

Adult Social Care & Health
Your Voice: An Involvement Framework for Service Users and Carers in Waltham Forest 2008-2010

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1. Foreword from Sandra Howard, Head of Adult Social Care and Health in Waltham Forest

- 1.1 This is an exciting time to live and work in Waltham Forest. We are serious about user and carer involvement and working in partnership with you to improve our services and make sure they fit in with your individual priorities and aspirations. We want to make sure our services are informed by the experience of those who use or seek to use services and that what we deliver is relevant to local people, area and outcome focused.
- 1.2 The Council has improved considerably as an organisation in recent years and performance and service delivery within the Adults Social Care have reflected this progress. A strong interim Management Team is currently in place focused on delivering the outcomes of the Government White Paper (Our Health, Our Care, Our Say)¹ and the personalized social care agenda set out in the January 2008 circular “Transforming Social Care”.² A permanent management team will be put in place following the Council-wide Efficiency Review which will be completed early in 2009.
- 1.3 One of the priority improvement areas we have identified is delivering a User and Carer Involvement Framework with a programmed series of consultations targeted at poor performing service areas and focused on delivering the aspirations, goals and priorities identified by service users.
- 1.4 This framework sets out the consultation techniques and principle of open-minded dialogue, which will help us to improve services together. In particular I hope this strategy will enable us to reach out to disadvantaged and hard-to-reach groups so we can target services to the areas they are most needed.

Sandra Howard
Head of Adults Social Care and Health

¹ The Our health, our care, our say White Paper sets out a vision to provide people with good quality social care and NHS services in the communities where they live. Please use this web address for further information on Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: <http://www.dh.gov.uk>

² Transforming Social Care, Local authority Circular LAC (DH) (2008) 1, 17 January 2008.

2. Introduction

2.1 Waltham Forest has a commitment to engaging and learning effectively with service users and carers as part of the Councils Core Values. As a user or carer you have opportunities to get involved and influence the services that we provide to you. We are committed to consulting and involving you when making decisions, in a way and at a level that suits you. This includes keeping you informed, consulting with you on any plans or changes we want to make and involving you in making decisions about your health and wellbeing. This way you can help to continually improve our services by telling us:

- (1) How good services really are
- (2) What improvements we should make
- (3) What our priorities should be

2.2 Involvement means that we can improve services by better tailoring them to user and carer needs and are accountable for the decisions we make. This means greater satisfaction with the services we provide and the opportunities to participate.

Developing a new User and Carer involvement Framework

2.3 As part of the drive to improve our services this framework sets out how you can play an important part in influencing our decisions and shaping our future. We aim to put our service users and carers at the heart of all our activities. We want to deliver the highest quality of services for you. We believe the best way to achieve this is to involve you at every step of the way. Without your comments, complaints and compliments, we cannot improve and develop as you want us to. We need and value your input, and have developed this strategy with you to ensure we get it right.

Valuing and including everyone

2.4 The needs of service users and carers vary greatly. The framework has been developed to support differences, both in meeting those needs, and also in terms of responding to communities who are not currently involved. The strategy reflects our Equality and Diversity Policies which have helped us to reach level 3 of the 'Equality Standard for local Government'. Waltham Forest is a vibrant borough with people from many different backgrounds, and our residents mirror this. We will be using a variety of methods to make sure we involve everyone, and that users and carers who have not been actively involved in the past

because of barriers such as culture, language, age, disability and learning difficulties can now become actively involved. We will give hard-to-reach groups extra support to make sure they can be involved.

Supporting you

- 2.5 Some service users and carers will already be actively involved and will have the skills and confidence to get involved with us on an equal footing. Others may be new to involvement, and see their lack of experience as a barrier. If you want to find out more there is a list of useful contacts in our Better Care, Higher Standards Charter which can be accessed at <http://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/index/care/planning-services-and-standards/bchs.htm>
- 2.6 We will:
1. Offer help and cover out of pocket expenses when you attend any courses
 2. Offer support in helping you to identify any training needs
 3. Encourage you to go on training courses and conferences to build up your knowledge and skills, and mix with other users and carers

3. Core Values and Linkages

Local

3.1 A commitment to listening and responding to the needs of residents is now enshrined within the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy, "Our Place In London" published in May 2008.

Principle	Priority	Commitments
Manage population growth and change	Cultivate civic participation, cohesion and independent living so everyone feels they belong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote active citizenship and civic pride, for example by encouraging volunteering, and giving residents a greater say over priorities and the allocation of resources. • Provide information to newly arrived communities, with a particular focus on the needs of children, high quality language skills training and local democracy. • Support and empower our most vulnerable residents to live independent, active and enjoyable lives. • Promote equality, cohesion and integration in our community

3.2 The User and Carer Involvement Framework fits within the principles of the Waltham Forest Consultation Strategy and Plan. The plan sets out a series of good practice consultation objectives which have been established over a number of years in the borough:

1. Objective 1: Timely and meaningful consultation
2. Objective 2: Coordinating consultation activity
3. Objective 3: Inclusive and accessible consultation
4. Objective 4: Building capacity to consult and developing high standards
5. Objective 5: Quality assurance and value for money in consultation
6. Objective 6: Ensuring feedback and dissemination of consultation findings and outcomes

