



HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN,
YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 10TH SEPTEMBER 2013 AT 5.00 PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs B. Jones - Vice Chair (Presiding)

Councillors:

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

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

Together with:

D. Street (Acting Director Social Services), J. Williams (Interim Assistant Director Adult Services), G. Jenkins (Assistant Director Children Services), S. Harris (Acting Head of Corporate Finance), R. Ballantine (Personnel Manager), Z. Newman (SEW Safeguarding Children Board Business Manager), D. Paton (Service Manager), J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager), S.M. Kauczok (Committee Services Officer).

Users & Carers: Mrs M. Veater.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors L. Ackerman, L. Binding, Mrs P.A. Griffiths and G. Hughes; Mr C. Luke and Mrs J.M. Morgan (Users and Carers) and Mrs B. Bolt (ABHB).

The Scrutiny Committee requested that their best wishes for a speedy recovery be conveyed to Councillor Lyn Ackerman who was currently recovering from an operation.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest raised at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the following meetings be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman: -

1. Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 25th June 2013 (minute nos. 1-11; page nos. 1-5).
2. Health, Social Care and Wellbeing (Performance Management) Scrutiny Committee held on 18th July 2013 (minute nos. 1-8; page nos. 1-5).
3. Special Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 25th July 2013 (minute nos. 1-3; page nos. 1-2).

4. 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.

5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

The Scrutiny Committee received a verbal report from Councillor R. Woodyatt, Cabinet Member for Social Services in relation to the following.

Since the last meeting there had been a number of significant changes in senior management within the Directorate. Gareth Jenkins had been appointed to the role of Assistant Director Children Services and Members welcomed Gareth to the meeting and wished him well in his new role. Anne Sheehan had recently retired as Service Manager, Children Services and the Authority had recruited Carol Davies from the Vale of Glamorgan. It was anticipated that Carol would join the Directorate in November.

Within Adult Services, Andrea Giordano had left to take up a temporary secondment in Welsh Government, drafting the regulations that will support the safeguarding part of the new Social Services and Wellbeing Bill.

Cabinet had approved the implementation of the joint workforce development team with Blaenau Gwent and this initiative is operating successfully. Members' attention was drawn to the Information item on the agenda for this meeting, which relates to the forward work programme for the next few meetings. Members were advised that there would inevitably be changes to the programme as the Medium Term Financial Plan becomes clearer.

Support for vulnerable adults in Caerphilly County Borough has come out on top of a Wales-wide league table of local authorities. Caerphilly CBC's Social Services Department topped the Local Government Data Unit's 'Local Government Performance' bulletin for the highest percentage of adult clients supported in the community in Wales. The figures show that 91.87% of adult clients in Caerphilly received support within the community, over 5% more than the Wales average. The Council's Social Services Department was also ranked third best local authority for reviews of clients' care plans and was ranked among the best performing local authorities in Wales for its care plans for looked after children, assessment and support for children with special educational needs.

Members requested that their appreciation and congratulations be conveyed to the staff in these departments for their contribution to these achievements.

6. SCRUTINY REPORTS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. CHILD NEGLECT

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board Business Manager presented the report, which set out the actions being taken by Children's Services and partner agencies to reduce the harm caused to children by neglect .

Recognising it as a major cause of harm to children and an increasing national problem, the Caerphilly Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) led on the development and implementation of a regional "Recognising Neglect" guidance document and toolkit for practitioners.

Multi agency training was rolled out which was attended by social workers alongside police officers, health visitors, teachers and other professionals who work with children and young people. One of the most positive by products of this training has been the increased understanding across agencies of roles and responsibilities and the debate across and within agencies about thresholds for intervening in families where there are concerns about neglect.

In June 2012 three multi agency focus groups were held with front line practitioners across the region to evaluate the guidance and toolkit. In response to their comments in December 2012 we published a revised neglect guidance document was published and merged with the toolkit. This was distributed to all agencies. Case studies outlining outcomes achieved by practitioners working with children experiencing neglect were circulated.

A full discussion ensued and officers responded to the issues raised. In terms of the training, Members were advised that there had been a good uptake from the schools and that there had been an increase in the number of referrals since the training had commenced.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

8. DEVELOPMENT OF A NATIONAL ADOPTION SERVICE FOR WALES

The Assistant Director Children Services presented the report, which set out the plans to establish a National Adoption Service for Wales, supported by Regional Adoption Collaboratives and outlined the development of the South East Wales Regional Collaborative. The creation of a National Adoption Service is one of the key policy strands of the Welsh Government and if enacted, the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill will allow Ministers to prescribe arrangements by local authorities.

A South East Wales Regional Development Group has been established and Heads of Children's Services and Service Managers from Caerphilly, Newport, Monmouth Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent are developing a new model of service delivery. At present Caerphilly and Newport have dedicated Adoption Teams, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouth have combined to create a Tri-partite Adoption Service. The proposal is to bring the three Adoption Services together to create the South East Wales Regional Collaborative.

The Regional Development Group has established a number of task groups, which are supporting the development of the collaborative, consultation events with existing staff have been held to assist with the creation of a new model of service delivery. Work is ongoing to develop detailed proposals for the structure of Regional Collaborative model and the cost of various options. When this is completed a further report will be provide to Members for approval. It is planned that all five Regional Collaboratives will be established by April 2014.

It was noted that the Gwent Directors of Social Services would be meeting to consider the implications of delivering a regional service and that no additional financial resources were being provided by Welsh Government to develop regional collaboratives. A further report would be brought to the Scrutiny Committee when the financial modelling has been completed. The relevant members of staff, HR and UNISON, had all been consulted on the first phase of the consultation process for the new model.

