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Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

## What happened at our meeting on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Location ZOOM MEETING  
Chair: Caroline Co-Chair julian

**In total 23 members came to the Learning Disability Partnership Board meeting**



## **Speaking Out Group**

Darren F

Asha B

Daisy N

Nosheen

Abdul

Kevin

Sophie

Julian

## **Parent/Carers**

Colin Freer

Graham Slater

## **Professionals**

Laurel Sanderson (Commissioning Officer – Adults, Optalis)

Julie Davies (Oakbridge Service Coordinator)

Joanna Dixon (Healthwatch)

Linda Francis (Mencap)

Sarika March (South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust Learning Disability specialist)

James Breeze (Frimley NHS ICB)

Wayne Garret (RBWM DFG Lead)

Julia Harris (Optalis Head of Non Regulated Services

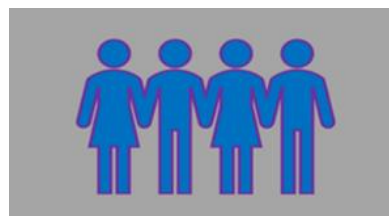
Community Lives Team)

Tracy Hurley (Optalis)

Clare Walsh (RBWM Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer)

Katherine Willmette (RBWM Interim Director Adult Social Care Operations Adult Social Care & Health)

Sharon Carrigan (Manor Green)



## **Apologies**

Peter Jost (Mencap)

**The meeting started off with introductions and sharing good news.**



**Wayne Garret spoke about Housing Assistance & Disabled Facilities Grants Policy 2024 - Summary of changes.**

Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) what are they?

DFG Grants are financial assistance provided by the government to help individuals with a disability to adapt their home to better suit their individual needs.

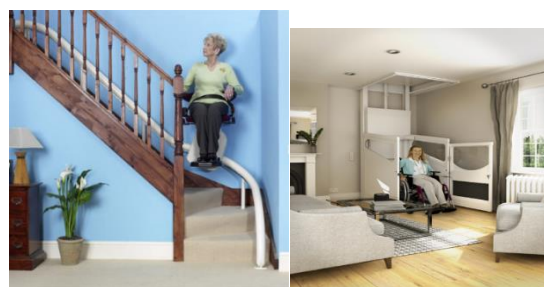
The grant is means tested, so they look at whether a person can afford to pay for the adaptations themselves, to make sure those who cannot afford it get the most financial support.

**The types of things DFG grants can help provide.**

- Equipment that can help people access their home and garden.



- Equipment that can help people to shower and use the bathroom.
- Changes to kitchens for wheelchair users.
- Equipment that can help people get upstairs in their home.
- Things like a new a ground floor extension.

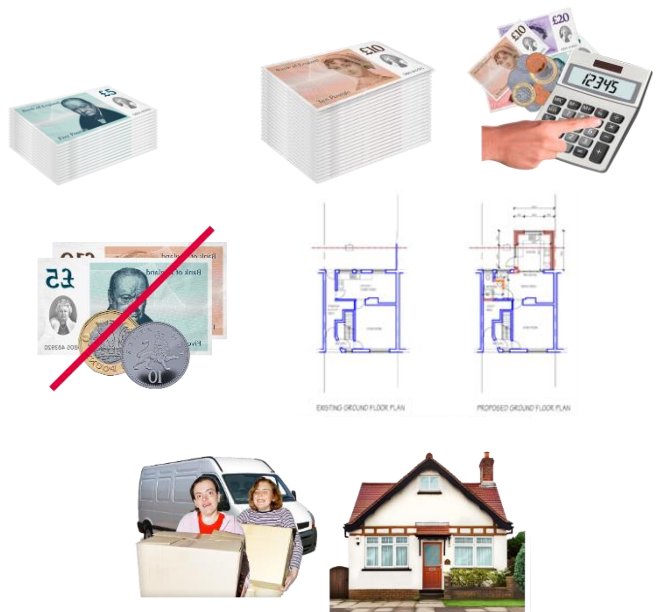


## Need for Change

In 2008 – The Government announced it would increase DFG grant money from £25,000 to £30,000.

Due to the cost-of-living crisis, £30,000 is not enough money to cover the cost of more expensive adaptations such as home extensions.

Sometimes the cost of complex adaptations to a home is so expensive that it is cheaper to help move a person to different home that better suits their needs.





## New Policy What's New?

### **Palliative Care Assistance - (PCA)**

Aimed at providing quick support to clients with life limiting conditions.  
Cancer – MND...

There is an assistance package that is not means tested to cover eligible works up to £5,000.

This helps ensure that people have the equipment they need when they come out of hospital to enable them to continue to live in their own home.

### **Disabled Persons Equipment Replacement assistance - (DPER )**

**This is means tested assistance package - To support equipment replacement costs.**

This helps people who cannot afford the cost replacing old equipment.

