

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
29 JANUARY 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 29 January 2015

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, Andy Dunbobbin, Veronica Gay, Hilary Isherwood, Brian Lloyd, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie and David Wisinger

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: Peter Curtis, Cindy Hinds and Hilary McGuill.

CONTRIBUTORS:

Cabinet Member for Social Services, Chief Officer (Social Services), Senior Manager Integrated Services, Reablement and Telecare Team Manager and North East Wales Community Equipment Service Manager

IN ATTENDANCE:

Member Engagement Manager and Committee Officer

51. TRIBUTE TO THE LATE COUNCILLOR STELLA JONES

The Chair asked that Members and all those present to stand for a minute's silent tribute to the late Councillor Stella Jones.

52. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

53. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 December 2014 had been circulated to Members with the agenda.

RESOLVED:

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

54. SOCIAL SERVICES INTERMEDIATE CARE FUND (ICF)

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report to provide an overview of the projects delivered by the Intermediate Care Fund (ICF) and of the outcomes that had been delivered.

He detailed the background to the report and explained that the ICF had been set up to support older people to maintain their independence and remain in their own home. The funding of £642k for capital and £1.248m for revenue funding was for the financial year 2014/15 and WG had advised that the funding would cease at the end of the period. However, the Chief Officer (Social Services) advised that an announcement had been made the previous day on the

future of Intermediate Care. Written confirmation had not been received but it had been indicated that £20m across Wales on a recurrent basis would be available but that a different funding route would apply. Work would be ongoing with health partners to support the continuation of services provided for Intermediate Care.

The ICF had been allocated on a regional footprint with Flintshire leading the management of the fund on behalf of North Wales. The bid for Flintshire had been based upon three key themes with a consistent focus on enhancing services for people with dementia. The projects that had been delivered through the ICF were reported and the Chief Officer (Social Services) provided details of some of the projects which included the provision of step up/step down beds in residential homes, falls prevention and Healthy Homes for Discharge project – Flintshire Care & Repair. The achievements for the first six months of the ICF from April to September 2014 were reported along with a case study of a person who had been helped by the ICF. Further case studies were also included in the report. On the issue of challenges, the Chief Officer explained that the authority was not aware of the ICF until part way through the year but had tried to use it efficiently and effectively. It was reported that Flintshire had hosted the North Wales Integrated Services Programme Board which formed part of the governance arrangements that fed into the North Wales Regional Leadership Board. WG had identified North Wales' approach to managing the ICF as being an 'exemplar'. Prior to the announcement by WG, Flintshire had identified critical projects that required funding in the future and these were detailed at paragraph 3.07.

Councillor Amanda Bragg welcomed the report and indicated that she had not been aware of the large number of projects that were undertaken. On the issue of 'Support at Night' she asked whether the service had been trialled and evaluated and sought clarification on the number of hoarders within the County of Flintshire that officers were aware of.

In response, the Chief Officer (Social Services) advised that he did not have details of figures but could provide the information to Members. He explained that hoarding could be as a result of a complex combination of social circumstances. On the issue of the 'Support at Night' project, the Senior Manager Integrated Services explained that the pilot scheme would look at a cluster group living in the community as currently support was only available to 11pm. Work was ongoing to identify the correct areas, which could include Mold or Deeside localities, and to ensure technologies were in place. The scheme would involve two members of staff being on call to visit service users as and when required throughout the night.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood commented on the issue of hoarders and raised concern for older people who ordered goods through the post as a result of receiving mailshots as they felt that they were required to do so. She felt that there should be an appropriate person that they could talk to if they felt pressure to send for goods that they did not need or want. The Cabinet Member for Social Services suggested that she could raise this issue at an Older People's Strategy meeting and added that Trading Standards also undertook work to try and raise awareness of scams where vulnerable people were asked to send money for goods or services that were never delivered.

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin spoke of an event that he had attended through his role as Armed Forces Champion and suggested that he meet with the Chief Officer (Social Services) to discuss funding avenues for War veterans and ex-service personnel. The Chief Officer agreed to meet with Councillor Dunbobbin and he and the Cabinet Member for Social Services welcomed the suggestion.

In referring to the issue of hoarding, Councillor Veronica Gay commented on properties which had been cleared to allow the individual to return home but the hoarding behaviour had continued and the issue had then reoccurred. She praised the work of the Care & Repair Team but she queried how the service could continue if the funding ceased and suggested that the number of hoarders could be more widespread than was known about.

