



HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 5.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor Miss L. Ackerman - Chair
Councillor Mrs P. Cook - Vice-Chair

Councillors:

Mrs E.M. Aldworth, A.P. Angel, Mrs G. Bevan, L. Binding, Mrs J. Gale, L. Gardiner, C. Gordon, Mrs P.A. Griffiths, G.J. Hughes, S. Morgan, J.A. Pritchard

Cabinet Members:

R. Woodyatt (Social Services)

Together with:

D. Street (Corporate Director - Social Services), G. Jenkins (Assistant Director - Childrens Services), J. Williams (Assistant Director - Adult Services), M.J. Jones (Interim Financial Services Manager), J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager) and R. Barrett (Committee Services Officer)

Users and Carers: Mr C. Luke, Mrs J. Morgan, Miss L. Price and Mrs M. Veater

Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Joint Social Care Workforce Development Service: A.J. Prosser (Head of Workforce Development)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K. Dawson, N. George and A. Rees.

Councillor C. Gordon requested that his apologies for absence be recorded for the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meeting of 24th June 2014.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES – 24TH JUNE 2014

Subject to it being noted that discussion took place on Agenda Item 12.1 (Items for Information) following a Member's query regarding the level of support available for male domestic abuse victims, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 24th June 2014 (minute nos. 1-12 on page nos. 1-5) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. MINUTES – 17TH JULY 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Special Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 17th July 2014 (minute nos. 1-6, on page nos. 1-5) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

5. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

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

6. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

The Scrutiny Committee received a verbal report from Councillor Robin Woodyatt, Cabinet Member for Social Services.

Members were advised that there had been a number of changes to senior staff within the Directorate. Lisa Curtis-Jones has been successful in gaining a six-month secondment as the Interim Head of Children's Services at Merthyr Tydfil with Lisa's former Service Manager post being covered by David Thomas. Janine Edwards, Manager of the 16+ Team, is also acting up as Service Manager to cover long-term absence. Within the Finance Section, Steve Harris has been successful in obtaining the post of Interim Head Of Corporate Finance, with Mike Jones covering his former post of Financial Services Manager. Congratulations were extended to the Officers on their new roles.

Members were advised that the next special Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan had been arranged for Thursday 16th October 2014.

The Cabinet Member referenced the recent child sexual exploitation abuse inquiry being undertaken in Rotherham and together with Officers present reassured Members of the robust arrangements within Caerphilly and the Gwent region to support any child or young person suspected of being targeted by individuals or groups. Members were advised of the work of the police-led Gwent Missing Children Project which co-ordinates multi-agency responses and support to children who are reported as missing. This has resulted in a reported 40% decrease in repeat incidents and as a result directly impacts on safeguarding young people.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

7. CAERPHILLY AND BLAENAU GWENT JOINT WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Andrea Prosser, Head of Workforce Development, presented the report, which gave Members of the Scrutiny Committee the opportunity to scrutinise, challenge and review the Joint Social Care Workforce Development Service for Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent.

The interim Joint Workforce Development Service was launched at the beginning of April 2012 with the main driver and rationale for creating a Joint Workforce Development Service for Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly being sustainability of service and being able to 'do more for less'. Members were informed that, in line with other authorities, there is an increasing caseload demand together with a need to prioritise whilst modernising approaches and improving services, placing pressure on budgets. The Workforce Development Service is therefore critical to enabling an appropriately qualified and skilled workforce to deliver changing and improving services.

The report detailed progress made in delivering the Joint Service and reviewed the performance and benefits realised and planned. These included positive customer service experiences, improved and increased range/access to training opportunities and an established staffing structure with active staff participation in reviewing and shaping the service. The Service has also provided a number of benefits to both Councils, including the streamlining of services, system improvements, increased flexibility and adaptability, and improved geographical representations and contributions.

Further detail on the Joint Service and its delivery and priorities was included in the Social Care Workforce Development Plan 2014-15 which was submitted to the Welsh Government in July 2014, a copy of which was appended to the report.

Members discussed the contents of the Social Care Workforce Development Plan in detail and Officers responded to a number of queries regarding data contained within the Plan. It was clarified that the fall in the number of referrals (excluding enquiries) to Children's Services within Caerphilly had been anticipated, with that it was expected the enquiry rate would remain consistent. Officers explained that the information was intended to provide a context to the demand on social care across the two County Boroughs and that Caerphilly were well placed within the list of rankings of local authorities across Wales.

