



YOUNG CRAWLEY CHILDREN & FAMILIES FORUM

Tuesday 24th April 2018

Meeting notes

Theme: Financial Hardship

PRESENT

Liz Roe, Home-Start CHAMS (Chair)
Kath Brooks, WSCC
Susan Brumpton, CCVS
Maria Cook, Autism Support Crawley
Darren Ford, Crawley Town Community Foundation
Claire Hart, CBC
Veryan Nicholls, Crawley CCG
Fay Power, CBC
Alison Robinson, IPEH WSCC
Diane Ruban, CCVS
Rubina Shamim, WSCC
Christine Vant, South East Water
Elaine Waight, Family Support Work
Michelle Wainwright, Walking for Wellbeing
Mandy Webb, Bewbush Community Nursery CIC

APOLOGIES

Brian Eastman, Scouts and CCVS
Matt Laird, CBC Crawley Wellbeing
Lisa Phillips, CCVS
Kathryn Ripley, CBC

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Liz welcomed everyone and asked for a brief round of introductions before reminding members about the structure of the forum.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising. Minutes agreed.

PRESENTATIONS :

Crawley Homes Council Tenancies

Fay Power Financial Inclusion Officer Crawley Borough Council

The council manages 8000 properties of various types. Half of the council households receive benefits. Dealing with debt is often a trigger for not paying rent. Tenants can self refer themselves to the team; organisations can refer clients into the team too. The team is there to help tenants who are struggling to pay their rent. There is a waiting list for homes in Crawley.

CBC Housing Options Service manages homes rented in the private sector, though rents are harder to afford because of the benefits cap, (if a tenant is in work for 16 hours a week they

avoid the cap; a couple has to be in work for 24 hours). The following information has been sent through by the Housing Options Team for information: *For families struggling in private sector housing, the Housing Options Service would carry out an assessment to determine if it was an affordability or a budgeting issue and then work with the family and refer them to any additional support services to address the issue to prevent homelessness. This would include services such as the Citizens Advice Homeless Prevention Money Advice Advisor (funded by CBC Housing Options), the co-located Southdown Workers at CBC in the West Sussex Homelessness Prevention Service, Housing Benefit for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP), the Crawley Borough Council or Raven Employment Services if assistance is needed to obtain employment to increase income and/or negate the benefit cap, Job Centre, Credit Union, IPEH/Mash/Think Family if appropriate, Local Assistance Network (LAN) funding through Children's and Family Centres. We do also have a small homelessness prevention pot for those that are not eligible for DHP but this is usually agreed as a repayable loan to recycle and reuse for as many people as possible.*

The council tenancies team works with families to prevent homelessness e.g. Southdown Housing and CAB are co-located on the team. The team has various drop-ins; can be telephoned or emailed for advice – see attached posters for more details. For more information see attached posters or contact Fay Power email fay.power@crawley.gov.uk

Housing Benefit Team

Claire Hart Technical Benefits Team Crawley Borough Council

The team helps people who are on low incomes. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction are means tested benefits. A separate Discretionary Housing benefit can be paid in certain circumstances to help pay rent, this is a limited one off payment. Claire gave an overview of recent welfare reform changes which included: social sector size criteria (bedroom tax); benefit cap; and 2 child limit.

When Universal Credit is rolled out in the area, housing benefit will migrate to UC. Backdating benefits will be limited to one month, however there will be no backdating on council tax reduction. In certain circumstance housing benefit can be paid direct to the landlord. Crawley Homes are building upon their working relationship with the Jobcentre. CBC will still be managing council tax reduction, supported accommodation, temporary accommodation and pensioners.

