

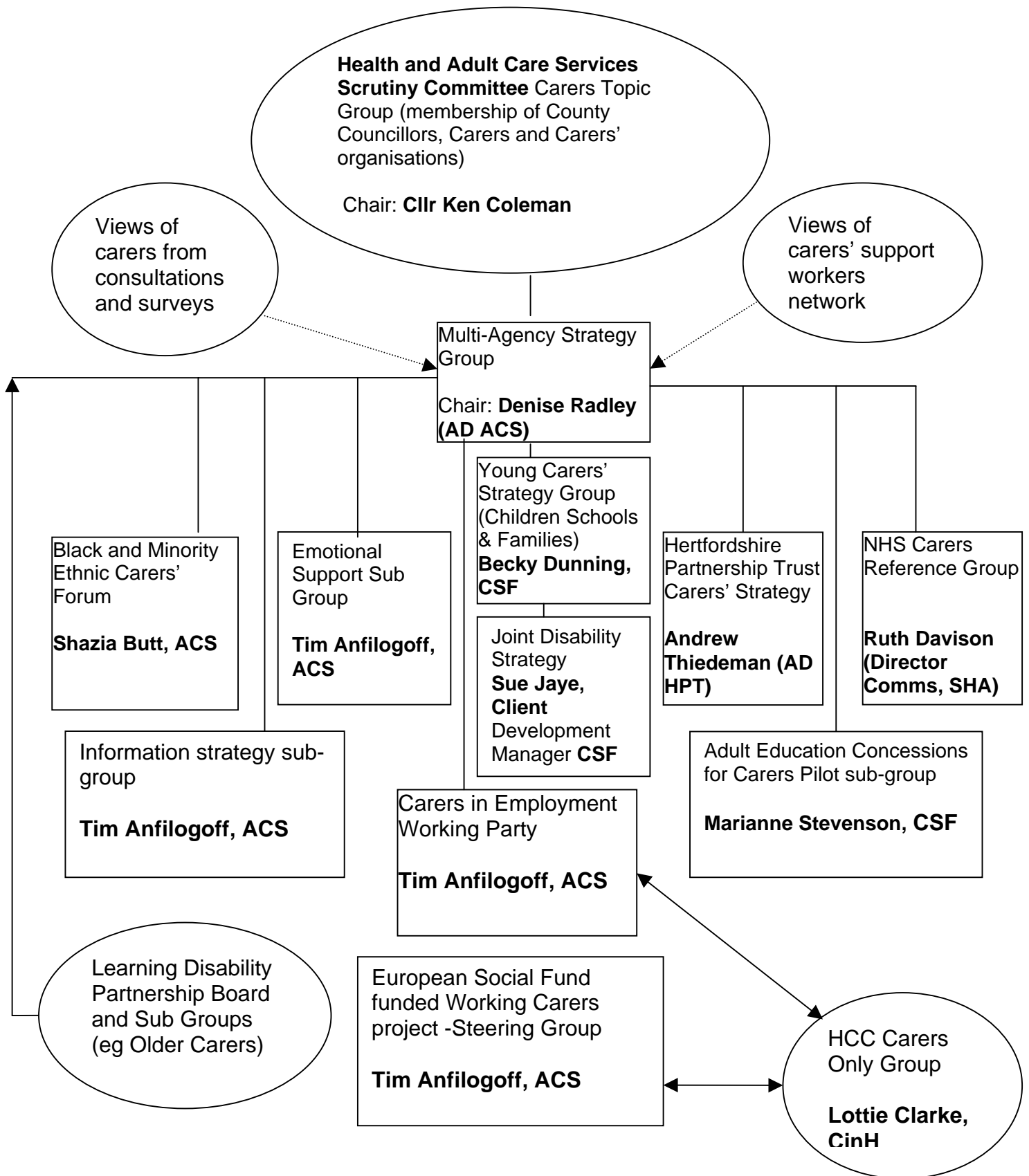
Hertfordshire Multi-Agency Carers Strategy, as at 7 February 2005

1. Background

The Strategy has been in place in a variety of forms since 1996. It has been designed and reviewed to incorporate all the main headlines raised in consultations with carers, the Carers' Topic Group, the Hertfordshire Carers' Strategy Group (carers and professionals from a range of agencies) the *Black and Minority Ethnic Carers' Forum* and by *Listening to Carers Days* etc

