

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 OCTOBER 2013

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, 24 October 2013

PRESENT: **Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)**

Councillors: Andy Dunbobbin, Veronica Gay, Cindy Hinds, Hilary Isherwood, Stella Jones, Brian Lloyd, Hilary McGuill, Dave Mackie and David Wisinger

APOLOGIES:

Councillors: Marion Bateman, Peter Curtis, Mike Lowe and Ian Smith

CONTRIBUTORS:

Cabinet Member for Social Services, Director of Community Services, Head of Social Services for Children, Head of Social Services for Adults, Social Workers

For minute number 27 - Claire Sullivan - Chief Officer for North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS), Janet Fletcher - Acute Family Support Officer – Hafal and Evelyn Oldale – a Carer

For minute number 30 - Internal Audit Manager and Senior Auditor

IN ATTENDANCE:

Environment and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

25. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Councillor Hilary McGuill declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 – Carers Services in Flintshire as she was a carer.

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 – Social Services Improvement Agency as he was a kinship carer.

26. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2013 had been circulated with the agenda.

RESOLVED:

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

27. CARERS SERVICES IN FLINTSHIRE

The Chair introduced Claire Sullivan (Chief Officer at North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS)), Janet Fletcher (from Hafal) and Evelyn Oldale who was a Carer.

Ms. Sullivan welcomed the opportunity to speak to the Committee to explain how Members could signpost carers to NEWCIS.

Ms. Oldale provided a detailed presentation to the Committee, in form of a job advert, of the work undertaken by a carer. She explained that the hours were long, that no formal qualifications were required and that the successful applicant might need to carry out the tasks of two people such as when lifting of the patient was required and that the environment was stressful. The pay was poor and that there was no occupational pension available and that days off were limited and there was no prospect of promotion and once the carer reached the age of 65, any allowances that they received were stopped.

Ms. Sullivan then provided a detailed presentation on NEWCIS explaining that they provided information and support to carers and that they signposted carers to the most appropriate service if required. NEWCIS was the point of contact for all carers and she provided information on carers which included:-

- There had been a seven percent increase in the numbers of adult carers in Flintshire since the last census in 2001
- Young carers from the ages of 12 to 17 totalled 4,745 in 2012
- NEWCIS had 25% of adult carers registered in Flintshire (which was one of the highest figures in Wales)
- In the first six months of this financial year, NEWCIS had received 543 referrals from GPs, Social Services, Community Hospitals, voluntary sector and self referrals from carers. 380 of these had received a home visit and assessment of their needs and were signposted to other services

She explained that there was a Flintshire Carers Strategy Group and she detailed those on the group and added that the group linked Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) via NEWCIS who attended and contributed to regional work currently being developed. The action plan for NEWCIS was updated on a regular basis and the NEWCIS website was linked to the Flintshire County Council website. All registered carers were sent a quarterly newsletter to inform carers of all training, groups, events and local service information. Newsletters were also sent to all GP's practices, community hospitals, social services, libraries, community centres, local organisations, private businesses and local councillors to ensure that carers saw the information that was available.

Ms. Sullivan explained that NEWCIS:-

- undertook carers needs assessments
- provided carer specific training, one to one support and home visits
- arranged carer groups and drop in sessions
- Managed Bridging the Gap respite service
- Prepared a quarterly newsletter
- Provided a 48 hour break scheme at Llys Eleanor in partnership with Clwyd Alyn and Flintshire County Council

Ms. Fletcher then provided a detailed presentation on Hafal with the main features being as follows:-

- Hafal – What's our mission?

- What do we do
- Hafal in Flintshire
- What services do we provide?
- Family Support
- Group activities
- Acute Family Support
- Get2gether
- Partnership meetings
- Respite fund
- Group respite
- Networking
- National Services

The Chair thanked Ms. Sullivan, Ms. Fletcher and Ms. Oldale for their presentations. She said that she hoped that the funding continued as NEWCIS and Hafal provided a lifeline for many people in Flintshire.

Councillor Stella Jones asked whether Ms. Fletcher felt that the small team at Hafal could provide the services that were needed to those carers living in areas such as Gronant due to the distance from the team's base at Wrexham. Ms. Fletcher said that she worked from the Deeside Community Mental Health Team office and attended Home Treatment Team clinical review meeting at least once a week at Wrexham. In response to a question from Councillor Hilary Isherwood about whether Hafal worked with young carers, Ms. Fletcher said that Hafal worked with carers aged 18 or over and that she would refer any young carers to NEWCIS or Barnardos.

