



HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH
ON TUESDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY 2013 AT 5.00 PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor L. Ackerman - Chairman
Councillor B.A. Jones - Vice Chairman

Councillors:

E.M. Aldworth, G. Bevan, L. Binding, P. Cook, J. Gale, L. Gardiner, N. George, C. Gordon, G.J. Hughes, S. Morgan, J.A. Pritchard.

Cabinet Member: Councillor R. Woodyatt, Cabinet Member for Social Services.

Together with:

A. Heaney (Corporate Director Social Services), D. Street (Assistant Director Adult Services), S. Harris (Financial Services Manager), R. Ballantine (Personnel Manager), L. Curtis-Jones (Service Manager, East & Assessment Care Management), S. Jenkins (Senior Social Worker CLCT), J. Edwards (Team Manager, Leaving Care Team), G. Bromley (Acting Team Manager), C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer), S.M. Kauczok (Committee Services Officer).

Users & Carers: Mr C. Luke, Mrs J.M. Morgan and Mrs M. Veater.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs B. Bolt, Aneurin Bevan Health Board and Councillors A. Angel, K. Dawson and Mrs P.A. Griffiths.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed Lisa Curtis-Jones, Steve Jenkins, Michael Jones and Janine Edwards who had been invited to the Scrutiny Committee to provide information about the Leaving Care Service and some of the work that is carried out with young people within the County Borough.

A welcome was also extended to representatives of Monmouthshire County Council and the Wales Audit Office who were attending in connection with the Wales Audit Office National Scrutiny Improvement Study.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning of the meeting. During consideration of agenda item 5(3), Councillor Mrs E. Aldworth declared a personal interest in the information provided in paragraph 4.13.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 21st November 2012 (minute nos. 1-4; page nos. 1-3) and 4th December 2012 (minute nos. 1-11; page nos. 1-6) be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

3. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There had been no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

4. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

Councillor Woodyatt extended a warm welcome to Janine Edwards, Lisa Curtis-Jones, Steve Jenkins and Michael Jones who were attending in respect of agenda item 5(1) and also to the visitors from Monmouthshire County Council and the Wales Audit Office who were attending in connection with the WAO Scrutiny Improvement Study.

Councillor Woodyatt then expressed his appreciation of the efforts of staff across the Social Services Directorate for ensuring the smooth running of services during the recent period of heavy snowfall. Although some services such as day services had to be closed on particular days, the majority of services continued without any serious disruption. This was in no small part down to the commitment and flexibility of staff across the Directorate ably assisted by other colleagues who helped with four-wheel drive vehicles. Councillor Woodyatt expressed particular thanks to staff providing services directly within the community who overcame significant difficulties to continue to provide the services that are essential to many of the vulnerable people within our communities.

In terms of leadership within the Directorate, the past few weeks has seen some very significant changes. Albert Heaney, Corporate Director Social Services, has been appointed to the post of Director of Social Services, Children and Families, Welsh Government and will be taking up his new role on 14th February 2013. Councillor Woodyatt congratulated Albert on his appointment to this prestigious role and acknowledged the significant contribution he had made to the Directorate during his 8 years with Caerphilly CBC. In addition, Nigel Brown, joint Assistant Director Children Services with Blaenau Gwent, has secured a position as Deputy Chief Inspector with CSSI for Wales. Nigel will take up his new role in early April 2013 and will be leaving the Authority in mid March.

Steps have been taken to cover the vacancies within the management structure. With effect from 14th February Dave Street will act as Interim Corporate Director pending the recruitment of a permanent post holder. The post of Interim Assistant Director Adult Services will be filled by Jo Williams. Steps are being taken to recruit an Assistant Director of Children's Services and this will hopefully be brought to a conclusion next week.

On 5th February the Authority held a corporate parenting event at which there was good attendance and engagement from elected Members. Officers will bring regular detailed briefings to the Scrutiny Committee on this important topic.

Following the Cabinet Member's report, Members of the Scrutiny Committee extended their sincere appreciation to Mr Heaney for the significant contribution he had made to the Council and in particular, the Social Services Directorate during the 8 years he had been with the Authority. Albert had undertaken his role with professionalism, care and kindness that has seen the Authority's Social Services rated as one of the best in Wales, all the while under difficult financial constraints. Members wished him well in his new role as Director of Social Services, Children and Families, Welsh Government.

