

Working for Change Dudley Parent Carer Forum Steering Group Meeting Church of God of Prophecy – Pensnett Wednesday 19 March 2014



Attendees

Anne Davies (Participate)
Rachael Gardner (Participate)
Georgina Homer (Independent)
Sally Waldron (Smile)
Susan Cresswell (Parents Supporting Parents)
Tina Cartwright (Participate)
Hayley Pearce (Parents Supporting Parents)
Rob Franklin (CCG)
Nicki Burrows (DCVS)
Donna Roberts (DCVS)
John Dean (Community Development DMBC)

The purpose of this first session was to come together and collectively agree what the forum stands for and agree a way to move forward together. It was also an opportunity to agree how we want the forum to be seen. The session was designed and facilitated by John and had an interactive and creative focus.

Activity 1 – box of postcards

The group was asked to look through a selection of postcards and pick one that we were particularly drawn to and one that we were not sure about. It was interesting to hear the reasons why different postcards were selected, these included:

- Memories of visiting a place
- Smiley happy children
- A sense of pride
- Arty
- Gave me feelings of warmth and softness
- Showed variety and a fast pace
- Like the circle shape, represented everyone together
- Holding hands, caring for each other, romantic
- Bright, positive, yellow, sunny, happy
- Well equipped for anything in life



Activity 2 – drawing with eyes closed



Each member of the group was given a piece of blank paper and a pen. They were then asked to draw a flower with their eyes closed and hand the drawing in without looking at their own or each others. Incredibly everyone identified their own drawing even though they had not seen what they had drawn!

The group again with eyes closed were asked to draw something they liked. They then had to identify who had drawn what. We learnt a lot about each other through these activities as well as identifying some ideas of what our visual identity should be.

Activity 3 – Working Together

John spoke to the group about the importance of thinking about how we put our message across, and about the key elements that deliver your message such as a logo, the images we use, and our title. Hayley shared how Parents supporting parents ran a competition at a local school to design their logo. It was agreed that as a forum we need to say 'this is what we do, and this is what we don't do!'

The group were given an individual activity where they had to consider why they were part of the forum or what did they bring to it, from an individual perspective. A few thoughts are captured below:

- Collective – sharing – change – framework – strength – fight- influence – engage – hearing – therapist – driver – secretary – support – nurse – advocate – mum – listen

Then in two groups we were asked to list around 5 key words that firstly applied to us as individuals, 5 words that highlight what we do as a group and 5 key words that highlight what we don't do as a group.

Individual Roles

- Conduit for information
- Influencing Policy development
- Facilitation of group(s)
- Offer Support / empathy
- Represent Parent Carer Views

What we do as a group

- We are dynamic
- Provide friendship
- Are Purposeful
- We are democratic
- We signpost
- We offer support
- We are being open
- We are empowered and empower
- We Influence change (for improvement)

- We simplify and share information

What we don't do

- We do not act on our own
- We act as a group not individuals
- We do not tell people what to do
- We are not unprofessional – we have values
- We don't fix everything, for everyone

The group then began to think about the name of the forum, some suggestions were:

- Parents Voice (Sandwell group)
- Dudley Parent Carers (National offer)
- Involve
- Turning the tide, together we decide
- Parents being heard
- Working for Change

Comments around these suggestions included

- I don't see myself as a carer, I see myself as a mom
- Are there parents who don't care?
- Do we want to stay away from parent / family connotations
- Its about fighting for change

The group decided the name should be

Working For Change – Dudley Parents Carers Forum.

A logo was discussed at this point, the activities earlier has teased out some things that people within the group felt drawn to. Suggestions included;

- Circle shape
- Keep it basic
- We like images of hands / hearts / children
- It should reflect the role of the forum.

It was agreed that because time was limited, that Rob, Nicki and Donna would go away and look at various logos based on this criteria. This will be circulated in the near future.

As the meeting closed there was a useful conversation regarding whether the group is a steering group or a forum. Concerns were also voiced around the sustainability of the group after this year, and the constraints / responsibility to be accountable to the funding provider. Nicki explained that CVS are the accountable body and she will be liaising with the funder. Nicki will then reiterate what the forum is able to do and the forum will say how this will be delivered.

The date for the next meeting was not set but it is agreed that they will take place on Fridays as most steering group members are available on this day.