Councillor Hilary McGuill asked for information on the 'buddy' scheme for those who went into Llys Eleanor as part of the 48 hour break project. In response, Ms. Sullivan explained that when it was identified that a carer needed a break, the carer and their relative would visit Llys Eleanor along with a volunteer who would then visit them during the stay. The buddy scheme was currently only available to those on the 48 hour break project but the staff at Llys Eleanor had asked that it be extended to the residents who lived there, which Ms. Sullivan was to consider. Talks were ongoing with Llys Jasmine about extending the scheme to that facility and Ms. Sullivan said that she would like it to be a whole Wales scheme.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood spoke of the respite projects and asked whether help was available for transport costs for those that lived in rural areas and did not have a regular bus service. Ms. Fletcher said that each case would be looked at but that it was possible to sometimes refund petrol costs, train fares or taxi costs through certain companies if the carer did not have a car and was not able to use a bus. Councillor Isherwood queried whether it was possible to send a leaflet on agencies such as NEWCIS and Hafal to all residents with their Council Tax bill as this would ensure the information was available to every household. Councillor Stella Jones also suggested that information on all agencies including NEWCIS and Hafal should be made available to all Councillors as part of the information they received following an election. In response to a question from Councillor McGuill, Ms. Sullivan said that a Carers Information Day was to be held on 29th November 2013 and Ms. Oldale said that

regular visits were made to hospitals and supermarkets to promote the work undertaken by carers and organisations such as NEWCIS and Hafal.

Ms. Sullivan commented on the Social Care and Wellbeing Bill 2016 and said that it was intended that the Care Strategy for Wales Bill be repealed but this was being challenged as the Bill suggested that there be a charge for information, care advice and services. She asked Members to support that a charge not be put in place. The Chair proposed that the Committee send a letter expressing their objection to charging for the service.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the presentation be received; and
- (b) That the Committee send a letter expressing their objection to charging for information, care advice and services.

28. SOCIAL SERVICES IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

The Head of Social Services for Children introduced a report to advise the Committee of Children's Services involvement in the Social Services Improvement Agency project.

Two of the social workers, Brigid Gore and Mike Jones, were introduced to the Committee. The Head of Social Services for Children detailed the background to the report, explaining that four social workers had worked for approximately ten months using an outcomes-based approach with three of their cases. Mr. Jones provided details of the case that he had worked on, explaining how he had used the "Turning the Curve" exercises as a visualisation tool to encourage interaction between the children and parent. He felt that from his point of view, this worked well but added that it was important for the social worker to choose the appropriate tools to create the greatest impact. Ms. Gore spoke about a case that she had inherited and the work undertaken by the social worker, Duty Team and the Family Intervention Team with the parent and child. She explained that their relationship had now dramatically improved and the child was much happier. Councillor Hilary McGuill felt that the work undertaken had taught the individuals to care and to think about the results of their actions and the effect it would have on others as it was automatically assumed that everyone knew how to be a parent but this was not always the case.

Councillor Hilary Isherwood commented that in most cases she felt that it was crucially important that the mother and child were not separated. In response to a comment from Councillor Andy Dunbobbin, the Head of Social Services for Children detailed work undertaken with 'Action for Children' and explained about accessing Mental Health Services. She added that each case was reviewed by an Independent Review Officer.

In response to a comment from Councillor Cindy Hinds about a recent case of a child that had died in Bradford but had not been discovered for two years, the Head of Social Services for Children said that it was a learning organisation and that issues which had been broadcast nationally were shared at team meetings. She reminded Members that social workers did not have an

automatic right to enter a property if there were concerns and that they would liaise with the Police if necessary about accessing a property. Mr. Jones said that social workers gained experience through their work and that there was a need for all other agencies to be part of a planned process to improve the life of children. The Director of Community Services said that there was a need to learn from tragic cases from across the country and also to learn from good practice. He thanked Mr. Jones and Ms. Gore for sharing their experiences with the Committee.

RECEIVED:

That the evaluation report be received and the involvement in the pilot be endorsed.

29. WORKSHOP OUTCOME FOR DOUBLE CLICK AND AGREEMENT TO PROGRESS

The Director of Community Services introduced a report to advise Members of the outcome of the Members workshop held at Double Click on 2 October 2013.

The Chair explained that this was the third time that the report had been considered by Members and said that any questions should have been raised at the workshop.

