

Joint Wheelchair User Group Response Statement For Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee 13th September 2018

This Statement is issued on behalf of:

***Kent Physical Disability Forum
Medway Physical Disability Partnership Board
Centre For Independent Living Kent
Freedom For Wheels
Wheelchair User Group
Professor Mike Oliver***

Initially the Joint Group would like to thank those members who attended and contributed to the HOSC meeting on the 20th July 2018. Specifically the Joint Group were heartened to see the considerable interest taken regarding this issue, along with the concerns and support evident with reference to the experience of service users using the Wheelchair Service.

Following the above, representatives from the Joint Wheelchair User Group, Thanet and West Kent CCG, Healthwatch Kent, Professor Mike Oliver and Phillip Campling (Managing Director of Millbrook Healthcare) held a meeting on the 17th August 2018 to discuss the issues around the delivery of the Wheelchair Service contract.

The position of the Joint Wheelchair User Group prior to this meeting was to lobby for the complete withdrawal of funding for the Wheelchair Service contract from Millbrook Healthcare.

We are pleased to report after a mutually respectful, open and productive meeting that position has now changed. Our priority has always been to see an improvement in service delivery to users, not necessarily to see the withdrawal of funding to any particular contract.

A range of measures were put forward by the CCGs and Millbrook that would, if fulfilled, go a long way towards seeing a significant improvement in the delivery of services. These measures are to include:

- The provision of disability equality training for Millbrook staff.
- Funding to produce a comprehensive report collating & examining the individual experiences of people when trying to access Wheelchair Services.
- CCG administrative support where the Joint Group feels it is necessary.
- User involvement in the scrutiny of the delivery of Wheelchair Services.
- Service users being involved in the development of reporting and evaluation procedures that would in our opinion better reflect how successfully the contract is being delivered.
- An examination of how the Voucher System is currently working in Kent and how it is benefiting (or not) the service user.
- The possibility of other service providers being utilised to assist Millbrook in reducing the backlog of cases.

Moves are already underway to start work on these various workstreams. A joint meeting has been organised for the 21st September facilitated by Lorraine Denoris (independent) to establish how all parties concerned can work together to ensure improved service delivery to those people needing these vital services, whilst also being aware that time is of the essence, and in order to encourage continued service user involvement, significant improvement will be needed and evidenced as soon as three months after the consultation meeting on the 21st September 2018.

Again we thank the Committee for its time and commitment regarding this issue. We would be keen to provide further updates and reports regarding the progress of this work so that you can continue to monitor this. If progress is not satisfactory the Joint Group will want to bring it to your attention without delay.