

Richmond Borough Mind



For better
mental health

**Richmond Borough Mind
Service User Forum Terms of Reference as at Date (to be reviewed at end of
September 2011)**

Purpose of this group

The group is part of Richmond Borough Mind's commitment and belief that users of its services should be involved in the formation of policy and development of services in the organisation. Users of RB Mind services should play an active role in the delivery of these services, and assist in wider developments within the organisation. The group will help to raise the profile of users needs, views and interests in the way that RB Mind operates.

Work of the group

The group will act as conduit to all user involvement activities within Richmond Borough Mind. It will be looking at the wider developments within RB Mind and seeking ways to facilitate user involvement within them. The group will be consulted on wider developments within the organisation, and be updated on work being done by the management committee. The members of the group will also be given the opportunity to highlight any ongoing concerns raised to them, either by staff or fellow users in and around the services they access.

Influence

The points considered in the client involvement group will be taken to the organisational staff team meetings and to the management committee. Issues raised by this group will also be fed back down to all the project own designated service user involvement group activities.

Values of the Group

The group will adopt RB Mind's values which are Socially Inclusive; Person Centered; Aspirational; Recovery Focussed, Kind and Supportive (SPARKS). The group will at in the spirit of RB Mind's Service User Involvement policy.

The time, commitment and individual experience each member gives to the group are highly valued and repected during group meetings. Practically this means that people will arrive to meetings on time, give each other space to talk in the meetings and listen and respond carefully.

Members of the group will support each other during the meetings. Where it becomes apparent that members need further support in order to be involved in the

group, this will as far as possible be provided on a one to one level by a member of RB Mind staff or other relevant volunteer or professional.

Powers

The service user forum has no specific legal power or responsibility. It exists solely to promote, comment, recommend, guide and assist. However, it does so in the expectation that its recommendations will be acted upon through RB Mind structures.

Reporting

RB Mind's Service User Forum will feed into RB Mind's Management Committee, Staff Team Meeting and individual projects. The Service User Forum is however independent of these structures and dictates its own work schedule.

Membership

The aim is to have a representative from each service that RB Mind delivers for service users participating on the Service User Forum. Each service will select a lead service user representative to participate at the Service User Forum. Their role would be to update the forum on what is going on within their service.

Projects who are currently invited to field a member to the group include: Equalities in Mental Health; Counselling (if appropriate); Eco-therapy; Mind in Mortlake; People's Network; Social Centre; Time Bank, Carers in Mind, One to One Well Being Service (if appropriate).

A member of the Trustee Board who is also a user of mental health services will be invited to attend the Client Involvement meetings.

A maximum of three staff will attend meetings; currently these staff are the Services Manager, and any two other member of RB Mind's Staff Team. Staff may attend but this will be for a particular reason, for example to speak about a particular topic or seek feedback on a particular idea.

Members will give apologies if they cannot attend the group. If people cannot attend the group then those at the meeting will decide who will take feedback and updates to the members who are not present.

Membership – Who can be at the meeting?

Members are appointed following their position as service user rep of whatever RB Mind Service they use. Members can invite any support staff they require to access the meeting e.g. interpreters or an RB Mind Staff Member. All members are users of RB Mind services – as indicated in RB Mind's Service User Involvement Policy.

Chairing is done by one of RB Mind's Service User Trustees, and there is a rotating responsibility for these service users to be present at the meeting and to chair it.

Guests invited to speak at or attend RB Mind's Service User Forum must be authorised to do so by a service user trustee. They do not have voting rights but can address the meeting at the Chair's discretion. Other users of RB Mind services can attend the service user meeting at their own discretion.

Confidentiality

As some of the ideas and policy considered sensitive, members of the group are expected to keep all discussions confidential to the group until the appropriate means of communication and consultation are decided on within the group itself.

Where information can be shared outside of the group this will be made explicit during the discussions and noted in the action points.

RB Mind staff will support group members one to one with the responsibility of keeping information confidential, if group members or project staff feel this would be beneficial to the individual, the group or RB Mind.

Expectations

Members of the group will give ideas and feedback about how RB Mind's services can be developed and these will be worked on in the group and in other RB Mind staff and planning meetings. Members will also help identify ways of how the 'task' of running the organisation can be shared for increased ownership between staff and users of the organisation's services.

Group members expect at least a months notice about new policy, service developments and changes so they can be considered at client involvement meetings and where possible taken back to individual projects to talk through with service users before implementation.

The group will plan to meet once a month, with additional meetings being held where necessary.

Meetings will last for one and quarter hours with a 10 minutes break half way through.

Meeting venues will be in a place that is accessible and takes into account the needs of group members.

Group paperwork

Action points will be recorded (taken in turns, in alphabetical order) and circulated to groupmembers as soon as possible after the last meeting. Decisions can also be noted as part of recording action points.

Any information that is needed for the group to have an informed discussion will be circulated a week prior to the meeting.

