

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
13 DECEMBER 2018

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, 13 December 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Andy Dunbobbin, Gladys Healey, Cindy Hinds, Kevin Hughes, Rita Johnson, Dave Mackie, Hilary McGuill, Ian Smith, Martin White, and David Wisinger

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor Paul Johnson (for Mike Lowe)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Marion Bateman and Jean Davies

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Chief Officer (Social Services), Senior Manager - Safeguarding and Commissioning, Senior Manager – Children and Workforce, Senior Manager Integrated Services, and Senior Cluster Coordinator and Partnership Lead

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer

39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

40. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 31 October 2018 and 15 November were received.

RESOLVED:

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

41. REGIONAL CARERS' STRATEGY

The Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning, introduced the report to provide an overview of the North Wales Carers' Strategy and to support Flintshire County Council signing up to the Strategy.

The Senior Manager provided background information and explained that the Strategy was made up of the following three parts:

- a North Wales vision for carers services
- Service standards
- an action plan

The Senior Manager reported on the key decisions and activities undertaken to develop a North Wales Carers' Strategy, as summarised in the report. She explained that the Strategy asked that local, sub-regional, and regional commissioning gave carers a voice in local decision-making and made sure that all services in the area become more carer aware and carer friendly. It was also incumbent on those in commissioning to ensure services were designed to find carers and help them to identify their needs and to commission support services for carers with particular support needs and/or entitlements. The Senior Manager referred to the North Wales Carer's Strategy – A Strategy for carers of all ages, which was appended to the report.

Councillor Kevin Hughes asked how young carers were identified and supported in Flintshire. The Senior Manager – Children and Workforce, explained that not all young carers were known to the Authority and said work was ongoing with agencies, schools, and young people to identify and contact young carers to offer support and information and signpost to other support services. He referred to the referral pathways that had been agreed with Barnardo's and said he would ask Barnardo's to provide data to show the Committee what their views were about young people.

The Chief Officer suggested that representatives of NEWCIS and Barnardo's be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee. Councillor Hilary McGuill proposed that this be included as an item on the Forward Work Programme for the Committee.

Councillor McGuill commented on the needs of elderly carers and expressed concern that they were not being signposted to the appropriate information and services available to assist them.

The Senior Manager - Safeguarding and Commissioning commented on the importance of early identification and the assessment and understanding of the needs of carers of all ages. She referred to the impact of caring on individuals and the aims of the North Wales Carers' Strategy to give a voice to carers in decision-making and help them identify their needs and entitlements.

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin commented on the need for raising awareness and engagement with the general public. The Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning drew attention to the action plans for key partners in the Strategy and reiterated the need for early identification and support. The Senior Manager – Children and Workforce, advised that National Carers Week would be held in June 2019 and suggested that the Committee might wish to consider promoting the information and services which were available to support carers.

Councillor Gladys Healey spoke of the needs of young carers and in particular young people who were still in full-time education. She also commented on the financial savings to social care services through the care provided by young carers.

The Chief Officer acknowledged the comments made by Councillor Healey and gave reassurance that the Authority worked diligently to identify and support young carers in Flintshire. However, the Authority was not complacent and detailed work was ongoing to improve the position further.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Committee supports Flintshire County Council signing up to the North Wales Carers' Strategy; and
- (b) That representatives of NEWCIS and Barnardo's be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

42. INTEGRATED CARE FUND (ICF)

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report to provide an update on the use of the Integrated Care Fund; how its use was governed at a local, regional and national level, and the difference that the funding was making to residents in Flintshire. He provided background information and context and referred to the key considerations relating to funding allocations, the revenue programme and capital programme. He then invited the Senior Cluster Coordinator and Partnership Lead to present the report.

The Chair commented on the impact of funding and the services provided through the ICF which were making a financial saving to the health service.

In response to Councillor Hilary McGuill's query on the repatriation and prevention service, the Senior Manager – Children and Workforce explained that this was a partnership arrangement between CAMHS service, Wrexham County Borough Council, Flintshire County Council, and Action for Children, which provided intensive therapeutic support services when there was a risk of placement breakdown. During discussion the Senior Manager – Children and Workforce, also responded to the further questions and comments raised by Councillor McGuill concerning Disabled Facility Grants and explained how the service facilitated the need to fund the adaptations required to private residential property and ensure protection of public money.

Councillor Andy Dunbobbinn suggested that consideration be given to applying for funding from the Armed Forces Covenant to support service veterans and their families.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the Integrated Care Fund Programme; and
- (b) That the Committee supports the initiative of utilising short term funding streams to deliver against strategic and operational priorities for the Council and key partners

43. FLINTSHIRE FOSTER CARE SERVICES

The Senior Manager – Children and Workforce introduced a report setting out the proposals for developing and enhancing Flintshire’s approach to Fostering. He explained that the Council had a well-run and effective Fostering Service and said foster carers were an integral part of the workforce, providing high quality committed care. However, the Service faced significant challenges which included attracting and developing foster carers to support children with complex needs; older children and sibling groups; responding to court timelines to assess ‘Connected Persons’; and competing with independent fostering agencies which offered higher financial remuneration for foster care.

The Senior Manager – Children and Workforce referred to the main considerations, as summarised in the report, and the range of proactive and innovative approaches the Service was taking in response. He reported that the Service had recently been awarded a grant through the NESTA ‘Innovate to Save’ scheme which would provide the funding to research a new model of foster care called the Fostering Network’s Mockingbird Programme of family care.