Reference was made to qualification targets detailed in the Plan, with it confirmed that a number of presentation and fundraising events were held across the sector in order to acknowledge the achievements of staff. Officers confirmed that learning outcomes for staff and training placement methods were continually assessed and reviewed in order to facilitate improvements across the service.

The overall performance of the Joint Social Care Workforce Development Service in relation to meeting its targets was queried. Officers confirmed that the partnership had been held up as an example of "notable working" and that there had been interest in the working model from other local authorities. Members queried the financial impact of possible changes to future partnership working and Officers confirmed that whilst significant financial challenges lay ahead, it was too early to anticipate such changes or subsequently amend current working practices.

Members were pleased to learn of the progress made by the Workforce Development Team and the benefits realised, and noted the Social Care Workforce Development Plan for 2014-15.

8. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT (MONTH 3)

Mike Jones, Interim Financial Services Manager, presented the report which informed Members of the projected revenue expenditure for the Social Services Directorate for the

2014/15 financial year and detailed the progress made against the savings targets built into the 2014/15 revenue budget for the Directorate. Full details were appended to the report.

With regards to the projected revenue expenditure, Members were informed that the 2014/15 month 3 financial position indicated a projected underspend of £1,558,000, which equated to 2% of the Directorate's budget. This comprised of a £638,000 underspend in Children's Services, a £885,000 underspend in Adult Services and a £35,000 underspend in Service Strategy and Business Support. Further information regarding the financial position within each of these services were detailed to Members, including details of overspends and underspends within a number of areas. It was explained that these projections assumed a steady increase in demand in these services throughout the financial year in line with the annual increase experienced over recent years.

Members were also informed of progress made against the 2014/15 Revenue Budget Savings targets, which included targeted savings of £2,062,000 and incorporated the overspends and underspends previously mentioned. Members were informed that at this early stage in the financial year £1.571m of savings had been achieved, representing 76% of the savings target, with work progressing to deliver the balance of the savings target.

Particular consideration was given to the Adult Services budget and Officers responded to queries in relation to a number of projected overspends and underspends detailed within the report. In response to Members concerns regarding the impact of budget reductions on Adult Services, Officers referenced several budget areas under examination with a view to establishing alternative working practices whilst making efficiency savings.

It was advised that External Residential Care within Childrens Services is a highly volatile budget area and significant variations against this budget often occur, and that the 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.

Following discussion on the contents of the report, Members noted the projected underspend of £1,558,000 for 2014/15 and the progress made against the savings targets included in the 2014/15 budget settlement for the Directorate.

9. INTEGRATED SERVICES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director - Childrens Services, presented the report, which informed Members of a proposal to develop an Integrated Service for Disabled Children and People across the County and to seek support to progress with planning and developing the service.

The report explained that services for disabled children, young people and their families are currently provided independently by a number of statutory agencies. Health Services are provided in the Caerphilly Children's Centre and at other clinic settings around the County. Social Care services are provided through the Social Work Team covering the whole of the County and based in Ty Pontygwindy. In addition to countywide support provided by Education, the Information Service for Children with Additional Needs (ISCAN) is based within the Caerphilly Children's Centre. The Caerphilly Children's Centre is owned and managed by Action for Children.

Through a series of discussions between Health, Social Care and Education, it was recognised that services could be enhanced if agencies committed to working together in a more co-ordinated way. A multi-agency development workshop was therefore held in April 2014 with the purpose of examining the potential to develop a truly integrated service for disabled people and young children across Caerphilly. As a result of the workshop the partner agencies agreed on the purpose of an Integrated Service and established a number of strategic objectives.

Engagement with Action for Children was recognised as a key next step, with the Assistant Director for CCBC Social Services meeting with the Service Manager of Action for Children to establish aims and objectives and partnership working and on 1st August 2014 the first multi-agency Management Board meeting was held. In addition to Health, Social Care, Education and Action for Children, the Board welcomed a parent representative and a representative from Enable, the fundraising group supporting Caerphilly Childrens Centre. A number of priorities and actions were formulated as a result of this meeting, which were detailed in the report.

Members were advised that it was proposed to co-locate the Children with Disabilities Team in the Caerphilly Children's Centre in order to enhance access to services and the exchange of information and skills across professional boundaries. It was explained that there would be a need to invest approximately £15,000 maximum in the IT infrastructure in order to support the Team's move but that the long-term benefits would outweigh the immediate costs, and that this was an exciting opportunity for key partner agencies to develop a truly integrated service for disabled children and young people.