SCRUTINY REPORTS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. LEAVING CARE SERVICE

A warm welcome was extended to Lisa Curtis-Jones, Steve Jenkins, Michael Jones and Janine Edwards who had been invited to the Scrutiny Committee to provide information about the Leaving Care Service and some of the work that is carried out with young people within the County Borough.

The Leaving Care Team based at Ty Pontygwindy, Caerphilly provides a service for Looked After Children who are 16+. The Team aims to improve life chances of young people leaving care, by supporting them through their transition into adulthood and ensuring that young people are gradually and holistically prepared to leave care. The Leaving Care Team has seen an increase in demand for its services of late as a result of changes to legislation. It is continuing to make progress in all areas of development and service delivery and is working closely with housing to address issues from the Southwark Judgement in respect of homelessness and young people.

The Team has a statutory obligation to offer personal advisors to young people and this service is provided by Barnardos. Social Work staff are allocated to work with all 16/17 yr olds and have the responsibility for completing a Leaving Care Assessment and the development of the Pathway Plan which is devised by the young person's sixteenth birthday.

The Scrutiny Committee discussed the report in detail and officers responded to the various issues raised. Members sought clarification in relation to the statutory guidance that had been issued by Welsh Government in regard to Local Authorities' responsibilities towards former relevant children to reconnect with care services from the age of 21 to their 25th birthday. The guidance places a range of duties on the Authority in respect of reinstating the Pathway Plan, the services of a personal advisor and providing financial support in respect of education and training.

Leaving Care staff have developed a training programme "Preparation for Independence Skills" which has been delivered to Caerphilly foster carers over the past 7 years. In terms of the independence checklist that had been devised and accepted, it was suggested that this could also be useful for families and school governors.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the report and thanked Michael, Janine, Lisa and Steve for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

6. RESIDENTIAL CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The report updated Members on developments at two of the Authority's in house residential care homes for older people, namely Castle View and Ty Clyd. It identified the successful implementation of eleven residential beds for people with dementia at Castle View and the provision of six assessment beds at Ty Clyd both in terms of outcomes achieved by service users and carers as well as financial cost avoidance to the Authority.

Cartref commenced supporting people with dementia on 17th February 2012. This was restricted to six people initially while the full staff team were being recruited and the building work completed. The home became fully operational in October 2012. CSSIW have carried out two inspections at the home during 2012. At their visit inspection on 10th July, CSSIW queried if staffing levels were sufficient. Dependency levels of residents are monitored regularly. An exercise was carried out that identified that staffing levels were meeting resident needs which was agreed with CSSIW and they confirmed this when they carried out their unannounced visit in October 2012. The feedback received from families to date has been very positive through letters and care plan reviews.

Six assessment beds have been established as a separate unit within Ty Clyd Care Home in Bargoed. Alterations have been undertaken to the lounge area to facilitate separate kitchen and dining facilities. Toilet and bathing facilities have also been improved with a focus on rehabilitation.

The initial intake had been restricted to hospital discharges from Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr via the Hospital Discharge Team, Locality Social Workers and Advanced Nurse Practitioners. Following the initial review it was agreed to widen the intake to include all hospitals providing the proper rehabilitation processes had been followed and for further visits to be made to community teams.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the developments at Castle View and Ty Clyd Residential care homes for older people and the positive outcomes achieved.

7. LEARNING DISABILITY ASSESSMENT CARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY

Councillor E. Aldworth declared a personal interest in this item during consideration of paragraph 4.13 of the report.

The report responded to a request from the Scrutiny Committee to provide information about Local Authority activity in relation to Assessment Care Management for people with a learning disability. Information was provided regarding the Authority's Learning Disability Team, the number of people with a learning disability supported and the nature of the support and staff activity.

The report highlighted a number of key issues i.e. There is regular consideration of casework and caseloads. A weekly budget meeting is held to scrutinise funding requests. There is good analysis of performance management information. Each social worker has a line manager to provide formal supervision and informal case discussion opportunity. Social workers have a key safeguarding role contributing to the protection of vulnerable adult and client finance processes. There is an awareness of the needs of people who have complex needs which makes them particularly vulnerable despite not 'fitting' traditional service user groups.

