

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
16 NOVEMBER 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 16 November 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Marion Bateman, Andy Dunbobbin, Gladys Healey, Andrew Holgate, Kevin Hughes, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Hilary McGuill, Ian Smith and David Wisinger

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors: David Healey (for Cindy Hinds) and Patrick Heesom (for Rita Johnson)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Martin White

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services; Chief Officer (Social Services); Senior Manager, Children and Workforce; Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning; Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator; Safeguarding Unit Service Manager, and Early Years and Family Support Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officer

27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

28. MINUTES

(i) The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2017 were received.

Matters Arising

Minute number 21: Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board - in response to a query by Councillor Hilary McGuill concerning patient and GP forums, the Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator advised that Gareth Bowdler had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 13 December, and that she would send a follow up email to Jane Bryant requesting information on which GP practices still held the Forums.

(ii) The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2017 were received.

Matters Arising

Minute number 23: Care Sector Update to include top-up fees and invest to save care sector support - Councillor Hilary McGuill asked if a letter had been sent on behalf of the Committee to make representations to Assembly Members for a fairer contribution from the Welsh NHS towards care costs. The Facilitator

confirmed that a letter had been sent and a response from Mark Isherwood, Assembly Member, had been circulated to the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

29. OLDER PEOPLE'S STRATEGY AND AGEING WELL PLAN

Councillor Christine Jones introduced the report to provide an update on the work taking place to implement the Strategy for Older People in Wales with specific focus on the Ageing Well Plan. She invited the Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator to present the report.

The Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator advised that the Ageing Well in Flintshire Plan provided a framework for developing activity that would support older people to take control of their lives so they could maintain independence and wellbeing and continue to play an active part in their communities. She provided background information and reported on the progress made in the following priority areas, as detailed in the report, which demonstrated the strong links with partners, citing community groups and older people's groups as examples, and third sector organisations who were instrumental in taking the work forward:

- Age-Friendly Communities
- Falls Prevention
- Dementia Supportive Communities
- Opportunities for Learning and Employment
- Loneliness and isolation

Councillor Hilary McGuill thanked the Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator for an excellent report. She welcomed the initiative that North Wales Fire & Rescue Service fire crew had been trained to carry out Falls Risk Assessments during home fire safety checks and sought clarification that all Fire Stations within Flintshire were implementing this. The Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator confirmed that Deeside Fire Station was 'on board' and said that she would confirm the position with Buckley Fire Station following the meeting. Commenting on the Loneliness and Isolation work in areas of rural north Flintshire, Councillor McGuill asked how the activities/information leaflets would be distributed to the target areas. The Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator confirmed that the leaflets would be issued through Town and Community Councils, local organisations and community groups and services. She said that elected Members had also offered to distribute leaflets in some areas and acknowledged the need to use existing resources.

Councillor Dave Healey commented on the opportunity to combine the distribution of leaflets within the newsletters sent out by Members and the potential to use local Councillors who had well established networks for the distribution of leaflets.

Councillor Hilary McGuill expressed her thanks for the training which had been provided to Mynydd Isa Scouts to be 'Dementia Friends' which

demonstrated a positive approach towards dementia friendly communities across age ranges. She commented on the Authority's plans to charge voluntary organisations 20% business rates and expressed concern that this could result in the closure of scouts clubs and other groups within local communities.

Councillor Dave Mackie acknowledged the excellent work being undertaken to combat the issue of loneliness and isolation and welcomed 'Dementia solutions' initiatives. He emphasised that loneliness was a serious problem particularly amongst older people and said that some people may not feel comfortable attending Dementia Cafes. He urged the Authority to look at initiatives that could be implemented in local communities so that people enduring loneliness could attend during the week to socialise and meet other people. The Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator commented on a project which was currently taking place in the Mostyn and Gronant areas to consider what volunteers could achieve in the area and to encourage the setting up of appropriate groups and clubs.