For more information see attached briefing or contact Claire Hart email claire.hart@crawley.gov.uk **this email is for organisations ONLY not for individuals**

South East Water – Christine Vant

Customer Care Team is relatively new; it was set up to support vulnerable clients. When a client contacts the team, the team looks into what the customer needs. The Field Team are able to visit the client in their own home. Different tariffs are available for differing situations e.g. single room tariff (e.g. student shared accommodation), helping hand tariff, reduce tariffs for certain medical conditions, capped tariffs, etc. Debt can be written off if the person shows they are making an effort to pay bills. Organisations can signpost their clients to the team; the team will also visit organisations to introduce their service. Social media is used to update customers on for example a burst water main. 27000 people is on the priority service register so it is can't reach everyone. For more information see attached leaflets or contact

Christine Vant email christine.vant@southeastwater.co.uk

DISCUSSION – THEMES FOR 2018

Forum members answered the following questions:

- 1. Does your organisation come across families who are facing financial hardship? What trends/issues have you noticed in particular?**
- 2. How can local frontline organisations best support families facing financial hardship, in their day to day work and activities?**
- 3. What support for families facing financial hardship, is missing and needed in Crawley?**

Members broke into small groups to discuss and record their answers to the above questions. The following feedback was given on what are the trends in Crawley: education for young people - teenagers in schools need to learn about budgeting and housing. Full feedback on what support is missing and needed for families facing financial in Crawley, will be available in the 2018 Local Picture report.

INFORMATION SHARING

Walking for Wellbeing CIC small groups of young people are taken on adventure walks, activities and challenges; the activities help in increasing confidence and self-esteem. Families are welcome, ages range from 4 years to grandparents. Michelle is looking to team up with organisations that currently have funding to help them deliver their service. For more information contact Michelle Wainwright email michelle@walkingforwellbeing.co.uk

Crawley Town Community Foundation are hosting a range of community projects e.g. Kicks which is a social inclusion project; Move the Goalposts which is for mental health. It's not just football themed community support which is offered by the foundation. For more information contact Darren Ford email darrenford@crawleytownfc.com

WSSC Spacehive Crowd Funding Events are taking place in the county. For more information visit <https://www.spacehive.com/movement/westsussexcrowd> or contact Kath Brooks kathrynA.brooks@westsussex.gov.uk

Crawley CVS the Young Crawley Emotional Wellbeing Packages are developed; there are three schools taking part in the pilot which will start in September 2018. For more information contact Lisa Phillips <mailto:lisa.phillips@crawleycvs.org>
CCVS are hosting a Civil Society Engagement Exercise. It is taking place on the 4th May, for more information contact Susan Brumpton email Susan.Brumpton@crawleycvs.org

Crawley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) the perinatal mental health service was launched last month. Local maternity services are being reviewed; engagement events will follow. Dermatology services are being reviewed. For more information contact Veryan Nicholls <mailto:veryan.nicholls@nhs.net>

Bewbush Community Nursery CIC this is a childcare setting with 57 child places. For more information contact Mandy Webb email mandy@bewbushcommunitynursery.co.uk

WSSC IPEH service is for pre-birth to 25 year olds. Support starts with universal services, such as the school, the health service and the police. Families needing additional support will receive the next level. A 'whole family' approach ensures that children's needs and welfare are being met and maintained as well as those of the family. This is done by working with the family, local communities and others already supporting them. For more information contact Alison Robinson email alison.robinson@westsussex.gov.uk

Home-Start CHAMS supports families in Crawley and is part of the CCVS Young Crawley Project, offering 8 weeks service. Twiglets meets in Tilgate during term-time and is a multiple births support group meets, the group is open to parents and parents to be. Home visiting support is delivered in a family's own home. The targeted support helps parents and children in a variety of ways. This year Home-Start CHAMS is celebrating 20 years of providing much requested family support in the local community. As part of the celebrations Liz Roe has committed to doing a skydive on Saturday 16th June to raise much needed funds to continue their work into the future. Please help to raise money by: Joining Liz and skydiving yourself. Liz! Click on this [link](#) to find out more and to set yourself up; sponsor Liz by clicking [here](#); and sharing this information with others. For more information contact Liz Roe email LizR@homestartchams.org.uk

Date of next meeting

17th July, 10am-12pm in the Longley Room, The Orchard, Crawley