The Learning Disability Assessment Care Management Team includes one Team Manager, two Senior Social Workers, two Senior Practitioners and 9 Social Workers. The Learning Disability Service participated in an external evaluation of the way it manages cost and quality. The work was undertaken via an Opportunity Assessment by Alders Consultants, which was commissioned by the Social Services Improvement Agency. The feedback was extremely positive and the Learning Disability Team has devised an action plan to further develop the quality and cost effectiveness of its work with people who have a learning disability. Members asked if they could have sight of the action plan together with regular updates on progress with carers' assessments.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the information regarding the Caerphilly County Borough Learning Disability Team.

8. GWENT FRAILTY PROGRAMME - WALES AUDIT OFFICE

The report provided information on the outcome of a recent review of the Gwent Frailty Programme by the Wales Audit Office (WAO). It also provided the background to the design and implementation of the project and outlined the recommendations made by the WAO in November 2012.

The Gwent Frailty Programme is a transformational programme between the five neighbouring local authorities in the former Gwent area, Aneurin Bevan Health Board (ABHB) and local voluntary sector organisations. Its aim is to provide services to frail people across the area, in a way that is citizen-centred, focused on the needs of individuals, rather than organisations. It requires transferring resources from acute hospitals and other institutional settings to preventative services in the person's own home, delivering better outcomes for people and better value for money. It is regarded by the Welsh Government as one of Wales' iconic projects, and has been backed by repayable Invest to Save funding of £7.3 million.

The Wales Audit Office review took place during the Spring of 2012 with the final report being available in November 2012. In the context of the Gwent wide programme the Wales Audit Office concluded that, "Partners are strongly committed to the Gwent Frailty vision and have created a sound programme management framework to underpin it. Gwent Frailty is in the early stages of implementation and challenges remain to ensure it is sustainable, to change established behaviours and to demonstrate its impact". A copy of the full audit report is attached as an appendix to the report. Page 41 of the report highlights information specific to Caerphilly County Borough Council. The report provided seven proposals for improvement, as set out under paragraph 4.10 of the report. The progress against these proposals will be overseen by the Joint Committee.

Officers responded to the various issues raised by Members. In response to concern raised about the financial sustainability of the project, a reference to a reduction in bed demand and delays experienced by some teams in the recruitment process, Members were advised that ABHB is funding 76% of the service with the five local authorities funding the balance. The programme is supported by repayable Welsh Government Invest to Save funding of £7.3 million, which is being used to "pump prime" the development of services. The longer-term financial sustainability of the programme will be achieved through redirecting resources from reductions in hospital beds and residential and nursing home placements.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the content of the report from the Wales Audit Office.

9. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (MONTH 9)

The report summarised the projected financial position for the Social Services Directorate based on information available as at month 9 of the 2012/13 financial year.

The 2012/13 month 9 position shows a projected Directorate underspend of £209k. However, there is a projected overspend of £199k on Social Services transport provision through the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU), which is charged directly to service reserves. This results in a net projected overall underspend of £10k. Full details of the month 9 budgets and projections are provided in the appendix to the report. Officers drew Members' attention to the key issues within the report.

Members commented on the projected overspend for transport provision and expressed concern that the service was costing more to run since it had become an integrated service. It was agreed to refer this matter to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee/ Head of Engineering Services for consideration and comment. Members were advised that the report on transport eligibility criteria, which had been requested at a previous meeting of the Health Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee, would be presented to the Scrutiny Committee in due course.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the content of the report.

10. REQUESTS FOR ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

The following requests for items to be prepared for consideration at future meetings of the Scrutiny Committee were made as follows: -

1. Councillor L. Binding requested a report on the number of people who had accessed the emergency facility at YYF and had subsequently been referred to a full A&E centre.
2. Councillor J. Pritchard requested a report on the provision of aids and adaptations.
3. Councillor R. Woodyatt suggested it might be useful to have a report on how best the problem of neglected children, as opposed to children in need, can be progressed.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted.

1. Summary of Members' Attendance - Quarter 3: 1st October 2012 - 31st December 2012.
2. Provision of Contact including Legal Requirements and Demands on Social Workers' Time.
3. Missing Voices: A Review of Independent and Professional Advocacy Services for Looked After Children and Young People, Care Leavers and Children in Need in Wales.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm.

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 26th March 2013.

CHAIRMAN