The Chief Officer (Social Services) commented on the demand for the service and of the discussions that were needed on the approach to be taken for future delivery of the project. On the additional funding that had been announced by WG, he explained that it amounted to 40% of the funding that had been provided for this financial year and that work would need to be undertaken to identify which projects would continue to be funded.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee endorses the progress made with the effective use of the Intermediate Care Fund;
- (b) That the development of further initiatives using the finance recently announced be supported; and
- (c) That Committee gives support that Flintshire County Council continue with the areas outlined in paragraph 3.07.

55. REABLEMENT/INDEPENDENT LIVING IN FLINTSHIRE

The Senior Manager Integrated Services introduced a report to update Members on the progress made by the Reablement and Telecare service.

She introduced Sara Thelwell (Reablement and Telecare Team Manager) and Steve Featherstone (North East Wales Community Equipment Service Manager) to the Committee. In advising that Flintshire had had a successful Reablement Service for a number of years, she referred to the definition of reablement and added that the service had the potential to help many people. The service had mainly concentrated on supporting older people including those with mild to moderate dementia, and people with physical disabilities. It was hoped in the future that the service could be extended to support people with a learning disability. A number of teams were involved in providing the reablement service and these were detailed in paragraph 3.09 of the report. Reablement outcomes were measured and these included whether service users had not required any further support at end of Reablement, had increased the support needed or not completed the Reablement phase. A full analysis of the outcomes was attached at appendix 1.

The Reablement and Telecare Team Manager provided details of the way that service users could access the service through either the Social Services First Contact Team or through a Social Worker upon discharge from hospital. The North East Wales Community Equipment Service Manager spoke of the domestic and residential care schemes and explained that in partnership with Wrexham County Borough Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), the team covered Wrexham and Flintshire. He commented on the enhanced care scheme and spoke of the work undertaken with the Reablement Team to provide the equipment necessary to allow service users to return to their own home.

The Chair welcomed the report and praised the work of the Reablement Team which she felt provided an excellent service.

Councillor Dave Mackie also spoke the fantastic work undertaken by the Team. In referring to wheelchairs, he asked that a sign be put on all wheelchairs to indicate that they should not be used without the footrests being in place, as this could result in accidents. On the issue of people being admitted to hospital, he felt that hospitals could do more to keep people active during their stay as he felt that they became weak and therefore not have the strength to be discharged from hospital and live on their own, which then became a problem for the hospital. The Senior Manager Integrated Services explained that wheelchairs were issued by the Health Service. She added that the health of patients on discharge from hospital was a common problem so it was important for them to leave hospital as soon as possible. Councillor Veronica Gay concurred with the comment.

The current length of time for reablement was six weeks and Councillor Mike Lowe asked if this would be extended if the service was to support people with a learning disability. The Senior Manager Integrated Services confirmed that the time period would be extended as it would require an Occupational Therapist to work with the service user for a longer term.

Councillor Brian Lloyd sought clarification on how the team would deal with people who would not accept help. The Senior Manager Integrated Services explained that it could take time to build a relationship and a feeling of trust and sometimes the team were successful in achieving this and sometimes they were not. The Reablement and Telecare Team Manager indicated that it was important that residents were aware of the help that could be made available and for the team to provide reassurance that the person could still retain their independence.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee endorses and supports the good progress of the Reablement Team and the approach which the service is taking.

56. KEY PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS WITH HEALTH AND THE THIRD SECTOR

The Senior Manager Integrated Services introduced a report to update Members on the progress made with key partnerships and locality developments.

She detailed the background to the report and explained that it was imperative that there were ongoing improvements in the way that the partners worked together. On the merging of Locality Leadership Teams and GP Cluster Meetings, the Senior Manager Integrated Services explained that the proposals were progressing but there was currently a vacancy for a Locality Lead within North East Flintshire. It was hoped that once the vacancy had been filled, joint working could be progressed. In the meantime, a new approach was to be trialled to bring together the work of the existing GP cluster and previous Locality Leadership Teams and a meeting to agree a way forward had been arranged. She commented on the ongoing work around enhanced care, Single Point of Access (SPoA) and Co-location of Health and Social Care Locality Teams.

On the issue of care homes, the Senior Manager Integrated Services highlighted the risks posed by the lack of capacity for nursing input into Care Homes in North Wales which had been raised with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB). Work was to take place to trial a new model in South Flintshire for Social Prescribing and the Third Sector was working with Social Services about SPoA. She advised that a new Early Years and Family Support Manager (Gail Bennett) was in post. The report detailed the progress that had been made to date particularly on the Flying Start Programme and work with the Elfed Consortia and the 'Incredible Years' parenting programme. Other key projects included the new approach to parent engagement that had been developed at Ysgol Merllyn in Bagillt and the £143k that had been awarded by Welsh Government to modernise the former Youth Club on the site of Sandycroft Primary School.

