

Appendix 1

EIT Adult Operations Team Meeting STEPS at Tithebarn 01.09.10

Those present:

Sean McEneaney	Hazel Grant
Denise McGuire	Chris Todd
Carrie Burns Unison	Lynn Wightman
Joyce Pell	Lyndzi Crinson
Gina Bianchi	Jenny Hughes
Joanne O’Gorman	Sarah Carr

The purpose of the meeting was to update everyone regarding the progress of the EIT reviews and to clarify the next moves regarding STEPs at Tithebarn specifically.

Sean opened the meeting by explaining that this briefing session was to advise Managers and staff of the Cabinet report that will be presented on 30 September. As this report has implications for STEPs we felt it was important that staff were made aware of the content before they heard it from any other source. The report will be made public prior to the cabinet meeting and at that time we wanted staff to be fully informed. Sean asked that as the report was still confidential it was important that it remained so until it was released.

It was important to note that the meeting today was not a formal consultation. Approval for any formal action has to be given by Cabinet.

Sean described the ongoing work that has continued following the start of the EIT reviews. We went to Cabinet in March 2010 to ask for approval to assess all current clients in order that the services they receive are in line with their assessments. The outcome of these meetings has now been evaluated and it is clear that there is a mismatch between the aims and objectives of the service and what clients hope to gain. In many cases alternative main stream services are appropriate for their needs. This may be at Alma Day Centre prior to it moving to Halcyon in Thornaby, Allensway, or through a direct payment to support community involvement.

We now intend to return to Cabinet to seek approval to enter formal consultation with staff, clients, carers, unions and other interested parties regarding the future of care provision at STEPs

The report is submitted to Democratic Services on 7th September 2010 and it then follows a number of processes before finally reaching Cabinet on 22 September 2010. At some stage during this progress it will become a public document. We want to work with staff and clients during this progress and if we are given permission to enter formal consultation this will continue throughout October. We would then return to Cabinet with the outcome of the consultation.

During this process there are a number of implications for staff. Since the EIT started we have continued to assess any post that has become vacant and ask managers to hold the post should it be required or fill it temporarily to cover the service. We now have 22 posts of different grades etc and since staff expressed an interest in these posts we will send the list to Angela so that everyone can look at what alternatives are already available. It has to be emphasised that this is just a taster at this stage.

It does not imply a firm commitment on either your side or the manager involved. It is just an opportunity to experience alternatives in order to make an informed choice later, should this become necessary. Chris Todd (HR) will liaise with staff if requested and will facilitate trial periods in alternative settings if anyone would like to take advantage of this. This will have two advantages

- Managers with vacancies will have the opportunity to cover their service
- Staff will have the opportunity to try other jobs for a few weeks.

Anyone who does not want to take this opportunity will remain at Tithebarn. It will however be necessary for staff remaining to work flexibly in order to fill the gaps in the rota created by colleagues on trials. This will ensure the Service is covered.

It is important to note that no decisions have been made but there is a likelihood of eventual cessation of services at STEPs. We want to be honest with you regarding this.

Apart from work trials Chris will be available to offer support to any member of staff who would like to talk to her. She can be contacted on **528278**. Alternatively Chris will spend time at Tithebarn in order to speak to anyone who needs advice.

We want to work with everyone as carefully as we can. Anyone who feels they would like to complete a skills audit so that we can cross reference other posts not necessarily in the same role you are doing now are encouraged to do so. Chris can help with this as well. The jobs list will also be sent to another service where there are risks to employment. The posts we are holding and others that may emerge which are relevant will be ring fenced to anyone at risk of being displaced. We also anticipate that where interviews are concerned, should this become necessary, we would only want staff to attend one for multiple opportunities. Again this is all being pre-emptive and it is important to emphasise that no formal agreement has been reached.

An important consideration has to be your clients. They are likely to be apprehensive regarding the future of their service and I would hope you can reassure everyone that their needs will be addressed.

Work will be starting soon to speak to all of the clients regarding their future services and in preparation for this a letter will go out to them all today. The point was made that earlier letters had been confusing and I find this regrettable. Should there be any confusion this time it would be appreciated if staff would explain what the letter is about. We also noted the conflicting advice and information clients were given during the assessments and again we will try to rectify this by using an alternative approach.

We intend to set another meeting date for October 1st 2010 in order that we can advise you first hand what the outcome of the Cabinet meeting is.

Please contact Carrie Burns if you need any advice from Unison. Similarly any questions can be sent through Joyce, Lynn or Chris.

Many thanks for your attention and professionalism regarding the information

H. Grant.

Hazel Grant
Adult Operations Project Manager