The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations in the report as follows: -

1. To note the contents of the report and the proposals for achieving a National Adoption Service in Wales as detailed in the report of the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Cymru.
2. To note the progress of the development of the South East Wales Regional Adoption Collaborative.

9. CONTINUING NHS HEALTHCARE

The Interim Assistant Director Adult Services presented the report, which informed Members of the current situation in relation to access to Continuing NHS Healthcare for residents of the County Borough.

Members were advised that individuals assessed as having a primary health need are eligible for Continuing NHS Healthcare (CHC) support to meet all their physical, mental health and personal care needs.

The current CHC framework was introduced in May 2010 and Implemented in August 2010 to ensure that people are dealt with fairly and consistently throughout Wales. The Wales Audit Office (WAO) recently published a review of the process in "Implementation of the National Framework for Continuing NHS Healthcare" (13th June 2013). Their main findings are set out in paragraph 2.2 of the report. Overall, the findings replicate the experiences of CHC in Caerphilly. However, Caerphilly had not seen the reduction in numbers of people receiving CHC support that has been seen by other Councils.

In Caerphilly, for older people and those with physical disabilities the number of people in receipt of ongoing CHC support has increased by 21% since 2010/11. In addition to this a number of individuals are fast tracked through the system for support over a limited time period due to terminal illness.

The table in paragraph 4.3 of the report identifies a decline in the numbers receiving community support and the increase in joint funded packages since the introduction of the Framework. It also identifies that the majority (79%) of people receiving CHC receive their care in a care home. The initiative and expertise of the Adult Services Review Team has been significant in this regard and Members congratulated officers on their achievements and proactive approach.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the current position on Continuing NHS Healthcare.

10. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (MONTH 3)

The Acting Head of Corporate Finance highlighted the key issues within the report, which informed the Scrutiny Committee of the projected revenue expenditure for the Directorate for the 2013/14 financial year. Full details were contained in Appendix 1 to the report.

The month 3 position shows a projected Directorate underspend of £738k as summarised in the table at paragraph 4.1.

An underspend of £565k is projected in Management, Fieldwork and Administration. Actual vacancies within the Division as at month 3 total 23.25 full-time equivalents. This equates to a vacancy level of 10.64% against the budgeted level of 2.67%. Current projections assume that the vacancy level will remain at 10.64% for the next three months but will then revert back to the budgeted level for the remainder of the financial year.

External Residential Care is a highly volatile budget area and significant variations against budget often occur. The projected underspend of £306k reflects current committed placements and is net of financial contributions from Health and Education. The Divisional Management Team will closely monitor the budget throughout the financial year to ensure that appropriate action is taken to manage the financial impact of fluctuations in demand.

The Adult Services Division is currently projected to underspend by £77k as summarised in the table in paragraph 4.4.1 of the report. The most significant variations against budget are in External Residential Care, Home Assistance & Reablement and Other Costs.

Within External Residential Care there is a projected overspend of £121k on Mental Health placements and a projected overspend of £40k on short-term placements. However these are offset by projected underspends for both Older People and Learning Disabilities placements.

Within Home Assistance & Reablement there is currently a projected underspend for the in-house Homecare Team amounting to £289k and a projected underspend of £82k in relation to contributions to the Gwent Frailty Programme. These underspends, however, are being largely offset by a projected overspend of £298k for independent sector homecare provision.

There has been a steady increase in the total hours brokered for independent sector homecare during the current year and this is expected to continue. As such, the current projections include a contingency of £291k to meet this anticipated increase in demand during the remainder of the financial year.

The most significant element of the projected overspend of £289k in Other Costs is additional one-off costs of £143k arising from the need to engage Agency workers to back-fill staff dealing with the closure of Mill View Nursing Home. There are currently no significant variations against budgets within Service Strategy & Business Support.

Concerns were raised by Members in relation to the filling of vacant posts and it was noted that a review was currently being undertaken to ensure that there will be no undue delays in recruiting to vacancies. Members received assurances that new members of staff in Social Services are offered a level of protection and that there is regular monitoring of workloads.

In addition, Officers responded to issues raised by Members in relation to the projected overspend for independent sector homecare provision, the closure of Mill View Nursing Home and the costs relating to other domiciliary care.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the content of the report.

11. ROTA VISITS BY MEMBERS TO SOCIAL SERVICES ESTABLISHMENTS: 1 JANUARY 2013 - 30 JUNE 2013

The report provided details of rota visits undertaken by Members to Social Services establishments between January and June 2013.

Concerns had been raised at a previous meeting with regard to the decline in the number of visits undertaken by Members. Members were advised that a training event is in the process of being arranged for 10th October 2013, which all Members will be invited to attend. It is hoped that this will result in more Members expressing an interest in undertaking these visits in the future.

Councillor A.P. Angel offered to undertake additional visits if other Members were experiencing difficulties in completing their schedules..

The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the recommendations in the report as follows:-

1. To note the contents of the report and the rota visits training event scheduled for 10th October 2013.
2. Members be requested to prioritise visits to those establishments that have not received a visit in the last quarter.
3. Members be encouraged to complete their scheduled rota visits as soon as the relevant documentation of scheduled visits for a specific quarter has been received.

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

There were no requests for items to be included on the next available agenda.

13. INFORMATION ITEM

The following item was received and noted.

1. Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme 2013/14.

The meeting closed at 6.17 pm.

Approved as a correct record subject to any amendments agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2013.

CHAIRMAN