

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 JUNE 2019

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, 6 June 2019

PRESENT:

Councillors: Mike Allport , Jean Davies, Rob Davies Andy Dunbobbin, Gladys Healey, Cindy Hinds, Brian Lloyd, Mike Lowe, Hilary McGuill, Martin White and David Wisinger

SUBSTITUTES: Councillors: Veronica Gay (for Dave Mackie) and David Healey (for Ian Smith)

APOLOGY: Senior Manager, Children and Workforce

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services; Chief Officer (Social Services); Senior Manager, Integrated Services, Lead Adults; and Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning. For minute no. 6: Planning and Development Officers – Social Services

IN ATTENDANCE: Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officer

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chair asked all present to stand in a minute's silence to mark D Day 75 in honour of those men and women who had fought and made sacrifices on 6 June 1944, in France during World War II.

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Democratic Services Manager advised that it had been confirmed at the Annual Meeting of the County Council that the Chair of the Committee should come from the Liberal Democrats Group. As Councillor Hilary McGuill had been appointed to this role by the Group, the Committee was asked to note this.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the appointment of Councillor Hilary McGuill be confirmed as the Chair of the Committee.

(From this point, Councillor Hilary McGuill chaired the remainder of the meeting)

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Councillor David Wisinger nominated Councillor Gladys Healey as Vice-Chair of the Committee and this was duly seconded.

Councillor Veronica Gay nominated Councillor Dave Mackie as Vice-Chair of the Committee and this was duly seconded.

On being put to the vote Councillor Gladys Healey was appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

Councillor Gladys Healey thanked the Committee for their renewed confidence in her.

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Gladys Healey be appointed Vice-Chair of the Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

None.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 28 March 2019 were received.

Matters Arising

Minute number 61: the Chair referred to the closure of the Windmill in Buckley and asked if alternative arrangements had been found for the affected individuals and their families. The Senior Manager, Integrated Services, Lead Adults, explained that two social workers had been appointed to look at the arrangements for the individuals who attended the Windmill and everyone had been found alternative daytime care support and feedback had been positive.

RESOLVED:

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

5. ANNUAL DIRECTORS REPORT

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report on the Annual Director's Report for Social Care Services 2018/19. He provided background information and advised that the purpose of the Social Services Annual Report was to set out the improvement journey and evaluate Social Services' performance in providing services to people that promote their wellbeing and support them to achieve their personal outcomes.

The draft Social Service Annual Report 2018/19 was appended to the report and was intended to provide the public, the regulator and wider stakeholders with an honest picture of services in Flintshire and to demonstrate a clear understanding of the strengths and challenges faced. The Chief Officer advised that the report would form an integral part of the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) performance evaluation of Flintshire's Social Services. The evaluation also informed the Wales Audit Office's assessment of Flintshire County Council as part of the annual improvement report.

The Chief Officer explained that the Annual Report had been prepared following an in-depth review of current performance by the Social Services Senior Management Team, Service Manager, and Performance Officers. The

improvement priorities contained within the report were aligned to the priorities contained within the Portfolio Business Plan, the Council's Improvement Plan, and associated efficiency plans. The Chief Officer reported on the improvement priorities identified for 2019/20 as detailed in the report.

Councillor David Healey thanked the Chief Officer and his team for their work and for a comprehensive report. He commented on the crisis in continuing health care in some areas of the United Kingdom and the risk to provision of care services in the private sector due to lack of funding. He asked if the Authority was also at risk and what support was provided to assist people to remain independent and continue to live in their homes and specifically patients who were discharged from hospital. He suggested that the criteria for eligibility for care at home be looked at to enable more people to receive support from care providers and to have adaptations in their homes. The Chief Officer thanked Councillor Healey for his positive comments and in response to his questions said that the risk to care services provided in the wider sector due to lack of funding was real for the Authority and nationally. He commented on the recent lobbying by the Chief Executive and Members to the Welsh Government to make the case for more funding for key services to local authorities and to state that current funding was unsustainable.