In response to the suggestion from Councillor Kevin Hughes on instigating a recruitment campaign in the local press or via social media, the Senior Manager – Children and Workforce outlined the initiatives which were ongoing within the service to address the issue of recruitment and referred to the regional and national campaigns for one model for Wales by the Welsh Government which the Service had significantly invested in.

Councillor Dave Mackie commented on the assessment process for Connected Persons and emphasised the importance of the caring role provided by Connected Persons and the life-changing circumstances that can occur as a result.

Members expressed their support and appreciation for the work undertaken by Flintshire’s Fostering Service.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the current work of the Flintshire Fostering Services to provide its statutory and legal obligations as we move to the new Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act (RISCA) framework;
- (b) That the Committee Supports the Service’s approach of continued innovation to identify and implement new models of Foster Care arrangements; and
- (c) That the Committee supports the realignment and investment of resources and staff in the development of the service which supports our approach to reducing residential ‘out of county’ placements.

44. UPDATE ON FLINT AND HOLYWELL EXTRA CARE FACILITIES

The Senior Manager Integrated Services introduced the report to provide an update on the development of the two new extra care schemes in Flintshire.

The Senior Manager reported that the extra care scheme in Flint (Llys Raddington) was complete and at full capacity. Feedback was positive from residents and families with regard to the move-in process and facilities available. The Senior Manager referred to the Committee's recent tour of the building and thanked Members for their positive comments and feedback. She advised that the construction of the Holywell extra care scheme was underway and would offer 55 apartments as well as specific apartments for individuals living with dementia. The scheme would be eligible to older adults (50+ years old) but allowing for some flexibility for younger individuals with similar care needs. Supporting individuals in extra care was more cost efficient than residential care for Social Services which was responsible for ensuring care needs were met. The Senior Manager reported that the expected completion date was Spring 2020 and the name of the scheme was out for consultation with Welsh groups, local members, and the Town Council.

During discussion Officers responded to the comments and questions raised on revenue costs, and the aspirations for future schemes to be built in Flintshire.

Councillor Paul Johnson asked how the Holywell Extra Care scheme was being promoted to local residents, particularly the elderly. The Senior Manager advised that a post selling event had been held and further information sessions and promotional events were being planned at local venues in early 2019. Councillor Gladys Healey spoke in support of the Llys Raddington scheme and asked if an information event could also be provided for residents in her Ward.

Councillor Hilary McGuill asked if provision was being made to address the costs of future repair and refurbishment of the earlier schemes. The Senior Manager explained that some maintenance costs were built into the charges

for the apartments and confirmed there was also a fund for repair and maintenance to ensure the building was maintained in good order.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee continues to support the development of these Extra Care housing schemes in Flintshire;
- (b) That the Committee supports and engages in the forthcoming publicity and consultation events which will promote the Holywell Extra Care development, commencing in early 2019; and
- (c) That the Committee welcomes the change of age range at Holywell Extra Care development.

45. COUNCIL PLAN 2018/19 – MID YEAR MONITORING

The Chief Officer introduced a report to present the monitoring of progress at the mid-year point 2018/19 for the Council Plan priority 'Supportive Council' relevant to the Committee.

The Chief Officer advised that the mid-year monitoring report showed that 88% of activities were making good progress with 81% likely to achieve their planned outcomes. 79% of the performance indicators had met or exceeded their targets. Risks were being managed with a minority of 18% being assessed as major. The report was an exception based report and therefore focussed on the areas of under-performance.

Councillor Dave Mackie referred to page 176 of the report and the performance indicator for the percentage of looked after children with a timely health assessment. The Senior Manager – Children and Workforce acknowledged the concerns expressed by Councillor Mackie and explained there had been some improvement but the matter remained an issue that the Service raised consistently with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB).

The Chair commented on the risk that demand outstripped supply for residential and nursing homes care bed availability. Councillor McGuill asked how many beds were currently available in residential care homes in comparison to 10 years ago. The Senior Manager explained that the number of beds were less now than previously. The Chair asked if the Committee could be informed of the number of people waiting for EMI beds. The Chief Officer commented on the limited number of care homes in Flintshire and said demand was greater than supply and the problem would increase due to demography.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the mid-year Council Plan Monitoring Report 2018/19.

46. ROTA VISITS

There were no reports on rota visits.

47. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager presented the Forward Work Programme for consideration. He advised that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 31 January 2019, to consider the following items:

- Community Health Council
- Parenting Programme

The Democratic Services Manager said the Programme would be updated to include the Committee's request that representatives of North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) and Barnardo's be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the identification of young carers.

Councillor Dave Mackie commented on the process for discharging cross border patients at the Countess of Chester Hospital and said he had been informed that delays in discharging patients who lived in Wales resulted in additional costs to the Hospital. The Senior Manager Integrated Services, explained that representatives from the Authority attended regular meetings with the Countess of Chester and patients admitted from Flintshire were reviewed on a case by case basis.

The Chair expressed concerns around an increase in waiting times at the Wrexham Maelor Hospital. She also commented on staffing levels at the Glan Clwyd Hospital. The Chair asked what financial contribution was made by BCUHB to the Countess of Chester Hospital.

During discussion it was agreed that an item on the delayed transfer of care be included on the Forward Work Programme.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly; and
- (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.

48. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 3.00 pm and ended at 4.20 pm)

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Chair