



Your ref:

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014

Our ref: OSC/AHSP/Mind

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Dear Cllr Morton,

**Re: Mind Advocacy service**

Many thanks for attending the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel on 29<sup>th</sup> September, and for giving an overview of the reasons behind not renewing the Mind Advocacy contract. As noted at the meeting we have some concerns about the impact of the non-renewal of the contract on mental health service users in Haringey.

We understood at the Panel meeting that the reason for the Mind Advocacy service contract not being renewed is that the service requirement has changed, in light of the Care Act. However, the letter sent to Mind on 11<sup>th</sup> September suggests that the contract is not being renewed due to the service not being good value for money. Are you able to clarify the reason for the non renewal of the Mind Advocacy service?

At the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September, the Panel heard that the intention is to align advice and information with advocacy, and that this would be in part done by linking with the customer services transformation programme. Our understanding of this programme is that there is a focus on digitalisation. Whilst we understand that this may be appropriate to enable residents to better access information we have concerns on how suitable this would be for mental health advocacy. We do not feel that mental health advocacy would be suitably provided online due to the specific issues that a person may be experiencing, and the need for help in navigating through an often complicated, and ever changing health system. We would be interested in knowing more about how this is envisaged to work and would appreciate some further information in this respect.

As a Panel we have concerns about the people who are currently being provided an advocacy service from Mind and what will happen to them once the contract has ended in December. As you will be aware those with mental health needs often have chaotic lives and the Panel is concerned that their known point of contact, which they may have an ongoing relationship with will no longer be there to support them.

Two other advocacy providers across Barnet, Enfield and Haringey were mentioned at the Panel meeting. Please could you let us know who these organisations are and what work has been done to ensure that they have capacity to deal with the cases which Mind will no longer be able to deal with, both in terms of new referrals and current cases? We would also be interested to hear whether they have the capacity to take on those clients who would usually go to the Mind advocacy service in Haringey.

Since the Panel meeting I have received further a correspondence from Haringey Disability First Consortium with regards to a non renewal of a Advice and Casework service (run by consortium lead Haringey Race and Equality Council, HREC). I have therefore asked for an item on the work being undertaken on the voluntary sector to be placed on the Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel agenda on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014. I understand Melanie Ponomarenko has spoken to Charlotte Pomery about this, and Charlotte has agreed to attend the Panel meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you with regards to the concerns and queries raised above.

Best wishes,

Cllr Pippa Connor  
Chair, Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel

C.C. Charlotte Pomery  
Anita Hudson  
Adults & Health Scrutiny Panel Members