

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 MAY 2014

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Thursday, 1 May 2014

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chairman)

Councillors: Peter Curtis, Andy Dunbobbin, Veronica Gay, Stella Jones, Brian Lloyd, Mike Lowe, Hilary McGuill, Dave Mackie and David Wisinger

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Marion Bateman, Hilary Isherwood and Ian Smith.

CONTRIBUTORS: Cabinet Member for Social Services, Director of Community Services, Head of Children's Services, Senior Manager Commissioning and Performance, Resources Services Manager, Complaints Officer, and Planning and Development Officer

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment and Social Care Facilitator Facilitator and Committee Officer

Prior to the start of the meeting Members congratulated the Director of Community Services on his recent appointment.

The Chair referred to the forthcoming retirement of the Head of Children's Services and expressed thanks to her, on behalf of the Committee, for her hard work and dedication. Members also individually expressed their appreciation for the support and guidance given by the Head of Children's Services and wished her well for the future. The Director of Community Services also paid tribute to the Head of Children's Services and thanked her for her work and commitment.

62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin declared a personal interest in the following item as he is a kinship carer:-

Agenda Item 6 – Annual Fostering Inspection

63. MINUTES

- (i) The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2014 had been circulated with the agenda.

Accuracy

Councillors Stella Jones and Cindy Hinds said they had submitted their apologies to the meeting and asked that the minutes be amended to reflect this.

- (ii) The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2014 had been circulated with the agenda.

Accuracy

Councillors Stella Jones and Cindy Hinds said they had submitted their apologies to the meeting and asked that the minutes be amended to reflect this.

- (iii) The minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2014 had been circulated with the agenda.

Accuracy

Page 19, 2nd paragraph, should read the development of a dementia cafe at Llys Jasmine not Llys Eleanor.

RESOLVED:

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

64. ANNUAL REPORT ON THE SOCIAL SERVICES REPRESENTATION AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE 2013-14

The Director of Community Services introduced a report on the compliments, representations and complaints received by Adult and Children's Social Services for the year April 2013 to March 2014. He provided background information and explained that feedback in the form of compliments and complaints from service users and their parents or carers was valuable in identifying where services were working well or needed changing. He advised that the annual report contained information about the number and type of complaints received and details of the activities undertaken by the Complaints Officer to develop the service.

The Director invited the Senior Manager Commissioning and Head of Children's Services to give an overview of the complaints and compliments received in relation to Adult Social Services and Children's Social Services.

The Senior Manager Commissioning advised that there had been a small increase in the number of complaints received since last year but this should be considered in the context of the number of service users receiving a service. He referred to the methods used to resolve a complaint, timescales, and outcomes/lessons learned. The Senior Manager reported that overall there had been a rise in the number of compliments received for Adult Social Services in 2013-14 compared to the previous year. He explained that compliments had been received in a number of ways in recognition of when staff had done "over and above" what had been expected by service users and their families.

The Head of Children's Social Services reported that there had been an increase in complaints in relation to Children's Social Services compared to previous years, however, this was against a significant increase in the number of referrals received during the year. She explained that the increase in complaints

received year on year reflected the proactive way in which information about making a complaint was shared with children, young people and their families and was also partly attributable, where the service was involved in Court proceedings with families, to the withdrawal of Legal Aid across England and Wales. She also commented on the North Wales Complaints Officers Group and advised that the Welsh Government was in the process of revising the Regulations for the Social Services complaints procedure.

The Head of Children's Social Services referred to the number of compliments received during 2013/14 which had increased overall on previous years. The compliments had been received in the form of cards and letters or praise expressed during Court proceedings.

The Chair thanked the Senior Manager Commissioning and Head of Children's Services for their presentations and invited Members to raise questions.

Councillor Hilary McGuill referred to the summary of complaints across Adults and Children's service areas which were attached to the report and commented that she felt they did not provide enough detail. She also commented on the significant fall recorded in the number of compliments received in relation to Resources. The Head of Children's Services responded to the queries raised and said "lessons had been learned" from complaints made to ensure that the issues concerned did not arise again and that procedures were changed. She reported that responses from the User Surveys which had been sent out indicated that the majority of service users and their families and carers were complimentary about the service they received.

Commenting on the matter of compliments the Chair suggested that the number of cards, letters and emails from service users or their families should also be included when recording the number of compliments received for Children's Social Services.

During discussion Members reiterated the views expressed by Councillor McGuill that more detail was required concerning the nature of the complaints made against Adult and Children's Social Services.