Selection of Service User Representatives

Users of any particular RB Mind service can become a user representative. In order to become a service user representative, the individual would need to put themselves forward, and for other users of that service will need to approve their appointment. Ideally a second user representative would need to be found for every service for cover when the main user representative is unwell or unable to attend. .

Working draft as at April 2011
To be checked on Monday 14th May 2011

Each service user representative would have their involvement reviewed yearly, to allow others to gain from the experience.

Code of Conduct

1. Prepare for meetings so you are familiar with all relevant and timely information.
2. Provide appropriate information well in advance that ensures equality of access.
 - a. Papers for a meeting will reach attendees at least 1 week in advance
 - b. Minutes will be produced within 2 weeks
3. Respect other users experience and expertise, however this has been acquired.
4. Respect the overall purpose of the committee. It is assumed that while members may well disagree within meetings, they work together towards the overall common purpose and do not abuse membership of a group to undermine each other as individuals.
5. If, a service user representative in exceptional circumstances, cannot go to a meeting if possible make appropriate arrangements for another person to attend (a vice representative) on your behalf or for information to be conveyed on your behalf, as appropriate.
6. If a conflict of interest is likely to arise from an item on the agenda declare this in advance. If a conflict of interest arises during a meeting declare this immediately.
7. Do not discuss outside meetings information that has been classed as confidential. Confidential items should be clearly labelled and this will be agreed during the meeting in and of itself.
8. At all times respect the privacy of individual members, and do not disclose details of individuals' activities or views outside the meeting without their permission, and do not disclose their identity if they have chosen not to make this public. This applies whether or not a specific paper is marked as confidential.
9. Each Group or Board Chair will take responsibility for ensuring the special needs of all attendees are met prior to the meeting e.g. transport and interpreting
10. Contribute to team development or service user involvement within RB Mind.
11. Undertake training and developing skills in effective involvement of users, being an effective part of meetings and partnership working.
12. Follow the standards in public life that are taken from the Nolan Principles.
13. Chairs of meetings are responsible for ensuring that actions are followed up.

Standards for People in Public Life

These are based on the seven **Nolan principles** for involvement in public life.

- Selflessness:** Holders of public office should take decisions in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.
- Integrity:** Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them when carrying out their official duties.
- Objectivity:** In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- Accountability:** Holders of public office are responsible for their decisions and actions to the public.
- Openness:** Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decision and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- Honesty:** Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to sort out any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- Leadership:** Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and setting a good example.

Richmond Borough Mind Service User Representative Role Description and Person Specification

Role definition

Purpose:

To take part in *(insert details)*

Potentially to include –

1. Represent the views of Service Users at RB Mind's Service User Forum
2. To act as a service user representative within the service you attend or use.
3. To assist in the development and running of the service you use.
4. To take part in RB Mind's Personnel, Finance or Fundraising Sub-Committee
5. To inform other service users of developments taking place within the organisation.

Please Note: This Role Description does not fully cover the Trustee Service User Role. For information on this role please contact the Services Manager at Richmond Borough Mind.

Duties:

1. To value the experience and expertise of all group members and service users however obtained.
2. To serve as a service user representative and support the involvement work of RB Mind, and the needs of those who use its services.
3. Where appointed, to serve as a member of *(insert details)RB Mind's user involvement group or something*.
4. To prepare for meetings by being familiar with the items on the agenda and the related issues, getting support where necessary, sometimes from partner colleagues.
5. To give as much notice as possible of inability to attend a meeting and especially if wishing to resign.
6. To take part on occasion in training and support meetings for users and carers.
7. To contribute to team development within RB Mind's Service User activities.
8. To make a commitment to learning and developing skills in partnership working.
9. To be an ambassador for *(insert project)*
10. To help share information arising *from (insert details)* by contributing to publications in both the voluntary and statutory sectors.

11. To make an effort to find out the views of other users and carers.
12. To reflect the views of service users and / or carers, particularly groups experiencing social exclusion.
13. To behave in a way that makes meetings as effective as they can possibly be.
14. To behave in a way that makes sure that all Group members have equal access to information.

Personal qualities

1. Experience and expertise as a user of services provided by Richmond Borough Mind.
2. An interest in the concerns of, and priorities for people who use RB Mind Services
3. A commitment to working with others to improve and develop good quality services within Richmond Borough Mind.
4. A commitment to ensuring that the interests of the overall users of a particular service are reflected in (*name structure*) and in the work of RB mind.
5. An ability to work within the boundaries of RBMind.
6. A willingness to take part in initial training sessions and subsequent team development sessions.
7. A willingness to be available to serve as a member of the User Carer Group for at least the equivalent of one day each month.
8. A willingness to serve as a member of the User Carer Group up to a year and then later reviewed.
9. An ability to identify where your personal interests may be different from those of other users and carers, and to declare when this is necessary.

User (name):

Signature: **Date:**

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