Councillor Kevin Hughes commented on the opportunity to raise awareness through links with local businesses and cited shopping centres as an example. He asked what was being done with regard to keeping older people warm during the winter months. The Older People's Strategy Co-ordinator explained that Age Cymru run an annual campaign 'Spread the Warmth' which includes a guide providing information and advice on keeping warm, safe, and well. Some useful tips and advice for keeping warm and well during the Winter months have also been included in Councillor Christine Jones's column in the 50+ Action Group's Quarterly newsletter 'Codger's Quarterly' which will be distributed around the County early December. Councillor Andy Dunbobbin suggested that Social Media and community noticeboards could also be used to 'spread the word' in local communities.

Councillor Gladys Healey commented on the need for Dementia Friendly and Age Concern to be managed separately.

Councillor Carol Ellis referred to the 50 plus engagement worker post which was funded until 2020 and asked that officers and Members remain mindful that this is an important role particularly in view of the projected rise in the number of older people in Flintshire in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made be noted.

30. SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AND CHILDREN

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced the report to provide information on the joint Adults and Children's Safeguarding provision within the county boundaries. He commented on the success of the Safeguarding Unit and said the report was in a new format this year bringing both adult and children safeguarding together to inform Members of key statistical and performance related information about children and adults at risk for whom the Authority had significant safeguarding responsibilities. He added that the report help to amalgamate services and shed light on services such as Deprivation of Liberty

Safeguarding (DOLS). He invited the Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning to present the report

The Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning provided background information and reported on the main considerations, as detailed in the report, concerning Children's Safeguarding, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS), Adult Safeguarding and Adults at Risk. She also reported on the key roles and responsibilities across the Safeguarding Unit portfolio and Corporate Safeguarding.

In response to a question from Councillor Andy Dunbobbin, the Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning confirmed that out of county placements were within the remit of the report and that whilst Adverse Childhood Experiences were not included in the report this was something that could be considered for future reports.

Councillor Hilary McGuill asked why the number of DOLS was increasing, how the increasing costs were funded, and who would fund the nursing care if the assessment demonstrated a need for a higher level of care. The Chief Officer advised that the Authority made a small contribution of between £5K - £10k to fund DOLS. The cost to the Authority was in the region of £250K per annum and was an unfunded pressure. The additional costs for a higher level of care would be considered on a case by case basis with Continuing Health Care funding in some cases.

In response to a further question from Councillor Hilary McGuill the Safeguarding Unit Service Manager confirmed that there was no time limit on how long a child could remain on the Child Protection Register up to the age of 18. She commented that children were not kept on the Register longer than necessary and the average time was 12 to 14 months.

Councillor Ian Smith asked who decided if a DOLS assessment was appropriate. Officers confirmed that the provider makes an application for a Best Interest Assessment.

Councillor Kevin Hughes asked what arrangements were in place to deal with cases of child sexual exploitation and online sexual exploitation. The Safeguarding Unit Service Manager advised that Flintshire had a Child Sexual Exploitation Panel which worked closely with the Police ONYX team. She reported that work was also ongoing in schools and Flintshire was leading the way in the field of work on Child Sexual Exploitation and was being followed by other regions.

In response to a question from Councillor Hilary McGuill the Chief Officer confirmed that DOLS assessments do not have an impact on Delayed Transfer of Care in Flintshire.

Referring to the Child Protection Register and pre-birth conferences, the Senior Manager, Children and Workforce advised that funding had been secured from the Welsh Government to work with and support women who had repeat pregnancies which then resulted in the child being placed for adoption within the County.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the information in relation to the Flintshire Safeguarding Unit for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 be noted;
- (b) That the additional data available from 1 April 2017 to 31 October 2017 for the Safeguarding Unit be noted;
- (c) That the increase in activity across all parts of the Safeguarding Unit be noted; and
- (d) That the Committee was satisfied that safeguarding provision within the County is robust

31. FREE CHILDCARE OFFER

The Early Years and Family Support Manager introduced a report to provide an update on the free Childcare offer programme and to seek agreement to extend the offer to other areas of Flintshire. She provided background information and advised that a bespoke system had been built in Flintshire to link in with existing systems, citing Flying Start and School Admissions as examples, and thanked Jason Snead from the IT department and the Geographic Information System Team for their hard work in ensuring the system was successful in meeting the needs of implementing the scheme.

The Early Years and Family Support Manager reported on the main areas of consideration, as detailed in the report, around the childcare offer, what it means for a parent, early education, eligibility and aims of the pilot scheme. She advised that only two applications had been declined to date and that the offer did not include the cost of food or transport. She reported there had been some challenges but there had also been good collaboration with the Welsh Government in implementing the Childcare Offer.

