

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
31 JANUARY 2019

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 Thursday, 31 January 2019

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Marion Bateman, Jean Davies, Andy Dunbobbin, Gladys Healey, Kevin Hughes, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Ian Smith, Martin White, and David Wisinger

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor David Healey (for Cindy Hinds)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Cindy Hinds, Rita Johnson and Hilary McGuill. Chief Officer (Social Services)

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Senior Manager – Children and Workforce, Senior Manager Integrated Services, Service Manager – Early Years and Family Support, and Lead Parenting Practitioner – Early Years and Family Support.

IN ATTENDANCE: Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator, and Democratic Services Officer

49. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

50. MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 December 2018 were received.

RESOLVED:

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

51. THE NORTH WALES COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCIL: IMPROVING HEALTH SERVICES FOR PEOPLE IN NORTH WALES

The Chair welcomed and introduced Carol Williams, Deputy Chief Officer, Community Health Council, and Linda Harper, Chair Flintshire Local Committee, to the meeting. She invited them to give a presentation on The Community Health Council (CHC): Improving health service for people in North Wales. The main points of the presentation were:

- North Wales CHC
- what the CHC does
- how the CHC works

- Flintshire examples of CHC work
- CHC key points

The Chair thanked the Deputy Chief Officer and Chair of Flintshire Local Committee for their presentation and invited Members to raise questions.

The Deputy Chief Officer raised awareness of the campaign for MRI scans for prostate and said a number of patients had had to fund scans themselves. She advised that the CHC had made representations and people now had their costs reimbursed. She added that the CHC continued to support families affected by the Tawel Fan ward. The Deputy Chief Officer commented on the need for car parking charges at hospitals to be reasonable and the importance of keeping town centres active. Following a suggestion by the Chair of the Committee it was agreed that a letter be sent to the Assembly Members in North Wales prior to the e-petition being considered by the Welsh Government on 13 February urging Welsh Government to intervene to ensure prostate cancer scanning was not subject to a postcode lottery in Wales.

Councillor David Healey commented on the provision of mental health in Flintshire and said it was difficult to form a view. He felt that either there was a greater awareness or there was a sharp increase in the demand for mental health services. He asked how the provision for mental health in Flintshire compared with mental health services provided by other local authorities as mental health waiting lists for face to face services were a concern. Councillor Healey also referred to Parabl and commented that there seemed to be doubt as to whether this organization would continue.

The Deputy Chief Officer referred to the joint mental health team meeting which had been held between Flintshire County Council and BCUHB and added that Parabl was a third sector organization which offered talking therapies for people with mild to moderate mental health problems. She acknowledged there was a long waiting list for some mental health services and said this was an ongoing issue. She added that following discussions between the Chair of the Health Board and the CHC, the Chair of the Health Board had agreed to provide more information regarding Mental Health Services within BCUHB.

The Chair of the Flintshire Local Committee referred to the special measures imposed on the Health Board and said mental health was a contributing reason. She agreed that the description “patchy” in terms of mental health provision in Flintshire was relevant at both primary and community level. She reported that the Vice Chair of the Community Health Council was leading on Mental Health and anticipated that more positive news would be reported in the next 12 months.

Councillor Kevin Hughes referred to mental health services for young people and waiting lists for services. He also asked what influence the CHC had to address the issue of emergency waiting times in hospitals

The Deputy Chief Officer explained that A&E departments took part in a national exercise last year and spot checks were carried out on all Emergency Departments (including North Wales). She commented that the situation was

a cause of significant concern and it could not be said that matters had been resolved. She said that representatives of the CHC were meeting in the near future to review the situation in North Wales. The Deputy Chief Officer suggested that in the future the CHC would be keen to work with social services and local Members to scrutinise emergency departments.

Referring to the comments by Councillor Kevin Hughes on children and young people's mental health, the Chair of Flintshire Local Committee advised that CAMHS was the main organisation but said there didn't seem to be enough provision to meet demand. She said it was a situation which was an area of increasing concern and the CHC was seeking more information and clarity about how implementation worked. In relation to mental health services generally she felt there was a need for a core strategy which put mental health within it rather than alongside it.

The Deputy Chief Officer commented on the severe delays in referrals for autism services and speech therapy services across North Wales. The Community Health Council advised that they had raised concerns regarding the delays in referring patients.

Councillor Gladys Healey commented that the CHC was the "voice of the people" and needed to be stronger. She asked why there was a long waiting list for hip and knee operations. She also commented on mental health services and said there needed to be more coordinated working and thinking around mental health issues and referred to the problems created by marriage breakdown, poverty etc. She said that waiting a long time for an appointment created stress and worsened mental health issues.

The Deputy Chief Officer acknowledged the points made and offered to attend the meeting of the Committee to be held on 18 July, to which representatives of the BCUHB and Welsh Ambulance services had been invited to attend.

Councillor Ian Smith asked if the role of the CHC was well known amongst the general public. The Deputy Chief Officer responded that there was always further work to be done to raise awareness. She emphasised that one of the CHCs biggest resources was volunteers and advised that the CHC had a budget of £3m to cover all expenditure across Wales. She spoke of the CHCs dependence on volunteers and said that awareness was being raised through "word of mouth". She commented on the use of social media and said people seemed to find the CHC when needed.

