we can get issues on the agenda of the local cabinet member for Social Care and Scrutiny Committee

Anne-Marie Sweeney said that a motion to LP Conference should call on the LP to implement legislation.

ACTION RE DRAFT RESOLUTION TO LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE etc

1. Brian will have a shot at amending the draft LP resolution and re-circulate. He will endeavour to

- **expand the declaration that social care should be publicly provided through Local Authorities to include something like “ and agreed partnerships” (which might need to include the NHS)**
- **Ensure the sentence on local provision includes DELIVERY as well as DESIGN as far as possible by service users and CARERS/ CARER’S ORGANISATIONS.**
- **consider referencing legislation**

2. People to consider reading the LP’s Social Care Commission document and contribute comments on <https://www.policyforum.labour.org.uk/commissions/health>

5. Getting the Market out of Social Care

Brief discussion here raised the issue of whether and if so what kind of transitional programme might be useful.

Richard B suggested that there are big issues re how you repatriate services as LAs have lost capacity and no longer have research departments. Without going head on into re-nationalising services he suggested that there

is potential for sorting out a better model for delivering domiciliary care through Local Authorities which could push private providers out.

Bob said this is a different way forward and lumps lots of different groups under one umbrella. He suggested that we need to demystify stereotypes and sort out what models suit whom rather than jump in.

John L said the NHS long term plan has many proposals for all sorts of community teams and social prescribing some of which are worthy aspirations but there is but no costings or detail. We could start with some of those ideas and think about what would be needed to make them work. We may need to think along separate tracks, one for those who can reach independent living and one for those who need support to keep them out of hospital. It was suggested that this to could be framed as maintaining independent living. John said that we needed to acknowledge the NHS's role and we need to look at current campaigns in Salford and Merseyside.

Gordon suggested that it is useful to adopt the notion of a “**just transition**” to get from here to where we want to be. He thought that MP Barbara Keeley, shadow minister for social care would see any transition as gradual but it needn't be. Elements of the process would be to get rid of compulsory competitive tendering and pursue a workforce strategy which is about decent conditions and wages

John Lipetz suggested it would be useful if Richard produced a paper on different routes to getting the market out of Social Care. He also thought we should hone in on getting people out of hospital and challenge the imposition of 10 year contracts which will block change.

Ann B agreed that we need to stop compulsive competitive tendering and suggested that there is more commonality between us than might be apparent. Learning disabled people and older people in residential care homes also need to have as much independence as possible.

Bob said he didn't disagree with John but noted that the NHS focus on what is wrong with you. As going to the cinema is not a health issue, they don't want to know!

Various people expressed concern re unaccountable Integrated Care systems driving forwards radical changes at high speed with or without Local Government involvement eg .in Nottingham where the LA have withdrawn from governance in the ICP/ S. John Lister clarified that none of the original STPs had proposals for Social Care and more Councils are feeling marginalised.

Ian put in a plea for looking at new technology / digital developments.

6. Preparation for next meeting.

ACTION RE NEXT MEETING

- **Gordon will prep a short presentation on how the group in Haringey are going about trying to get the market out of Social Care and bring services back into the public sector/ into public partnerships.**
- **Richard Bourne will try to prepare a short piece on influencing Labour policy.**
- **Brian Fisher will report on the initial thoughts of the Funding Subgroup**
- **Maybe Ealing Social Care Action Group can give us some thoughts on how we can co-ordinate campaigning to resist cuts to Personal Allowances in particular as well as other cuts to benefits and services**
- **Ann Bannister will take the lead with Brian and Gilda to put some proposals re the organisation of the Social Care group as an independent group affiliated to the HCT**
- **We should all bring thoughts and ideas about how we can build a lively campaign for Social Care both locally and nationally.**
- **WE will be seeking volunteers for working groups on legal change and getting the market out of Social Care**

**Date of next meeting THURSDAY MAY 2nd 1. 30 - 4pm provisionally
at Carrs Lane Conference Centre, (room 1 downstairs)**