

TAMESIDE COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE PARTNERSHIP

MINUTES OF A PROVIDER GROUP MEETING **HELD ON TUESDAY 8TH JUNE 2004**

Present:	Annette Goodfellow	Tameside CAB (in the Chair)
	Irfan Munir	Bromley, Hyde and Robinson
	Denise Pinder	Bromley, Hyde and Robinson
	Alistair Newton	Consumer Advice, TMBC
	Michelle Brennan	Partnership Manager, LSC
	Corin Smith	Partnership Manager, LSC
	Alan Franco	CLS Co-ordinator, TMBC
	Marina Evans	Rowlands, Solicitors
	Karen Heathcote	Tameside Libraries
	Janet Hamnett	Patient Advice and Liaison Service
	Michelle Brennan	Legal Services Commission
	Rachel Newton	Shelter, Gtr Mcr Housing Aid Centre
	Corin Smith	Legal Services Commission
	Annette Goodfellow	Tameside CAB
	Alison Forman	Gtr Mcr Low Pay Unit
Apologies:	Wendy Buckley	Pluck Andrew Solicitors
	Pat Purcell	Customer Services, TMBC
	Martin Goodsell	Shelter, Gtr Mcr Housing Aid Centre
	Hitesh Chandarana	Patient Advice and Liaison Service
	Andrew Shanahan	Beevers Solicitors
	Linda Walker	Partnership Secretary, TMBC
	Jim Gourley	MENCAP
	Alka Raunier	Job Centre Plus
	Roger Thompson	TMBC

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the proceedings of the meeting held on 2nd March 2004, having been circulated, were approved as a correct record.

2. MATTERS ARISING

Alistair Newton reported that the Consumer Support Network had been reconvened, and that a meeting of partners had taken place earlier in the day. The partnership of Consumer Advice, CAB, Beesleys, Rowlands, the Library Service, and Age Concern had agreed to subscribe to the "Wirral Advice Club" literature, as the basis for the production of a Tameside CSN pack which could be widely distributed. This information would then be replicated on the Council's website.

3. EMPLOYMENT ADVICE IN TAMESIDE

Annette Goodfellow (CAB) and Alison Forman (Gtr Mcr Low Pay Unit) presented information about their respective employment advice services. The CAB employ a full time caseworker, Emma Bardsley. This service

receives referrals from the CAB reception, ACAS, local solicitors and Gtr Mcr Low Pay Unit. For the period 01/04/03 – 31/03/04 they took on 129 complex cases i.e. potential employment tribunal cases, and 79 less complex cases. Annette distributed an information briefing giving more detail of the type of cases dealt with.

There followed some discussion of the “sufficient benefit test”, which is a condition of a case receiving funding from the Legal Service Commission, which is a test of whether the investment is justified by the possible outcome i.e. would a private paying client of moderate means be prepared to fund such a case?

Gtr Mcr Low Pay Unit provide a telephone casework advice service for the Greater Manchester Area, with 2 full time advice workers. They support callers throughout the duration of their case, making a positive referral where representation at a tribunal is required. In the last financial year they dealt with 185 cases for Tameside residents (about 8% of the total of calls for the GM area). Alison distributed an information briefing giving more detail of the type of cases dealt with. They have also published 37 up-to-date factsheets on statutory rights , which are also available on their website (www.gmlpu.org.uk), and have launched a publicity campaign promoting maternity rights, including briefings for midwife services.

It was agreed that the two organizations would produce a joint flyer to be distributed in the Tameside area. They were also planning to take a stall on Ashton market to publicise the respective complementary services.

4. TAMESIDE COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP

The Steering Group were now beginning to consider what the priorities were likely to be for a new Strategic Plan for the period April 2005 – March 2008. They would welcome discussion at the next provider group of the key issues that advice providers would like to see addressed in this 3 year plan. The Steering Group had also had a presentation of the conclusions of the “Matrix Review” of the Community Legal Service which had been commissioned by the Department of Constitutional Affairs. One of the key findings here was that there was often insufficient usage and review of strategic plans by CLSPs, once the initial stage of publication had been achieved. A further response by the Legal Services Commission was awaited.

5. AOB

- (a) The Housing providers were planning to meet with the Housing Options Centre to review usage of the surgeries provided at their premises.

- (b) Both Beevers and Parkerbird have new immigration advice contracts. It was agreed that it would be useful for an information flyer to be produced that summarized all the provision in this area of law that was available in Tameside.
- (c) Tameside Reference Library have a subscription to a new CD-ROM service – the “funder finder” which signposts to grant aiding agencies.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 7th September 2004 and would focus on both the Housing and Consumer subject areas.