

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
27 JUNE 2016

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 Monday, 27 June 2016

PRESENT: **Councillor Andy Dunbobbin (Vice-Chair in the Chair)**

Councillors: Veronica Gay, David Healey, Mike Lowe, Hilary McGill, Dave Mackie and David Wisinger

APOLOGIES: Chief Executive and Councillors Carol Ellis, Adele Davies-Cooke, Ray Hughes, Mike Reece, Ian Smith and Matt Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Bernie Attridge, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Environment

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services; Chief Officer (Social Services); Senior Manager, Children and Workforce; Senior Manager, Integrated Services, Lead Adults; Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning; and Service Manager, Disability Services and Children's Integrated Disability Services

Finance Manager, Strategy Accounting & Systems (for minute number 13)

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

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

11. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 22 April and 19 May 2016 had been circulated with the agenda.

22 April 2016

Councillor Veronica Gay said that she had submitted apologies for the meeting and asked that this be recorded in the minutes.

As a matter arising from minute number 70: Care Sector Report, the Chief Officer (Social Services) advised that officers had taken part in a positive meeting with colleagues from the independent care sector and health care. The meetings would continue on a quarterly basis to maintain dialogue on issues of mutual benefit, in recognition of the pressures on all concerned.

Councillor David Healey spoke of his regret at being unable to attend the meeting to discuss such an important topic, and commented on the low number of Members who had been in attendance.

Councillor Dave Mackie highlighted the importance of publicising the issues raised at the meeting. Having shared the report with the Community Health Council in North Wales, he advised that it had been noted.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the amendment on the minutes for 22 April 2016, both sets of minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

12. VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

As suggested by the Chairman, it was agreed that Agenda Item 6 'Council Fund Revenue Budget 2017/18' would be brought forward. The remainder of the items would be considered in the order shown on the agenda.

13. COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced the update report on the financial forecast, including the budget pressures and proposed efficiencies for Social Services for 2017/18 as the third and final year of the current portfolio business planning cycle.

In providing an overview of the corporate context of the report, the Finance Manager explained that Cabinet had re-adopted the three part strategy to address the financial gap. Work was continuing on the refresh of the Medium Term Financial Strategy in light of the revised forecast of a projected gap of £14.4m for 2017/18. An update was also given on projections for service portfolio business planning as set out in Table 2 of the report.

The Chief Officer gave a presentation on business plan efficiencies and pressures for Social Services, covering the following:

- Local context
- Social Services: Comparative Analysis
- Efficiency Statement
- Resilience Statement
- Social Services - Efficiencies Summary 2017/18
- Learning Disabilities - Efficiency Targets 2017/18
- Social Services - Summary of Cost Pressures

The Chief Officer explained that Flintshire had implemented one of the leanest Social Services structures across the region and that initial feedback from the independent review had so far validated the business plan proposals. On the comparative analysis, there was a 'Red' risk status on resilience of Adult Services due to the financial support required from Welsh Government (WG) for care

sector partners. The 'Amber' risk rating for Children's Services reflected the increased level of resources needed to support the service.

Councillor Dave Mackie referred to a recent education presentation given to the Heads' Federation meeting which had helped to raise awareness of the financial challenges faced by the Council. The Chairman stated that the Leader was continuing negotiations with the WG to put forward Flintshire's case as a low funded authority.

Councillor Hilary McGuill pointed out the benefits of early signposting where re-ablement was no longer a viable option, for example, activities to support people with mental health issues. The Chief Officer agreed that effective connections were needed, involving Single Point of Access teams. He shared the concerns around the future challenges, given the expected 23% rise in the county's older population over the next four years. He said that the Council would do all it could to mitigate those challenges which reinforced the need for increased financial support from WG. In relation to concerns about the changes to domiciliary support charges, the Chief Officer said that the issue would be handled sensitively with consultation taking place. Responding to further questions, officers provided explanation on links with community hospitals across the region and discharging arrangements with hospitals outside Flintshire. On the terminology used in the presentation, it was explained that the term 'managing child care market' was a term set by the WG.

On adoption and fostering, Councillor Mackie spoke about the significant increase in charges for services from independent agencies. He felt it was important that individuals adopting or foster caring should not be seeking to gain financial profit and that the approach taken in Scotland should be implemented in Wales. The Chief Officer said that the current regional arrangements on adoption and fostering were robust with good quality fostering provision, and that a national approach was to be introduced. Following a query on additional costs for individuals supported in extra care facilities, he acknowledged that this reduced the spend on alternative settings, however opening extra care provision required financial input and the benefits to the resilience of the Council would only be seen over time.