2. Multi-Agency Carers' Strategy Groups as at 10 December 2004

Note: All groups are multi-agency



3. National Involvement

- Sarah Pickup continues as carers' lead for the Association of Directors of Social Services and chairs the Carers Reference Group, with representation from all key national carers' voluntary organisations and in this role has fed back to DH on problems with the new performance indicator and the lack of a joined-up Government approach to policy on paying users and carers for their active involvement in consultation processes
- HCC and partners have met to discuss feeding back to DH on the consultation draft of the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act (closing date 17 March 2005)
- HCC and its partner agencies were successful as part of an *Actions for Carers in Employment* bid led by Carers UK in accessing European Social Fund monies (£500k over 2 years) to improve support to working carers. Interviews for the project manager post will be in February so work can commence before May 2005
- HCC was shortlisted for Beacon Status for *Supporting Carers* in September, one of 9 authorities in this position. Following a very successful visit on 15 December, Sarah Pickup, Tim Anfilogoff and Sue Reeve gave a presentation to the final panel in London in January. Results should be published the week commencing 14 March. If successful, there will be some financial reward which can be spent on services for carers, as well as funds for disseminating best practice

4. The Ten Key Themes of the Strategy: A few examples of Recent Developments

4.1 Information

- Continued improvements have been made to www.hertsdirect.org/carers
- Work is planned to visit the pages with a mixture of carers and professionals from a range of care groups to see how easy it is to find relevant information
- PCTs have been asked to feed back on the information campaign in Carers Week (June) last year. Indications are that it was effective in the short term but more detailed evaluation is necessary before repeating the exercise
- Because of primary care's key role in helping carers access information and identifying themselves as carers, work is continuing in partnership with the Strategic Health Authority and Carers in Hertfordshire to discuss progress of PCTs against the new Accountability and Delivery Agreement around identifying and referring carers. There are already positive developments in terms of carers' noticeboards etc, but there is a long way to go.

4.2 Recognition

- A combination of training of front-line professionals on carers' assessments and their recording, and audit and 'cleaning' of data on SSIS has led to a projected absolute increase in the numbers of carers' assessments recorded this year of at least 40% (last year the increase was 14%)
- Work is in hand to produce the first figure for the new carers' indicator that Department of Health requires for the second half of 2004-05.
- *Carers in Hertfordshire's* new carers' support post in Welwyn Hatfield has now been filled, and the additional role in East Herts means that generic carers' support is now spread much more evenly around the county
- The Practice Audit of Assessment and Care Management in ACS began in June and finished in November. More than 35 carers were surveyed face to face between June and November (and a significant proportion of the 210 files audited related to carers). This is the first time practice relating to carers has had such a high formal profile in an audit. Following the report to Board in January 2005 an action plan to address a range of issues (including recording when carers decline assessments and ensuring they are offered)
- New Carers' Guidance for all social care practitioners in ACS and HPT is being drafted (and discussed with CSF) in the light of the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act which comes into force from April 2005.

4.3 Time Off

This is a good point at which to look back over what we expect to have been achieved through the use of Carers Grant over the period 98/99 – 2005/6 (when the grant ceases to increase year on year):

Areas still needing attention:

- To date we have not used Carers Grant on any joint funded projects with health despite attempts to do so. This year for the first time a small amount of joint funded work in primary care is happening where PCTs can match our funding to support referrals from Primary Care to ACS, CSF and Carers in Hertfordshire
- To date no PCT monies have been directed towards mental health carers' support workers, even though the NHS Plan makes this a health obligation and expects Hertfordshire to require about 14 such posts – PCTs have not been able to prioritise
- A limited extension of the hours/flexibilities of day services has been possible owing to difficulties with staff availability (some of these issues will be addressed through the new Carers in Employment project – see below under 4.6)

Successes by end of 2005/6:

- Creating a county-wide Younger People with Dementia Breaks Service from a baseline of zero

- County-wide Crossroads service, with new county-wide infrastructure providing 20,000 more hours of care than 1998 baseline
- Development of flexible carers' services and breaks monies which have been fully devolved to EPD and LD teams and CMHTs and which are now making a substantial difference
- Expansion of carers' support to ensure each area of the county has provision from local *Carers in Hertfordshire* workers
- Money Advice Unit carers project – three workers raising for carers more than 5 times what the project costs
- Increase in leisure schemes for adults with LD that give carers a break, to provide county-wide cover
- Expansion of Mental Health user and carers holidays (Forresters) to more than 100 per year (94 in 2004-05)
- Preventive services and BME lunch clubs developed and consolidated in Watford, North Herts and Hertsmere
- Engaging a range of carers, organisations, Topic Group, conferences etc in the process of identifying the priorities for the spending of the Grant