In summary the Chief Officer provided reassurance regarding the provision of social care services in Flintshire. The Senior Manager, Integrated Services, Lead Adults, responded to Councillor Healey's question regarding support to help people maintain their independence and continue to live at home and referred to reablement when people are discharged from hospital, recycling of aids and equipment to assist independence, and disabled facilities grants.

The Chair advised that she had asked that an item on the continuing health care budget be considered at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 18 July and said that the consultation would be sent to the Committee prior to the meeting for information.

Councillor Martin White spoke on the need for care and support services and the preventative work which could be achieved with adequate funding. He also spoke in support of the excellent care services provided in Flintshire and commented on the high standard of care and facilities experienced by some of his family members.

Councillor David Wisinger asked what support was available for people with mental health problems. The Chief Officer acknowledged the concerns raised by Councillor Wisinger regarding the need for people to seek urgent support outside office hours. He gave an assurance that the Authority was doing all it could to support mental health services and referred to the services and future initiatives which were supported. He said that further discussion could be raised at the North Wales Mental Health Service transformation project. The Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning provided further information on the Service and the programme. The Chair asked what links the Authority had with the Samaritans. It was agreed that the Senior Manager, Integrated Services, Lead Adults would make enquiries to determine whether the Authority had any formal links between its mental health services and the Samaritans and whether it provided any funding.

In response to a question raised by Councillor Gladys Healey concerning out of county placements for young people the Chief Officer advised that a new small residential care facility was being developed in the Deeside area and work was in progress with an experienced voluntary organisation. The Chief Officer also referred to the Mockingbird project which provided specialist fostering placements for young people with challenging behaviour. The Chief Officer continued that there were a number of services and initiatives used to support young people collectively. He also referred to the Children and Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and said that although the waiting list for CAMHS had reduced the waiting lists for other services had increased.

Councillor Cindy Hinds commented on the issue of cyber bullying. The Chief Officer said there was an initiative around cyberbullying within the Regional Safeguarding Children's Board and commented on the work being undertaken with the Health Board and other agencies and local authorities to combat abuse through social media. The Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning, commented on safeguarding and the need to be aware of early signs and spoke of the further work to be undertaken in this area to protect both young and vulnerable people.

RESOLVED:

That the draft Social Services Annual Report be approved.

6. MARLEYFIELD HOUSE EXPANSION PROGRESS UPDATE

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report to update on progress in relation to the extension to Marleyfield House Care Home, Buckley. He introduced Michael Jones and Gareth Stapley-Jones, Planning & Development Officers, Social Services, to the meeting.

The Senior Manager, Integrated Services, Lead Adults provided background information and said the development of Marleyfield House would increase existing capacity by an additional 32 beds and provide accommodation to support 64 people in total. Following an initial feasibility study, approval was granted to engage a construction firm to take the project forward. A revised, modern, and innovative design had been proposed which maximised the landscape topography and provided purpose built efficient accommodation for the range of services being delivered. The plans allow increased operations functionality, a closer link with existing facilities, and supported recovery for short term residents and well-being for long-term residents. Investment for the development had been sourced through a Capital Grant as part of Welsh Government's Integrated Care Fund (ICF) with additional investment from the Council's Capita Programme. An application was also being made to the Innovative Housing Programme (IHP) to further support the project.

The Planning and Development Officers presented an artist's impression of the extension, explaining the plans and layout.

Members spoke in support of the project and the innovative approach to supporting individuals in residential settings. During discussion, Officers

responded to the questions raised around staffing levels, catchment areas, provision for people with dementia, and day care and respite facilities.

Councillor David Healey asked why solar panels had not been incorporated into the design. It was agreed that further information on the possible use of solar panels would be sought from the Design Commission for Wales.

The Chair expressed concerns that the proposed parking arrangements may not be sufficient and asked whether the provision could be increased without compromising planning requirements. Officers acknowledged the points made and explained that a number of staff had indicated that they wished to cycle to work which would further reduce the number of parking spaces required.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee supports the progress made on the Marleyfield House expansion Project as a strategic priority for Social Services.