### **Disabled Facilities Assistance - DFA - Extensive works - Extensions**

Aimed helping individuals who require a extra money for works that cost more than the grant available (£30,000) or they are in genuine financial hardship.

Each application must be agreed by a panel of people who review each case.



**Please see slides that accompany these minutes for**

**To take part in the consultation please visit the website below before 2<sup>nd</sup> February:**

<https://rbwmtogether.rbwm.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grant-housing-assistance-policy-2024-public-consultation>

**Katherine Willmette presented on RBWM's Corporate plan 2024/2025 in relation to adult social care.**

Every year the council get some money from the government which they have to decided what they are going to spend the money on.

To help the council to decided where best to spend the money they draw up plan for a panel of elected officials to consider.

The plan is then shared as part of the consultation process for all RBWM residents and those that work in RBWM to be able to say what they think about the plan.

In February the elected officials are going to meet to say if they agree or disagree with the plan.



## The RBWM Corporate Plan for Adult Social Care 2024/2025

This year the council want to increase the amount of money they put into adult social care. To do this they will increase the cost of Council Tax.

By increasing the amount of money for adult social care RBWM will be able put money into projects like "Shared Lives" to help people live more independantly.

Money will be saved by looking at what support a person already has around them and building on that. This will be done by working with the individual so that they have a say on what is important to them.

The plan looks at other ways to support people beyond residential care. They are looking at what are the independent and supported living options for people and what activities are available for them to do.

The plan wants to make sure they are paying those who provide services in adult social care the right amount of money that is within the budget.

The plan looks at what support people need in the community. They want to work more with their community partners including working with the community and voluntary sector to provide support.





## Discussion on the proposed plan for Adult Social Care.

**Graham Slater** asked; *“What is meant by the word “consolidation” which was used in the plan about day services at Boyn Grove Day centre.”*

**Katherine** explained that the plan is to have a building based service for people who need that type of support. But in order to have that service it is more cost effective to have just one building base. At the moment it is looking like this will be Boyn Grove.

**Katherine** said that she thought there has been an agreement that OakBridge will move to Boyn Grove but is not aware of the current plans on that.

**Graham explained that;** *“there is a lot of frustration. Information on the plans for the day centres, has been very limited and there has been no consultation with carers or the people who use the day centre. There has been no easy read information about these plans and I am not sure the service users and carers know what these plans are. The budget consultation closes in a few days and we have not had any information. ”*





**Graham** went on to say that *“We have not had any information from the borough or Optalis that we should be reading and responding to the consultation.”*

**Colin Freer** agreed with Graham and said that; *“My son goes to Boyn Grove and we have not heard anything about any changes at Boyn Grove, if it is going to change in any shape or form.”*

**Clare Walsha** confirmed that there was not an easy read version but could not explain the reasoning for it.

**Katherine** thanked Graham and Colin for telling her that and stated that she is not directly involved in it, but will take that back and make sure there is an easy read copy of information available.

**Graham** also raised that there are a lot of references to the wider community and their partners as a source of extra support.

**Graham** said that *“The reality after the previous consultation was that it was agreed by the cabinet that they would find a Windsor based centre. As none of the other community based resources, voluntary groups or activities that were to be an alternative to day centres, came to be!”*



*"If anything the number of available activities has decreased further, part of which would have been Covid. But in Windsor a lot of resources such as the Swan pub, the café at Pirate Park, Woodys are needing to make money again so are not available. So while there is a lot of reference in the plan to community partners, for us in reality they do not exist. Day centres have turned out to be the only provision available to us, for some sort of meaningful activity and even respite for carers."*

**Graham** said *"the disappointing thing with this, is that there are going to be changes that affect service users and carers and it would have been nice to know about it some considerable time ago, much earlier on in the process."*

**Katherine** said that *"if the proposal is accepted by cabinet then that process would start with consulting people and talking to people at the start of that planning."*

**Katherine** was unable to comment on what has gone on before but is going to take back Graham's comments.

**Katherine** is going to feedback on this through Caroline Waites. i



*if anyone has any further question then people can email Caroline Waites and she will pass them on to Katherine.*

For more information and to have your say on the 2024/2025 budget consultation please use the link below, the consultation closes on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/news/share-your-views-royal-boroughs-proposed-202425-budget#:~:text=Residents%2C%20community%20groups%20and%20businesses,until%20Monday%2022%20January%202024.>



### Any Other Business

The LDPB will be meeting on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February to finalise the ToRs. We would like to hear our members views on;  
**How can we make people more aware of the LDPB?**

**How can we work better with our partners and networks?**

**Julia Harris** has said that she has heard what Graham was saying and apologised for not being able to give anymore information because there had not been any.

Moving forward they will be talking to and working with their customers and staff. The would like to set up face to face carers groups