The Chair commented that she felt that the voice of CHC was stronger than it used to be and was pleased to hear how much work was being done on behalf of residents. The Deputy Chief Officer emphasised that the CHC worked collaboratively with BCUHB but was an independent organization.

In response to a query from Councillor Marion Bateman regarding figures for waiting times for triage at accident and emergency departments, the Deputy Chief Officer agreed to provide the information available from the results of a recent survey.

Councillor Bateman also commented on staff morale and expressed concerns for the welfare of staff. She said that during a recent visit to a hospital staff were working long hours and appeared to be under stress. The Deputy Chief Officer advised that the issue of staff morale had been raised with the Chair of BCUHB and she would share the response with the Committee. She added that he had given assurances that he would address the issue.

Councillor David Mackie commented that at a recent question and answer session the new Chief Executive had commented on the learning he could bring from his background as chief constable to inform services such as mental health going forward.

Councillor Dave Mackie commented on the positive role played by the CHC in ensuring full maternity services remained in North Wales. He said that from the visits he had undertaken as a member of the CHC the biggest issue was a lack of experienced and trained staff and questioned whether sufficient people were being trained.

Councillor David Healey suggested that representatives of the CHC be invited to attend the meeting of the Committee to be held on 18 July and that BCUHB be informed of the intention to also invite representatives of the CHC to the meeting.

The Chair read out a written question which had been submitted by Councillor Cindy Hinds concerning private care agencies. The Community Health Council agreed to provide a written response to Cllr Hinds.

The Chair thanked the Deputy Chief Officer and the Chair of the Flintshire Local Committee for their attendance and responses to Members questions. The Deputy Chief Officer said the CHC would welcome the opportunity for more collaborative working in the future.

RESOLVED

That the presentation be received.

52. PARENTING STRATEGY

The Senior Manager, Children and Workforce, introduced the report to provide an update on the Flintshire Parenting Strategy Framework and the work being undertaken to provide quality, consistent parenting support across Flintshire, taking into consideration future funding proposals in relation to funding flexibilities and the required outcomes. The Senior Manager introduced the Service Manager, Early Years and Family Support, and invited her to present the report.

The Service Manager provided background information and explained that since 2007 two Parenting Strategies had been published in Flintshire with Flintshire's Parenting Framework launched in 2018 (appended to the report). The Parenting Framework detailed the sustainability and further developments

of parenting programmes and formed part of the wider strategy for early intervention and prevention in Flintshire. The work was overseen by the Parenting in Flintshire multi-agency Strategic Group.

The Service Manager advised that the work in Flintshire was aligned to the Welsh Government Parenting in Wales guidance on engagement and support. The success of the Strategies and the Framework in enabling good quality parenting support was due to the alignment of policy with local implementation, dedicated funding, a dedicated parenting coordinator role, strategic oversight through the Parenting in Flintshire multi-agency group and the collaboration between many services delivering quality information, advice and parenting support.

The Service Manager reported on the main considerations, as detailed in the report, concerning the Parenting Strategy, policy context.

The Service Manager took the opportunity to read out a letter of support from Professor Judy Hutchings, Director of the Centre for Evidence Based Early Intervention at Bangor University for the work on the Flintshire Parenting Strategy and Framework and the work of the multi-agency strategic group, the coordination role and the outcomes. The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, also expressed her congratulations and appreciation to the Service Manager for the hard work and positive outcomes achieved.

Councillor Gladys Healey sought assurance that support was in place to assist multi-cultural families and that assistance was sought from other organisations to help with this task. The Service Manager explained that language could present a barrier and support was provided to overcome this. The Lead Parenting Practitioner gave an assurance that the need to provide multi-cultural support was a key consideration within the Service and referred to the resources and support that was provided in other languages. The Service Manager also commented on the need to provide multi-cultural support to address safeguarding issues.

Councillor Kevin Hughes asked what support was available for grandparents who held responsibility as main carers for grandchildren. The Service Manager explained that whilst there was no specific programme for grandparents the importance of their role was recognised and they were welcome and encouraged to engage with the Service to establish cross-generation links.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee supports the parenting work to date; and
- (b) That the Committee supports the report and the work being undertaken to provide quality, consistent parenting support across Flintshire, taking into consideration future funding proposals in relation to funding flexibilities and the required outcomes.

53. ROTA VISITS

There were no reports on rota visits. The Social & Health Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator advised that a new list of rota visits would be circulated to Members in the near future.

54. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Social & Health Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator presented the Forward Work Programme for consideration. She advised that the item on Learning Disability Day Care and Work Opportunities Alternative Delivery Model had been considered at the meeting of the Organisational Change Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 28 January 2018, and to avoid duplication of workload had been taken off the Forward Work Programme. She reported that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 28 March 2019, to consider the following items:

- Q3 Council Plan monitoring
- Marleyfield House expansion progress update
- Delayed transfer of Care/Single Point of Access

A short session will be held at the rise of the meeting to consider the format of the Social Services Director's Annual Report.

The Senior Manager, Children and Workforce, explained that following discussion at a previous meeting of the Committee he had met with representatives of Barnardo's and North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) and suggested that representatives of both organisations be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss the identification of young carers.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly;
- (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 representatives of Barnardo's and North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the identification of young carers.

55. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.
(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.35 am)

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Chair