

Committee: **Scrutiny Committee for Social Services and Health**

Date: 13 March 2003

Title: Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Social Services and Health held at 10.00 am at Pelham House, St Andrews Lane, Lewes, East Sussex

Subject: Minutes

Attending: Chartier Mrs Leigh McPherson Webb Whetstone.

Lead Officer - Bernardine Bacon, Scrutiny Lead Officer

Legal Adviser - Andrew Ogden, Deputy Director of Legal and Community Services

Also Present: - Councillor Barnes, Chairman of the Project Boards for the Best Values Reviews of Older People Services and Children in Public Care.

42. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

42.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lock.

43. MINUTES

43.1 RESOLVED – to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 12 December 2002 as a correct record.

44. REPORTS

44.1 Copies of the reports referred to below are included in the minute book.

45. RECENT HIGH COURT DECISION

45.1 The Director of Social Services informed the Committee about a recent high court decision concerning the County Council.

45.2 The Committee noted that a judicial review had been sought by the parents of two young adult women who for many years had received care from Social Services. The case had raised three main issues concerning (a) how to meet the complex needs of these women, (b) lifting and handling issues and (c) the concept of an User Independent Trust. The Director of Social Services informed the Committee that the court had recognised the County Council's lifting and handling policy as being lawful. In fact it was regarded as a model of good practice and as a consequence many national bodies and local authorities had now approached the County Council with a view to updating their own policies.

45.3 The Committee was also updated about the Coughlin Case and the work being carried out with the Strategic Health Authority to ensure that East Sussex was Coughlin compliant.

46. UPDATE ON BUDGET

46.1 The Director of Social Services updated the Committee about the proposals for next year's budget. The Committee noted that there would be an overall cash increase of 7.5% and that £ 500,000 was being invested into the fostering service. In addition, a £100,000 would be invested into the daily living equipment allowance. Within the Mental Health service, a £100,000 would be spent on community support whilst a £100,000 less would be spent on residential care. Within the Learning Disability service an extra £ 650,000 would be invested for new placements.

46.2 The Committee also noted that following the recommendations from the Joint Review the medium term plan was to reduce the use of residential care which in turn would free up more funds for increased support at home. Furthermore, the Director of Social Services informed the Committee that there would be a net increase of £ 2.4 million to services for older people. The money would be targeted at delayed discharges and supporting people at home. In addition, the Director of Social Services also informed the Committee about potential risks to next year's budget.

46.3 RESOLVED – to ask the Director of Social Services to update the Committee about possible risks and pressures on next years budget at the Committee's meeting due to be held in July.

47. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF OLDER PEOPLES SERVICES AND CHILDREN IN PUBLIC CARE

47.1 The Committee considered a report by the Scrutiny Lead Officer. Councillor Barnes was also in attendance as Chairman of the project boards for the two Reviews.

47.2 The Committee considered how it would monitor the implementation of the recommendations for both of the reviews. Councillor Barnes suggested that the Committee should monitor those targets, which after six months, had not been implemented or achieved. Councillor Barnes also suggested that when monitoring the Review of Services to Older People, the Committee may wish to concentrate upon crucial issues such as pooled budgets.

47.3 The Committee noted that at their last meeting in December 2002 they had agreed to establish a Project Board for the Scrutiny of Older People Services with the task of scrutinising the following elements in relation to Older People Services:-

- Community Collaborative Rehabilitation Team
- Living at Home Programme
- Out of Hours
- Rapid Response Service

47.4 The Committee therefore agreed that the Project Board for the Scrutiny of Older People Services consisting of Councillor McPherson, Councillor Leigh and Councillor Lock would monitor the recommendations of the review, concentrating on the elements mentioned above and would update the Committee at a future meeting.

47.5 The Committee also considered which elements of the Best Value review of Children in Public Care they would wish to monitor. The Committee were reminded that the

review had recommended that the Corporate Parenting Panel should monitor the implementation of the recommendations. The Committee agreed that they would receive the monitoring reports submitted to the Corporate Parenting Panel. The first report would be considered at the Committee's scheduled meeting due to be held on 25 September 2003. In addition, it was agreed that it would be useful to have an officer from the Corporate Parenting Panel in attendance.

47.6 RESOLVED – to note the findings and recommendations set out in the reports and monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the two Reviews as set out above.

48. SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2003 – 2004

48.1 The Committee considered a report by the Deputy Director of Legal and Community Services.

48.2 Councillor Garvican suggested that that the Committee should scrutinise the pressures placed on residential care home owners. Councillor Garvican had previously circulated a paper to the Committee, but it was agreed that this should be circulated again. The Committee also agreed that as this was such a wide ranging subject area it would be sensible to reconsider this item for inclusion into the scrutiny programme at a future meeting in say six to nine months time.

48.3 RESOLVED – to agree the Scrutiny Programme for 2003 – 2004 for Social Services and Health as set out in the report.

49. FORWARD PLAN

49.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 March 2003 to 30 June 2003.

49.2 RESOLVED – to note the Forward Plan.