The Director said that a number of issues had been discussed which included the impact on service users, the Business Plan and the opportunities provided by the changes and he highlighted section three of the report. He explained that the business plan had been discussed in detail and added that there were more practical opportunities available to Double Click if the transfer from a Social Services run work scheme to a Social Enterprise company was approved.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be supported and it be recommended that Cabinet agree to transfer Double Click from a Social Services run work scheme to a Social Enterprise company in the form of a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Councillor Dave Mackie voted against the recommendation.

30. INTERNAL AUDIT OF SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Head of Adult Services introduced a report to provide Members with an opportunity to consider the outcome of the internal audit of Adult Safeguarding Arrangements which was completed in July 2013.

He detailed the background to the report and explained that the audit reflected on areas of good practice, where improvement was needed and areas where management needed to ensure full application of existing controls. Paragraph 3.05 detailed the actions which had been taken in response to the

improvement areas noted and the need for application of existing controls to ensure that there was no likelihood of increased risk materialising in this area.

In response to a comment from Councillor Dave Mackie about timings for electronic connectivity for all partner agencies needs to be prioritised and actively pursued, the Head of Adult Services said that it was not possible to include a timescale but added that guidance was now in place from Welsh Government on a simplified assessment process.

The Chair spoke about a meeting of Chairs and Vice-Chairs where it had been suggested that Internal Audit consider the risk to the Council from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

Councillor Hilary McGuill spoke of the responsibility of the authority under Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) in relation to the sexual health of adults in sheltered accommodation or with learning disabilities. She felt that there should be a process in place. In response, the Head of Adult Services said that the issue would be managed and that steps would be put in place but added that he would speak to the team to establish whether further structures would be appropriate. The Internal Audit Manager said that it was the role of Internal Audit to see that processes were in place, not to design them but if it was an area of concern, the overall system could be looked at. He said that the Internal Audit report was good and said that at the time of writing the report in May 2013 there had been four recommendations outstanding. He welcomed the good progress that had been made.

The Chair welcomed the opportunity for the Committee to be able to refer issues to Internal Audit and Audit Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the overall findings of the Internal Audit report published in August 2013 and management actions taken to address improvements and application of existing controls be noted.

31. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Environment and Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator introduced the report to consider the Forward Work Programme of the Committee.

The Facilitator reminded Members of the following:-

- Corporate Parenting and Public Law Outline seminar scheduled for 25 October 2013
- Effective Overview & Scrutiny training on 31 October and 1 November 2013
- The Welfare Reform workshop scheduled for 1pm on Friday, 8 November 2013

She detailed the items scheduled for consideration at the 25 November 2013 meeting but advised that the CSSIW Annual Letter may be moved to the

January 2014 meeting if the CSSIW officers were unable to attend in November 2013. The budget meeting was due to take place on 5 December 2013 with the next ordinary meeting taking place on 9 January 2014. The Facilitator detailed the items for consideration at the meetings scheduled upto March 2014. She also advised that an update on Home Enhanced Care would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

Following a request for any other items that Members wanted to discuss, the following were suggested:-

- Update on rota visits
- Public health including oral hygiene
- Information on whether the people with family members with bowel cancer were being targeted to receive the testing kit
- Whether risk assessments for those working at home were undertaken – the Chair indicated that this issue would be referred to Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Problems with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) and cross border services that were changed without giving prior notice to service users

In response to the information on bowel cancer, the Director of Community Services said that the issue could be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee but added that he would ask Public Health colleagues for an update.

The Director then provided an update to Members on the meeting which had been held the previous evening with the new Chairman and the acting Chief Executive of BCUHB. The meeting was to allow stakeholders to give their views and to allow engagement with local authorities and third sector partners. The Director felt that it was a positive meeting.

On the issue of rota visits, Councillor Dave Mackie said that he had undertaken a number of visits with some being at the same location; he queried whether there were other addresses that could be visited. The Director explained that rota visits only applied to in-house facilities but that the facilities visited would be re-considered.

The Facilitator advised that BCUHB had in the past been invited to the Committee meetings but that this practice had stopped pending the meeting with the new Chairman of BCUHB. As this had now taken place, an invitation could be extended to BCUHB to attend future meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That the Environment and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator and the Chair consider the inclusion of the suggested items at future meetings of the Committee;
- (c) That the issue or risk assessments for those undertaking agile working be referred to the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

32. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There was one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.11 pm)

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Chairman