**Thurrock Direct Payments Engagement Group**

**20th February 2018**

**Topic: Financial Pressures**

**Attendees:**

Huseyin Hurbas, Lorene Copeland, Ashley Woodward

Apologies: Patrick Long, Joel Eastaugh

**Facilitators:** Ian Evans (Thurrock Coalition), Ian Kennard (Thurrock Council).

**Present:** Sarah Turner, Commissioning Officer, Thurrock Council

**Welcome and Introductions**

Ian K. Welcomed everyone to the meeting

**Minutes of the previous meeting**

These were agreed as an accurate record.

**Theme of the Meeting: DP: Financial Pressures**

This topic is in the public domain and public consciousness in terms of required care and support, the processes involved as well as funding and budgets.

The group looked at what is impacting and of concern to individuals and also the Local Authority.

Individuals:

* Hourly rates
* Pay rates
* Recruitment difficulties and retention – can be hard if you find a great P.A. and rely on them a lot, need contingency for holiday/illness/redundancy
* Duties as Employers
* What would make it easier?
* Help with Duties as Employers
* Help with up to date and comprehensive advice and information on Pension enrolment, rights, responsibilities and obligations
* Help with looking at pay rates and what to include
* Attendees discussed how they had to contact the Pensions Regulator themselves after contacting ASC and not receiving any information or help. One P.A has their own pension already, so chose to opt out of auto-enrolment
* Need to be provided with information to give the P.A. on the issue
* How to set up the pension plan
* Need some guidance to be produced
* Agency workers – can be flexible, but difficult to contact with any changes, not reliable, no continuity of care.
* Any issues with agency – holiday cover – email: mlewington@thurrock.gov.uk
* Social Isolation
* Need flexible transport solutions built in to plans and accepted by Social Work Teams
* Discussion of 8 week tolerance policy
* DP Flexibility – imposed restrictions by Social Work Teams and Support Planners – lack details or skills, and too often have to go back to check for answers and nothing progresses.
* Lack of creativity of professionals when helping to implement DP: lived experience examples of not being able to use DP for:
	+ Shopping
	+ Carrying laundry
	+ Shower – can’t fit activities into an hour
* Care and Access to the Community – How do I get these together?

**The Market Position Statement**

A copy of the Easy Read Market Position Statement consultation document was circulated to those present.

Sarah Turner presented the introduced the Market Position Statement, how it works and how such statements influence the way the Council commissions support and services locally, covering a 5 year period.

The Market Position Statement is an important part of what a council must do to help to make sure that there are lots of different types of service and support available.

Those present read through the consultation document, discussion took place with the following comments:

1. What care & support service do you want in the future?
* Trust in the staff – in my home, in my life
* Help with going out and seeing friends and family is very important
* When in crisis – this should be recognised and so I get all the support I need
* Personal service with continuity – better service
* Honesty, kindness, empathy
* Reliability
* Genuine
* Interest, values and commitment – discuss priorities for the individual
* Can be a fearful and daunting process
* Suggest a listing/P.A. matching/introduction service

1. What care & support should be improved and how?
* Need better time keeping
* Improve consistent and timely care
* Reliable care and support
* More help to get out and about and access the community
* Help to keep safe
* Better signposting when appears that a Carer’s Assessment is needed
1. What should we start doing?
* See Question 1

**What Type Of Support Do You Require?: 27th of February 2018**

**(Rescheduled to 24th of April 2018 due to bad weather)
from: 1:00 pm to 3:00pm (at the Beehive Resource Centre, West Street, Grays, Essex RM17 6XP.**