



HEAR US



CROYDON USER COUNCIL

Croydon User Council

Meeting at: Orchard House
1.30pm – 4.30pm 6th October 2009

Chair: Ruth Govan (RG) Hear Us Vice Chair

Minutes: Jane White (JW) Hear Us Administrator

ITEM	ACTION	WHO
1.	MINUTES, WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS, APOLOGIES & HOUSE RULES	
	Chair welcomed everyone and went over the ground rules for the meeting.	
2.	CROYDON POLICE: Why are they coming to us Section 136 update Mental Capacity Act and The Police Safety and Restraint	
	<p>Croydon Metropolitan police have requested an annual meeting with Hear Us and service users. The first meeting will be the Croydon User Council meeting, November 3rd at Fairfield club. The police want to come and discuss</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 136 of the mental health act - which allows the police to 'remove a mentally ill person from a public place to a place of safety' • The Mental Capacity Act • Safety and Restraint <p>At the last CUC meeting, September 1st, it was agreed that It would be a good idea to use this meeting to discuss what we as Service Users would like to ask the police. For example, how do service users feel about arrests, contact with police, non-mental health related interactions with police etc? What do we want to ask the police that may not be on their agenda? And how should this best be presented at the meeting in November?</p>	
3.	<i>Discussion and ideas</i> CROYDON POLICE: What do we want to say to them and how do we present this	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we as service users want to talk to the police about: • What would we like to see the police do with the valuable 'first-hand experience that we give them? • Will it go to a senior person in the police who can instigate change? <p><u>Comments:</u> We would like to have regular written updates from the police in response to service user feedback and complaints. It was suggested to request that the Police hold "Open Surgeries" for service users to come and</p>	



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discuss their concerns/experiences etc with the police face-to-face. Could this information be minuted (as happens with the Linkworking project) and sent to a senior member of the police force for their response/feedback?

Suggestion to include discussing 'experiences with the police' at linkworking sessions. It was agreed that it might be better to ask open ended questions such as "If you have ever had contact with the police, was it a positive or negative experience?" "Is there anything that the police could have done differently?" etc

- Being in court. Peoples rights? How can we talk about this with police?

Other Topics

Handcuffs - Several people mentioned that they had had experiences where they felt that the police may have been 'heavy handed' or used handcuffs unnecessarily. For example, 'why should it be necessary to handcuff a person when they are in the back of a police van in a separate compartment?' Is it safe to handcuff a person when they are a passenger in a police van? What happens if the police car swerves?

Others expressed concern that handcuffs are sometimes too tight and can cause unnecessary pain and suffering as well as feeling 'punitive' and 'humiliating'.

Training on Mental Health

What mental health training do police get?

Currently police mental health training is voluntary, and police officers 'put themselves forward for training on disabilities etc', but it was felt that it should be mandatory for all police officers to have training in mental health when dealing with the public.

Would the police be interested in service user involvement in such training?

Police attitude to people with mental illness

Service users shared their experiences of:

Being mocked when 'high'.

The police being very rude and humiliating when they were being transferred from Croydon to Warlingham Park hospital

We would be interested to know what the police attitude is to people with mental health problems

Are there any channels where the police officers can report *their* concerns about service user treatment?

Positive comments: A service user who has been in police custody on several occasions said that the police were often more respectful than many healthcare professionals! People shared good personal experiences as well as negative about contact with the police while they have been mentally unwell.

4.

Discussion and ideas

CROYDON POLICE:

What do we want to discuss with the Police?



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A list of questions will be put together from the issues raised at the meeting and TO will give this to the police when he meets them on Wednesday 7th October so that they can give us some feedback at the next CUC meeting (3rd November)

TO

1. Why do the police want to come and see us?
2. Do the police have leaflets on section 136/could they have something written down to give service users explaining their rights under section 136 of the mental health act? Is the information service user friendly?
3. What mental health training do police get?
4. Why is mental health training not mandatory for police?
5. Ask police to bring handcuffs with them
6. What is the police criterion for use of handcuffs?
7. Are they interested in service user involvement in training?
8. Do the police have a budget for training on mental health?
9. How do the police view people with mental health problems?
10. We are thinking about asking service users on a regular basis about their experiences with the police. (This will be done during Linkworking sessions). How should we report this information back to the police?
11. Would it be possible for the police to hold Open Surgeries?
Service users could have regular discussions among ourselves and then go and talk to the police. Or individuals could go themselves with any issues that they wanted to discuss with the police?
12. If we collated the information (e.g. complaints/issues/questions) would the police be willing to give regular feedback?
13. What are the police going to do with the valuable firsthand experience that we give them? Will it go to a senior person who can instigate change?
14. Ask the police what they think is wrong with the current system/what problems do the police perceive when dealing with people with mental health problems? What 'language/terminology'