- 3.3 The User and Carer Involvement Framework further aims to deliver on a practical level the principles set out in the Service User Involvement Charter which was published jointly between the Council and the Waltham Forest Primary Care Trust in 2004:

See links at [Service User involvement](#)

National

- 3.5 Users and carers have a right to expect high scientific, ethical and financial standards, transparent decision making processes, clear allocation of responsibilities and robust monitoring arrangements. The national Research Governance Framework sets out a framework for the governance of research in health and social care. The standards in the Research Governance Framework apply to all research which relates to the responsibilities of the Secretary of State for Health. This covers research concerned with the protection and promotion of public health, research undertaken in or by the Department of Health, its non-Departmental Public Bodies and the NHS, and research undertaken by or within social care services that might have an impact on the quality of those services. A copy of the Research Governance Framework can be found here:

[Research Governance Framework](#)

- 3.6 On a more practical level for implementation purposes the framework is based on the eight principles for involving users and carers as agreed by:
1. The General Social Care Council
 2. The Commission for Social Care Inspectorate
 3. Skills for Care
 4. The Social Care Institute for Excellence

4. Principles and Outcomes

4.1 Following best practice guidelines as set out in paragraph 3.5 above and consultation with service users and carers we have adopted a set of guiding principles and outcomes, which are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1

	KEY PRINCIPLES	KEY OUTCOMES
1.	We will be clear about the purpose of involving service users or carers in aspects of our work	(a) Identifying the benefits to the organisation and service user or carer of being involved in the work (b) Recognising the boundaries to involvement (c) Being open, consistent and clear about these reasons
2.	We will work with people who use social care and health services to agree the way they are involved	(a) Involving users and carers in planning and assessing their involvement and the success of the project they are involved in (b) Making sure service users and carers have the opportunity to identify their own needs in the work (c) Listening and taking account of what service users and carers identify as being important in the involvement activity
3.	We will let service users choose the way they become involved	(a) Making sure service users and carers fully understand the reasons for the types of activities they will be involved in (b) Making sure service users and carers can make informed choices about how to be involved (c) Making sure conditions of involvement are clear (d) Involving service users and carers in different ways to achieve the most effective outcomes (e) Making sure the task is in proportion to service users' and carers' abilities
4.	We will exchange feedback about the outcome of service users' and carers' involvement in appropriate ways	(a) Developing a range of tools, materials and resources to provide effective feedback (b) Making sure service users and carers are fully included in their involvement (c) Explaining how their involvement has influenced the project

	KEY PRINCIPLES	KEY OUTCOMES
5.	We will try to recognise and overcome barriers to involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Overcoming physical and environmental barriers of access, safety and transport (b) Overcoming barriers of procedures and practices that exclude service users and carers, or only include them because they have to (c) Overcoming barriers of attitudes and values in ways that make sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to get involved
6.	We will make every effort to include the widest possible range of people in our work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Developing opportunities to include groups that are 'rarely heard', such as people in prisons, homeless people and refugees (b) Developing opportunities to include groups who it is hard to communicate, such as very young children, frail and elderly people, people with learning disabilities, people with limited English, and people who are 'involuntary service users' due to child protection issues or mental problems (c) Acknowledging the difference in power relationships between the organisation and service users and carers
7.	We will value the contribution, expertise and time of service users and carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Paying service users and carers for their involvement (b) Following recognised guidance on paying service users and carers (c) Refunding all out-of-pocket expenses (d) Giving reward or compensation for involvement in a fair, consistent and open way.
8.	We will use what we have learned from working with service users and carers to influence changes in our ways of working, to achieve better outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Asking service users and carers to share their experiences of being involved to influence future planning and change (b) Setting up audit and monitoring systems to make sure involvement can be formally assessed (c) Reporting back to service users and carers about how their contribution was used (d) Sharing learning with other organisations

5. Delivering the Involvement Framework for Service Users and Carers

5.1 Since the original involvement framework was published in July 2007 the corporate and partnership arrangements for involving residents and users and carers have undergone a transformation . Adult social care services will now deliver specific involvement outcomes and services improvements through the following strategic corporate, partnership and social care service arrangements. These programmes will consult on and agree their own involvement and engagement activities through project-managed work streams with regular reports on progress and published annual reports.

Partnership	Corporate	Social Care Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Area Involvement Networks (LINKs) • Adults, Disability and Long –Term Conditions Local Implementation Team (LIT) • Carers LIT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to Place Surveys as set out in the new national performance assessment framework and the relevant indicators in Waltham Forest’s 2008 Local Area Agreement. • Consultation and involvement events linked to the delivery of the transformation of public services agenda 2008-2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-commissioning of home care services and home care users survey • Better Care, Higher Standards Charter monitoring • Residential care homes and extra care supported housing project

6. Reviewing and monitoring

6.1 This strategy has been written in partnership with users and carers and we will know we have successfully delivered this strategy when:

- There are improved levels of service user satisfaction with our services
- There are improved levels of service user satisfaction with opportunities to take part in our services
- More service users are getting involved in our service
- Service improvements are introduced as a direct result of service user involvement and feedback
- Users are actively involved in the decision-making process