In response to a question from Councillor Hilary McGuill the Early Years and Family Support Manager confirmed there was no cap on the maximum household income for the early implementation offer. She also advised that the scheme was based on Wards in Flintshire and the website www.childcarechoices.gov.uk provided a tool to ascertain eligibility by a postcode search.

Councillor Dave Healey welcomed the scheme and commented that it concentrated on the areas of high employment. He asked whether the scheme had been tested in rural communities in Flintshire to provide assistance to those parents who also required childcare provision. The Early Years and Family Support Manager acknowledged the points made and explained that the Team was working hard to identify the gaps and increase provision in the future.

During discussion the Early Years and Family Support Manager responded to the questions raised by Councillor Dave Mackie around checks on parents eligibility and the risk of not having sufficient childcare settings to meet

future need. It was suggested that postcodes of areas be used when agreeing eligibility in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made with the implementation of the Childcare Offer and the proposed extension of the pilot to all areas within Flintshire be noted.

32. COUNCIL PLAN 2017/18 - MID YEAR MONITORING

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report to present the mid-year monitoring of progress for the Council Plan priority 'Supportive Council' relevant to the Committee. He advised that it was a positive report with 88% of activities being assessed as making good progress and 67% likely to achieve the desired outcome. In addition 65% of the performance indicators met or exceeded target. The Chief Officer advised that risks were also being successfully managed, with the majority being assessed as moderate or minor, and reported on the major risks as detailed in the report.

Referring to the Council Plan 2017/18 Mid-Year Progress Report which was appended to the report, and the performance indicator on the number of adult carers identified, Councillor Hilary McGuill asked how Flintshire could be certain the target had been met as there were many unidentified carers within the Authority area. The Chief Officer acknowledged that there would be some adult carers that the Authority would not be aware of, however, the information had been provided by NEWCIS and work continued to improve the capture of carers data by NEWCIS.

In response to the further query from Councillor Hilary McGuill around the percentage of child protection referrals that resulted in "no further action" the Senior Manager, Children and Workforce explained the background to the performance indicator and the need to lower the figure. He also explained that the Early Help Hub had not been in place during April, May, and June, and that the aim was to have a figure under 35 which should be achievable now that the Early Help Hub had been established. He confirmed that early indications were that the Hub was successful and that a report would be provided to a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Council Plan 2017/18 Mid-Year Monitoring Report be noted.

33. ROTA VISITS

Councillors Christine Jones and David Wisinger positive feedback on their visit to AROSFA, Mold, and spoke of the friendly environment, and improvements made to the gardens and parking facilities.

Councillors Gladys Healey and Hilary McGuill reported on their visit and the warm welcome they had received to Hafan Deg, Mold.

Councillor Mike Allport provided feedback on his positive visit to Marleyfield House and said that he had spoken to a number of service users who had expressed satisfaction with their stay at Marleyfield.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

34. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE)

In presenting the Forward Work Programme, the Facilitator advised that the meeting of the Committee to be held on 25 January 2018 would take place at Llys Jasmine, Mold. She also confirmed that the meeting of the Committee with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) would be held on 13 December 2017.

In response to the discussions which had taken place earlier during the meeting on the Early Help Hub, the Facilitator advised that a report to provide an update on this item would be submitted to the meeting of the Committee in January.

The Facilitator drew attention to paragraph 1.03 of the report and advised that at the meeting of the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee held on 25 October 2017, it had been resolved that each Committee should be canvassed for views on meeting preference as part of their forward work programme. She referred to the options as detailed in the report and asked the Committee to express a preference for its meeting pattern. She explained that the outcome would be reported back to the Constitution & Democratic Services Committee.

Councillor Kevin Hughes proposed that the Committee retained its current arrangement to meet on a Thursday morning and afternoon at 10.00 am and 2.00 pm and when put to the vote this was agreed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the Facilitator provides feedback to the Constitution and Democratic Services Committee that the Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee supports meetings remaining on a Thursday morning and afternoon at 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m.

35. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.30 pm and ended at 4.48 pm)

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Chair