Councillor Dave Mackie suggested that when a complaint was not addressed within the prescribed timescales feedback should be obtained from the complainant to seek their views on how their concerns had been handled. He also referred to the timescales for responding to complaints and asked if figures could be provided to compare the Authority's performance with the national average. The Senior Manager Commissioning and Performance advised that no national comparative data was currently available.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

65. CSSIW INSPECTION REPORT – COMMISSIONING DEMENTIA

The Commissioning Manager introduced a report on the outcome of a national review of commissioning in adult social care. She advised that the review included an inspection of how well services for people with dementia and their carers were being commissioned in Flintshire. The CSSIW report on commissioning arrangements in Flintshire was appended to the report.

The Commissioning Manager gave background information and reported that Flintshire was the only authority in North Wales to be selected for inspection. She advised that overall the CSSIW report on commissioning arrangements in Flintshire was positive about the services in place within the Authority for people living with Dementia in Flintshire. The report identified a number of areas of “best practice” in Flintshire and referred to the “Living Well” domiciliary care team, the North East Wales Carers Information Services (NEWCIS), and Flintshire’s Community Care Brokerage Service. The report recognised Flintshire’s contribution to the development of a Regional approach to commissioning through its work with the North Wales Regional Commissioning Hub and the development of a Regional Framework for domiciliary providers. It also highlighted Flintshire’s focus on ‘quality and responsiveness of services’ and described relationships with providers as “Very positive and very collaborative”.

The Commissioning Manager advised that the report also raised a number of concerns regarding levels of specialist EMI nursing home placements within Flintshire boundaries and that “partnership arrangements with BCUHB for people with dementia were not as effective or developed as they should be”. The report made three recommendations to improve the services for people living with dementia in Flintshire and the Commissioning Manger gave an outline of the work to be undertaken to take the recommendations forward and referred to the development of a detailed action plan, in consultation with partners, to strengthen dementia care by the end of June 2014. Councillor Hilary McGuill asked that a copy of the action plan be provided to the Committee for consideration.

Councillor Cindy Hinds referred to a recent report in a local newspaper concerning dementia care in Flintshire which she felt had been unduly critical. During discussion it was agreed that a letter be sent to the newspaper concerned to put forward the views of the Committee and highlight the positive work which had been undertaken by the Authority to support dementia care in Flintshire.

Councillor Peter Curtis commented on the greater demand for EMI care in the future.

Members expressed their congratulations to the Director of Community Services and the Commissioning Manager on the positive outcome of the CSSIW review and thanked them for their hard work and achievements.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee noted the findings arising from the CSSIW report and supported the development of an action plan in response to the recommendations;

- (b) That a progress report and final draft of the action plan be submitted to the meeting of the Committee scheduled to be held in July 2014; and
- (c) That a letter be sent to the local newspaper concerned to put forward the views of the Committee and highlight the positive work which had been undertaken by the Authority to support dementia care in Flintshire.

66. ANNUAL FOSTERING INSPECTION

The Head of Children's Services introduced a report on the outcome of the annual inspection of the Flintshire Fostering Service (20-22 and 28 January 2014) by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). She provided background information and advised that the Inspection had been positive and had identified a number of strengths, areas of progress and two recommendations for further improvement. The annual Fostering Inspection Report was appended to the report for consideration.

Councillor Cindy Hinds expressed her appreciation for the work undertaken by the Fostering Panel.

The Chair thanked the Head of Children's Services and the Fostering Team for their hard work and achievements.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received.

67. ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The Director of Community Services introduced a report to present the final draft of the Social Services Annual Report and to seek any final views and comments before approval was sought by Cabinet. He provided background information and advised that the report had been developed in sections that reflected the key themes contained within the Social Services and Well Being Bill.

During discussion Members expressed the view that the report was too detailed and should be more concise to engage the general public and links to the relevant information provided as necessary. The Director of Community Services acknowledged the points raised and explained that if any specific changes were required he would review the document again, however, the final draft was as concise as possible and he commented on the need to ensure that all salient points required by the Regulator were included.

The Chair suggested that in the future it may be helpful if a workshop was held for Members to consider and agree the development and format of the Annual Report prior to submission to a meeting of the Committee for consideration.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the final draft of the Social Services Annual Report be endorsed for consideration by Cabinet; and
- (b) That a workshop be held for Members in the future to consider and agree the development and format of the Annual Report prior to submission to a meeting of the Committee for consideration.

68. SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Environment and Social Care Facilitator introduced the report to consider the Forward Work Programme of the Committee. She advised that the following items were scheduled for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 12 June 2014:

- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
- Improvement Plan

It was agreed that a further meeting may be arranged to consider the following items if required:

- CSSIW Action Plan update
- Social Services Bill

The Facilitator commented on the need to arrange a Forward Work Programme planning session in the future.

RESOLVED:

That subject to the above the Forward Work Programme be agreed..

69. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

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

(The meeting started at 10.00 a.m and ended at 11.40 a.m.)

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Chairman