The Senior Manager (Integrated Services, Lead Adults) spoke about the increase in demography and the extra resources required for individuals with complex needs such as Dementia. She added that the extra care model in Flintshire was appropriate in caring and supporting the needs of individuals. The Chief Officer spoke about the importance of extra care provision in helping to address the shortfall in residential care homes. The Senior Manager (Children & Workforce) gave assurances that all opportunities were being explored to recruit the 35 additional foster carers currently needed in Flintshire. He referred to the challenges on this such as the increase in looked after children over a short period of time and the demand for foster carers of older children and those with complex needs. Councillor Christine Jones said that an informative presentation on the fostering recruitment strategy had been given to the Children's Services Forum. This had highlighted the excellent foster carer provision in the county along with the demand for more to support young people over ten years old.

In acknowledging the challenges of the increase in referrals given the fragile care sector, Councillor David Healey highlighted the importance of continuing lobbying to WG for financial support. He said that not all areas of the UK were affected equally and suggested the potential for support from the Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) on the recruitment of foster carers in the county. The Chief Officer spoke about effective links already established between the Council and carer organisations, in addition to the FLVC and North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS).

The Senior Manager (Safeguarding & Commissioning) advised that the Council worked with the voluntary sector on a range of early intervention work including training programmes.

Councillor David Wisinger thanked officers for the detailed presentation and spoke about the need for financial support for independent nursing homes to prevent further impact on the National Health Service.

Councillor McGuill's suggestion for 24-hour support for foster carers to encourage recruitment was not considered viable due to the cost implications and training/support arrangements already in place for foster carers. In response to a suggestion on developing links with 'Hospice at Home' as an alternative to secondary hospitals, the Senior Manager agreed but pointed out that that particular service was often at full capacity. Councillor McGuill felt that this issue should be highlighted and Councillor Veronica Gay asked whether the Committee could write to the WG. The Committee agreed to the Chief Officer's suggestion that the matter be raised with Mr. Rob Smith of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board who had attended the previous meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the committee notes the corporate cost pressures and main areas of income and expenditure under review for 2017/18 and supports the proposals;
- (b) That the committee notes the Corporate Services Portfolio Business Plan cost pressures and proposed efficiencies and supports the proposals; and
- (c) That the committee accepts, in principle, the developing strategy for the 2017/18 budget, and the process and timelines for setting the annual budget, in its wider role of corporate financial governance.

14. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTH WALES SAFEGUARDING BOARDS APRIL 2016

The Senior Manager (Safeguarding & Commissioning) introduced the progress report on the development of the North Wales Safeguarding Board (NWSB) for information. She provided a summary of the safeguarding arrangements and structures across the region, including sub-groups. She also advised that the Chief Officer had been appointed Chair of the North Wales Safeguarding Adult Board.

Councillor Hilary McGuill welcomed the findings of the report but said there was no mention of monitoring vulnerable children who were educated at home. The Senior Manager drew attention to the section on Policy and Procedure Sub-Group which referred to input by the Elected Home Education Task Group on the Welsh Government guidance. She said that regional protocols were in place to address actions identified, but would raise the concerns with the Task Group. In response to concerns about the safeguarding of adults living at home who may not realise they were vulnerable, a range of assessments were carried out to establish the best arrangements for each individual. Explanation was also given on a change in legislation on Adult Protection and Support Orders.

In respect of home education, Councillor Christine Jones explained that both she and Councillor Chris Bithell had been unsuccessful in their representations to the WG.

The Chief Officer agreed to pass on the concerns raised by Councillor Dave Mackie about the lack of an appropriate tool to monitor and assess performance of the Board, as indicated in the report. He summarised the roles and responsibilities of officers in respect of adult and children's services, and advised that two safeguarding conferences would be held during the Autumn to which all Members would be invited. The Senior Manager acknowledged Councillor Mackie's remarks on references to children and adults throughout the report, but explained that the document had been prepared by the NWSB and that a similar format was adopted by other regions. On section 4 of the report, she explained that a range of work was being undertaken in Flintshire, including the filling of vacant posts to support the NWSB.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the content of the progress report prepared by the North Wales Safeguarding Board's Business Manager be noted;
- (b) That a further report be received within 12 months on the progress of identified priorities; and
- (c) That the concerns raised by the Committee be fed back to the North Wales Safeguarding Board for further consideration.

15. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES IN FLINTSHIRE

Prior to consideration of the report, Councillor Christine Jones took the opportunity to praise Rhian Evans (Team Manager, Mental Health Services) for her nomination in the Leadership Public Sector category of the Leading Wales awards. She was delighted that Rhian's exceptional work in Flintshire's mental health services had been recognised, particularly in relation to Double Click.

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced the report which detailed progress on the three strands of Mental Health Support Services in response to Member requests. In presenting the report, the Service Manager (Disability Services and Children's Integrated Disability Services) explained that the three

strands worked closely to support the recovery of individuals with mental health issues by building up their wellbeing and confidence. She gave an overview of the range of support available from the Intensive Support Team, the Community Living Team & Medium Support Team and the Occupation & Employment Team. She was pleased to report that in 2015/16, individual support goals had been fully or partly met for the vast majority of people supported by the service. Information was also shared on the multi-agency team providing the Substance Misuse Service.

Following positive feedback given by the Chairman on the work of the Social Links team, the Service Manager spoke about well-established links with Health and third sector organisations.

Councillor Christine Jones said that the proactive work carried out by the small team in the Substance Misuse Service should be more widely recognised.

Councillor David Healey thanked officers for raising the important issues in the report and commended the Growing Places garden furniture restoration project. He pointed out that he had not received a response to his question about the waiting list for Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) raised with Health representatives at the previous meeting. Officers explained that the Health Board held funding for purchasing places on training courses.

Councillor Hilary McGuill asked about availability of support for dealing with the effects of 'legal highs'. The Service Manager advised that the team used a vehicle to enable a qualified social worker to target specific communities and offer advice and support where needed. Councillor McGuill also felt it would be helpful if users of drop-in centres (such as Alcoholics Anonymous) and perhaps youth clubs could refer themselves to the service if they needed support. The Service Manager agreed to take forward this suggestion for consideration and agreed to pass on the positive comments from three service users who had described the team's support workers as their best friends.

Councillor Christine Jones said that the excellent DVD entitled 'Sorted' which dealt with cannabis misuse, would be circulated to schools and made available on the internet.

RESOLVED:

That the progress of Mental Health Support Services be noted.

16. ANNUAL COUNCIL REPORTING FRAMEWORK

The Chief Officer (Social Services) presented the final version of the Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) which incorporated comments arising from the recent Member workshop. He thanked Members for their input and explained that this would be the final ACRF report as this was no longer a requirement. The report would be submitted to Cabinet for final approval.

Councillor Dave Mackie pointed out that abbreviations for looked after children contained in the report should not be used. Officers provided

explanation on 'Cycle', the risk management element of the performance management system.

RESOLVED:

That the final version of the Annual Council Reporting Framework report be accepted.

17. ROTA VISITS

Councillor Hilary McGuill reported that she had not received information on forthcoming rota visits. The Facilitator would pursue this with the relevant officer in Social Services so that an email could be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

18. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Facilitator introduced a report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme. The following actions were agreed:

- The Quarter 4/Year End Improvement Plan Monitoring Report to be deferred from July to the September meeting to enable the relevant officers to attend.
- The agenda for the July meeting to include an item to populate the Forward Work Programme of the Committee, including items such as the Flintshire Local Voluntary Council discussed earlier in the meeting.
- The items on the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Fostering Strategy scheduled for the September meeting to include the presentations previously given to the Children's Services Forum.
- The item on Repeat Referrals in Children's Services for the September meeting to report progress on actions arising from the inspection along with future challenges.
- Arrangements for the site visits to the Dementia Café and Safeguarding team to be circulated to the Committee.
- Confirmation to be sent by email to Members about the Climbie visits on 6 July 2016 at 1pm.

Councillors Christine Jones and David Wisinger gave a reminder of the forthcoming Pride of Flintshire Awards on 2 July 2016, adding that donations could still be made via Member Services. When asked if feedback from the event would be reported to the July meeting, the Chief Officer said that a debriefing would take place with initial views shared at the Children's Services Forum prior to further consideration.

Following a recent visit, Councillor Jones gave positive feedback on the quality of care provided at both Marleyfield and Croes Atti care homes.

Councillors David Mackie and David Wisinger both expressed their disappointment at the number of Members who were not in attendance at this meeting. The Chairman suggested that this be relayed to Group Leaders.

RESOLVED:

That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly.

19. 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 am and ended at 12.06 pm)

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Chair