7. THIRD SECTOR UPDATE

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report to provide an annual review of the social care activities undertaken by the third sector in Flintshire. He spoke of the thriving voluntary/third sector which provided invaluable support and services to Flintshire residents and the good working relationship between the Authority and Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC). The report provided an overview of the range and breadth of services funded by Social Services and detailed the recent activity undertaken to review services commissioned through the third sector to ensure they continued to meet the needs of the people in Flintshire. The report also detailed the approach taken to co-produce new and innovative services and gave an update on learning disability day and work opportunities and the plans for commissioning carers services in 2019/20.

The Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning, explained that Flintshire had developed a strong working relationship with its third sector partners and continued to invest in the sector by commissioning, where appropriate, to deliver services in the community as they were often best placed to engage and support individuals and their carers. She reported on the main considerations, as detailed in the report, around the work of the FLVC, Carers Services, Disability Services, Adults Advocacy, Children's Advocacy, Action for Children Strategic Partnership, Single Point of Access, and Mental Health.

In response to a query raised by the Chair, further information on the Single Point of Access service was provided.

Councillor Veronica Gay commented on the North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS). The Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning, explained that Flintshire Social Services delivered a range of support services for carers both in-house and commissioned through external third sector organisations. She reported on the highly valued work provided by NEWCIS to support carers, individuals, and families, and said that NEWCIS

worked in close partnership with the Authority to deliver some of the key services required under the Social Services and Well Being Act.

Councillor Martin White spoke in support of the valuable work provided by the social care third sector for the local population and suggested that the Chair sends a letter of thanks to the FLVC on behalf of the Committee. This was agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the social care activities that are being delivered within the third sector in Flintshire; and
- (b) That the FLVC be thanked for their role.

8. ROTA VISITS

Councillor Mike Lowe provided feedback on his visit with Councillor Andy Dunbobbin to the North East Wales Community Equipment Services (NEWCES) centre in Hawarden. He said they had been impressed with the high standard of service and the thorough procedures to ensure cleanliness of equipment provided to individuals. He said the Manager of the Centre had given them a presentation and tour of the building which had been very informative.

Councillor Christine Jones thanked Councillor Lowe for his positive comments and said she had invited the Manager of NEWCES to give a presentation on the Service to a future meeting of the Committee.

Councillor Mike Allport reported on his visit to Croes Atti Care Home and said the visit had been positive and he had no concerns to raise. He said he had received a warm welcome and staff were enthusiastic and helpful. He had spoken to individual residents/users who were pleased with the care and services provided.

The Chair provided feedback on her visit to Llys Gwenffrwd Care Home. She said residents were happy and pleased with the services and commented on the improvements to access outside the building which were excellent. She said Llys Gwenffrwd had extended an open invitation to their Summer Fayre to be held on 22 June.

RESOLVED:

That the update be noted.

9. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE)

In presenting the Forward Work Programme, the Democratic Services Manager advised that a report on the Continuing Health Care Crisis would be included on the agenda for the next meeting to be held on 18 July. He said a link to the consultation on Continuing Health Care would be sent to the Committee beforehand.

The Officer referred to the item on Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and Welsh Ambulance Services NHS which was also scheduled for the next meeting and advised that the Chief Officer (Social Services) had suggested that the Committee may wish to invite the Countess of Chester Hospital to attend the meeting. This was agreed by the Committee. Members were asked to forward questions for BCUHB and Countess of Chester to the Social & Health Facilitator in advance of the meeting.

Following a suggestion by Councillor Christine Jones it was agreed that a presentation by the Manager of NEWCES be included on the Forward Work Programme for a future meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft Forward Work programme as submitted be approved.
- (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 Countess of Chester Hospital be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee on 18 July 2019.

10. 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 2.30 pm and ended at 4.10pm)

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Chair