



HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TASK AND FINISH GROUP TO CONSIDER NON-RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL SERVICES CHARGING

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
9TH JANUARY 2013

PRESENT:

Councillors: L Ackerman, L Binding, P Cook, L Gardiner, N George, C Gordon, B Jones, S Morgan, J A Pritchard and R Woodyatt (Cabinet Member Social Services)

Co-opted Members: Mrs M Veater and Mr C Luke

Together with:

Mr. D. Street (Assistant Director Adult Services), Mr. S. Harris (Financial Services Manager), Mrs. R. Morris (Principal Finance Officer) and Mrs. C. Forbes Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer)

APOLOGIES

Councillor Mrs. J. Gale

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Ackerman declared an interest during the meeting in that her mother receives day care services provided by CCBC.

2. MINUTES 6TH SEPTEMBER 2012

The minutes were approved as a true record.

3. UPDATE INFORMATION – PRESENTATION

There were requests for additional information by members at the previous meeting. Mrs. Rachel Morris provided the following details:

- A list of day centres in the county borough and a description of the services provided.
- Examples of the types of day services provided by other local authorities.

In addition the review group were provided with a breakdown of people making a contribution for non-residential services at present. The breakdown illustrated the numbers of clients

paying a contribution in increments of ten pounds per week, ranging from 460 clients with a nil charge to 562 clients paying £41 - £50 per week.

Mrs. Morris explained that some clients choose not to disclose their incomes for a financial assessment, thereby incurring the maximum fee. This affects the numbers of people who pay the maximum £50 per week contribution.

Members were reminded that day care is currently charged at a daily rate of £1.62 per attendance where applicable following means tested assessment.

The review group were given information on the additional revenue that could be generated if there is an increase in the hourly rate (based on the current assessed charges and current hours).

Members stated that it was important to remember that the fees charged are a contribution and do not reflect the cost of providing the services. The review group asked if there should be a distinction between day services and centres where vocational training is provided. Members discussed the impact of the changes to the additional numbers with a liability to pay council tax.

The review group made reference to the projected population increases in the over 65-age group by 2030. Members agreed that in order to maintain services, reluctantly charges would have to increase.

The review group asked what affect the merger with Blaenau Gwent would have on the charging policy, in view of the higher level of charges within that authority. It was explained that this is one of many areas where we differ and we would need to be brought together over a number of years.

4. CONSULTATION WITH SERVICE USER GROUPS

The review group discussed the outcome of the consultation and expressed their thanks to those who took part. The low number of responses was debated and it was suggested that groups representing service users may not have wanted to respond in order to avoid being seen as involved in increasing charges. Members agreed that attempts to engage service users and groups in the consultation had been fully explored.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The task and finish group discussed the possible recommendations in respect of the outcome of the review, as follows;

- Should CCBC consider increasing the contribution towards non-residential social services? – the review group agreed that the level of charges should increase.
- At what level should charges increase? – Members agreed to consider the options at the final meeting of the review group.
- Charges for Extra-care and Community Living Scheme – Members agreed that charges should be introduced for these services.
- Should CCBC consider including savings when calculating ability to pay for non-residential social services – the review group agreed that savings should be included in the calculation.
- Should the Council give exemptions in exceptional circumstances to payment of charges for a limited period – the review group agreed that there should be a waiver included in the policy up to a maximum of three months.