In welcoming the report, Councillor Hilary Isherwood commented on the success of the programme to increase school attendance. However, she raised concern that families were being left without help following comments from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). She queried whether the funding for vulnerable families would continue.

The Cabinet Member for Social Services commented on the excellent work of the Flying Start project in her ward and she explained that every child in the community was entitled to attend, not just those with difficulties. She detailed some of the activities undertaken as part of the project and commented on additional funding which had been announced recently by Welsh Government (WG). Councillor Isherwood indicated that her ward had not been designated as a Communities First area but that some residents in the area were in poverty. The Chief Officer (Social Services) advised that the Flying Start Programme was for particular areas that were designated by WG based on criteria and Councils could not apply any discretion to the areas that received the funding for the project. He added that it was important for the Flying Start Programme to reach as many children as possible and he commented on the effectiveness of the service.

Councillor Veronica Gay raised concern at the number of Saltney residents who were registered with Doctor's surgeries in England rather than in Wales and asked whether those patients would be contacted by their GP as part of the Social Prescribing exercise to ensure that the correct figures were identified. Councillor Gay also sought clarification on accommodation in Saltney

for the co-location of Social Services and health staff. She raised concern about the over 65s and early years schools programmes as she did not feel that the support for the residents was in place in Saltney. In response, the Senior Manager Integrated Services explained that the pilot scheme for the Locality Team and GP cluster meeting merger was to take place in Mold and it was hoped that lessons could be learned to allow it to be rolled out to other areas. She commented on the benefits of co-location with health staff and highlighted the project in Holywell which had been a success. On the Flying Start programme, she suggested that Gail Bennett and Anne Roberts attend a future meeting to discuss issues with the Committee.

In response to a query from the Chair on enhanced care, the Chief Officer (Social Services) explained that the programme had been rolled out in Flint and Holywell and pleasing feedback had been received from patients. BCUHB was taking time to consider revised business models for the remaining areas in Flintshire and North Wales and therefore the project had not been progressed for these areas. It was hoped that the rollout would be completed in the future.

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin welcomed the Flying Start scheme and, in being sympathetic to the comments of Councillor Gay about lack of provision in her ward for the scheme, he provided details of the numbers of children who had been helped through the project. He highlighted the comment in the report that it was an aspiration to extend the benefits of the project beyond the geographical boundaries covered by the WG funded programme.

The Chair raised significant concern about the substantial challenge faced by BCUHB to recruit and retain appropriately trained, qualified and experienced staff to work in care homes in North Wales. She felt that the issue needed addressing along with the problems of bed-blocking, ambulances queuing outside Accident and Emergency departments and targets for seeing patients being missed. In response, the Chief Officer (Social Services) commented on the key issues and on the shortage of nursing care beds across North Wales, particularly for patients with dementia. He advised that the issues raised would be a priority in the single integrated plan and would be identified as a risk in the quarterly performance report for Social Services.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee welcomes the progress made within the Key Partnership Project.

57. ROTA VISITS

In response to a request from the Chair, Members indicated that no rota visits had been undertaken.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

58. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Member Engagement Manager introduced the report to consider the Forward Work Programme for the Committee.

He advised Members that it was hoped that a Special Meeting of the Committee would take place at 2pm on Thursday, 9 April 2015 to which the Chief Executive of Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board had been invited. The meeting was not yet confirmed as the Environment & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator had not received confirmation from officers from the Ambulance Trust who had also been invited to attend.

The Member Engagement Manager explained that only one item was due for consideration at the 5 March 2015 but the Chief Officer (Social Services) had suggested that a report on Social Services and the Wellbeing Act be considered at that meeting. The Chief Officer explained that the report would provide details on the implementation of the Act.

It had also been suggested during earlier discussions that Gail Bennett and Anne Roberts be invited to a future meeting of the Committee. The Chief Officer (Social Services) felt that it would be more appropriate that this form part of the joint meeting with Lifelong Learning Overview & Scrutiny that the Environment & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator was in the process of arranging.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood spoke of issues of oral hygiene and her concern about the lack of ability of people to be able to find a dentist. At a recent event held at the Daniel Owen Centre in Mold, she had asked about the possibility of establishing a mobile dentist service. In response to a comment from Councillor Isherwood, the Chair felt that the Environment & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator would be able to provide details of when it had been discussed at a previous meeting and to pursue the matter for consideration in the future.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be amended to reflect the above suggestions.

59. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press and no members of the public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 3.40 pm)

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Chair