4.4 Emotional support

- Joint work with PCTs, CSF, HPT, *Carers in Hertfordshire*, Relate, Age Concern and others is in hand developing a framework for understanding and publicising carers' access to:
 1. Psychology services in NHS
 2. Formal counselling
 3. Informal emotional support
- £20k of grant has been held over to support work on co-ordination and targeting gaps once an audit has been done (March/April) of existing services and methodologies
- Flexible Carers' Services continue to grow in scope and number providing a critical element of emotional support

4.5 Training and support to care

- The moving and handling course for carers has been rolled out across the county to 50+ carers. Excellent feedback has been received from carers who received it. We are looking to continue this work and to reach out to more carers this year
- A new role of Carers' Health Visitor will be piloted from April 2005 helping carers in Watford and 3 Rivers preserve their health and well being and supporting the PCT in making appropriate referrals to ACS, CSF and Carers in Hertfordshire

4.6 Financial security

- Carers from the HCC Carers Only Group are working with County Personnel on a training tool, using real case studies, for managers in making best possible use of Carewise flexibilities.

- The new Carers in Employment project commencing May 2005 will have four staff:
 - Carers in Employment Project Manager
 - 2 caseworkers (putting packages together that will help carers to work)
 - 1 Money Advice/Welfare Benefits Adviser (Carers and Work)
- This project will be crucial in helping HCC and its partners deliver on its obligations to assess and support carers around their aspirations to work as set out in the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act

4.7 A voice

- Based on Having Your Say forms for July to November 2004, the satisfaction of carers who clearly identified themselves as such (sample = 98) can be compared with that of the whole sample (sample = 461). While the difference in sample size means this can only be roughly indicative, carers continue to have similar levels of confidence in assessment (*carers* 93% satisfied, *all* 95% satisfied) and respectfulness of staff (*carers* 96% satisfied, *all* 98% satisfied). However there were bigger differences around choices about how we met their needs (*carers* 86%, *all* 94% satisfied) and the effectiveness of the care plan (*carers* 88%, *all* 94%)
- As mentioned above, 35 carers were interviewed as part of the Practice Development Programme audit, and those with outstanding issues were supported in getting them addressed
- Hertfordshire Partnership Trust has now appointed its new Users and Carers Councils worker and is launching the Councils with local press features and drop-in events in March/April
- Carers took part in a consultation event with members prior to the Scrutiny Committee in November 2004 which looked at developments in homecare. Their summary of their views was read at committee
- *Carers in Hertfordshire* have set up a Carers Advisory Group to support its internal quality assurance and to engage with HCC and others around commissioning and service development issues

4.8 Quality Services

- A new project to support older carers of adults with learning disabilities as part of the Valuing People strategy will be delivered through 2 full time workers attached to CLDTs and providing additional assessments of carers, and ongoing support to those older carers having difficulties facing the future/making decisions
- The Practice day (15 October) for Professionals from across a range of agencies has produced a report and work is in hand on a checklist for adult services on how and when to involve CSF

4.9 Equity of access and appropriate support

- PDP audit interviews (July-November 2004) showed that there were generally similar levels of satisfaction with assessment and our staff's courtesy (in EPD bme users and carers had higher satisfaction indicating work to assess need effectively is having a positive effect. However on choice, bme carers, particularly in LD services, were less satisfied than the overall sample (50% satisfaction as opposed to 62% whole sample). The apparent lack of culturally appropriate services will be addressed in the plan flowing from the PDP audit report to Board
- The BME Involvement Worker is also carrying out a piece of work with users and carers benefiting from Direct Payments. While it is positive in one sense that a high percentage (about 25%) of Direct Payment users are from BME communities (ie we are helping the community to find its own solutions) there are also questions to be asked about whether this is because of low availability in terms of culturally appropriate services
- Work continues through the ethnic sub group of the Service Improvement Group attached to the Customer Service Centre, including mystery shopping in minority languages at the end of each Black Carers Forum meeting to test use of Language Line
- A new sub-group of the LD Partnership Board chaired by the Black and Minority Ethnic Involvement Worker is helping users and carers get involved in the work of Valuing People

4.10 Quality management information about carers

- The draft indicator being piloted in the second half of 2004-05 has been collected. Despite the difficulties which ADSS have identified to DH, HCC appears to be performing better than two London Boroughs with whom we have so far discussed results
- A 40% increase in carers' assessments is projected over 2003-04, showing the value of work done in training and promoting better recording, though more needs to be done
- In particular, careful attention needs to be paid to these issues while IRIS (the new electronic recording system for ACS assessment and care management) is being introduced (commencing with Hertsmere in November 2004). The design of IRIS ensures all the relevant data about carers' assessments is adequately captured, in line with the new legislation

Tim Anfilogoff, Policy Manager Users and Carers, 7 February, 2005