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	<p>etc do the police use in respect to people with mental health problems?</p> <p>15. Why do the police seem to 'home in' on groups of young black people/young people in the Croydon shopping centres?</p>	
5.	<p>Discussion and ideas CROYDON POLICE: What Other areas of Community Policing to do want to discuss?</p>	
	<p>The police in Croydon shopping centres seem to treat everyone as potential criminals – very heavy handed, especially certain groups of individuals, namely youngsters and particularly black youths.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the police’s current thinking about targeting and alienation of certain cultures/groups of people? • Are the police creating a culture of fear and disrespect from young people towards the police? • Are the police talking to these groups in the community and enlisting their involvement? 	
6.	HEAR US: CHARITY UPDATE	
	<p>Hear Us is in the process of applying for charity status. Since the admission of our application to the Charities Commission we have received their feedback and advice. The wording of the objectives is under discussion. The charity commission have offered to help us come up with the ‘wording’ for our application (objects) – a positive step forward</p> <p>The Steering group and Steering group subcommittee meet monthly to discuss charity business and charity documents (among other things)</p>	
7.	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS World Mental Health Week (3rd-11th October) Hear Us Christmas Party Week</p>	
	<p><u>World mental health week:</u> At the last CUC meeting Hear Us talked about having a stall at the Whitgift centre. Unfortunately, having contacted them, there are no charity stalls still available for this year. Faye Whitaker (from the Whitgift Centre Croydon) has sent Hear Us the application forms to apply for a stall next year.</p> <p><u>Newsletter:</u> The October issue of the Newsletter has been circulated and the Christmas issue is underway Comment: Should Hear Us be getting our issues into public journals etc as well as in our newsletter and on our website? TO: Education (of the public about mental health) is one of our proposed 'objects' on the Hear Us charity application form and this is</p>	TO



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<p>something that we will be looking into more in the future.</p> <p><u>Hear Us Christmas Party Week</u></p> <p>We are not having a 'Christmas party' in the traditional sense this year – we are having a "touring Xmas party"! - During the second week in December - at the various centres.</p> <p>We need a Xmas party committee (to come up with ideas for music, food etc) and people to volunteer to help at the different venues.</p> <p>TO, to contact each centre and find out the best day to hold the parties.</p>	<p>TO</p>
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Minutes Signed off by Chair.		
Name:	Signature:	Date:



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MEETING TYPE	DATE	TIME	VENUE	Guest
Closed	Tuesday 6th January	1-4 pm	Hear Us Office	None
Closed	Tuesday 3rd February	1-4 pm	Hear Us Office	CANCELLED
Open To All	Tuesday 3rd March	1-4 pm	Fairfield Club	John Clarke, from the Home Treatment Team & Psychiatric Liaison Service
Closed	Tuesday 7th April	1-4 pm	Hear Us Office	None
Open To All	Tuesday 5th May	1-4 pm	Fairfield Club	Welfare Benefits here to discuss the New Benefit; Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) & Permitted Work & A researcher from the IOP (Institute of Psychiatry)
Closed	Tuesday 2nd June	1-4 pm	Hear Us Office	None
Open To All	Tuesday 7th July	1.30-4.30 pm	Fairfield Club	SNAP Team & CroyCILL
Open To All	Friday 10th July	1.30-3.30 pm	Hear Us Office	Personality Disorder Service
Closed	Tuesday 4th August	1.30-4.30 pm	Hear Us Office	Personality Disorder Service
Open: AGM*	Tuesday 1st September	1.30-4.30 pm	Fairfield Club	Depression Alliance & Mind in Croydon's Active Minds
Closed	Tuesday 6th October	1.30-4.30 pm	Hear Us Office	Discussion about forthcoming CUC meeting with Croydon Police
Open To All	Tuesday 3rd November	1.30 – 4.30 pm	Fairfield Club	Croydon Police
Closed	Tuesday 1st December	1.30 – 4.30 pm	Hear Us Office	TBC

Please send apologies to Tim Oldham or Jane White on 020 8681 6888
 Email: tim@hear-us.org or jane@hear-us.org
 Hear Us User Group
 Orchard House
 15a Purley Road
 South Croydon, CR2 6EZ
 Website: www.hear-us.org