Discussion of the report ensued and membership of the Management Board was queried in regards to the lack of young persons' representation. Officers explained that alternatives such as the Youth Forum and the Shout Out Group provided an appropriate method of engagement for children and young people. Members stated that they would wish to see young representatives be included in the membership of the Management Board in order to facilitate the engagement and participation of children and young people, parents and carers.

Clarification was sought on the role and inclusion of voluntary organisations within the Integrated Service with it explained that Enable, who were included in the membership of the Management Board, were a fundraising group and registered charity, rather than a voluntary organisation. Officers also clarified specifics of the discussions that were held with Action for Children prior to the establishment of the Management Board.

Following discussion on the content of the report, Members noted its contents and unanimously endorsed progression of the plans (including relocation costs) to develop an Integrated Service for Disabled Children and Young People. It was requested that an update report on the Integrated Service be provided in 6 months time at a future Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee meeting.

10. MEMBERS VISITS TO EXTERNALLY COMMISSIONED RESIDENTIAL/NURSING HOMES IN CCBC

Jo Williams, Assistant Director - Adult Services, presented the report, which provided Members with information regarding the externally commissioned residential/nursing home provisions in CCBC, and the implications of seeking access for Members to visit the externally commissioned residential/nursing homes within the Caerphilly Borough.

The report detailed the externally commissioned homes together with their geographical location and the type of service provided at each home. It was explained that there is no requirement within the contractual arrangements the Authority has with the external sector to allow Members to visit the residential/nursing homes in the same way as it is expected in CCBC-run establishments. If it were felt that Member visits should be extended to external establishments then formal agreement would need to be sought with these establishments prior to Member visits being permitted.

It was explained that there are currently 6 CCBC-run homes that receive quarterly visits from Members, with information relating to such visits between January and March 2014 detailed within the report. These visits take place in order for Members to be satisfied that the facilities and accommodation meet the needs of the Directorate and service users.

It was advised that the visits, whilst although very worthwhile, could be time-consuming for both Members and staff in the homes who needed to be present to facilitate the visit and subsequently the full quota of Member visits were not being realised. The report therefore recommended that the frequency of rota visits be decreased to six monthly in order to increase compliance with visitation targets.

The frequency of visits to CCBC-run establishments was discussed and some Members felt they would find six-monthly visits to be a more achievable arrangement. Reference was made to the current scheduling of visits, in that it was felt that there was occasionally an overlap in the way visits were staggered across each three-month period, with some homes receiving two visits over a matter of weeks. Some Members raised concerns that this could continue however if the visits changed to a six-monthly arrangement.

Members suggested a review of the current contract monitoring arrangements within these establishments and discussions took place with regards to establishing a Task and Finish Group to examine such an arrangement. A suggestion was made that residential home visits could be matched to each Member's ward location. Discussion also took place with regards to further training for Members should visits to externally commissioned homes be permitted.

It was confirmed that externally contracted care home providers had yet to be approached regarding the possibility of Members visits. Officers reiterated to Members the importance of committing to and maintaining regular visits to these establishments, should agreement be reached between the Authority and external providers on this matter.

During discussion of the report, an amendment to recommendation 9.1 was moved and seconded in that the frequency of rota visits be changed to 12-monthly. By a show of hands and a majority vote, the amendment was declared lost.

Members endorsed the recommendation to reduce the frequency of rota visits to internal CCBC residential homes to six monthly, and recommended that Officers explore with independent residential home providers whether Members could undertake rota visits to these establishments.

Subject to this agreement on this arrangement being reached between the Authority and external providers, the Committee endorsed an additional recommendation in that a Task and Finish Group be established to examine the processes and criteria involved in visits to residential homes.

11. REQUESTS FOR REPORTS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

1. Councillor L. Binding requested an update on the requested report "Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards" with it was confirmed that this was due to be presented at the next Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee (21st October 2014).

12. INFORMATION ITEMS

The Committee noted the following items for information, full details of which were included within the Officers reports. There were no items brought forward for review.

12. Update on Adoption Services.
13. Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Youth Offending Service (YOS) Youth Justice Plan 2014-2016.
14. Summary of Members' Attendance: Quarter 1 - 8th May 2014 to 30th June 2014.

The meeting closed at 7.23 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2014 they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR