

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

**Date:** 7 May 2003

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

**Subject:** Minutes

**Attending:** Mrs Leigh McPherson Webb Whetstone

Lead Officer - Bernardine Bacon, Scrutiny Lead Officer

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

Chief Officer - David Archibald, Director of Social Services

Also Present: - Councillor Glazier, Lead Cabinet Member for Social Services and Health

Councillor Slack, Chairman of the Project Board and Monitoring Member for the Best Value Review of Family Support Services.

51. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

51.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chartier, Garvican and Lock.

52. MINUTES

52.1 RESOLVED – to approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 13 March 2003 as a correct record.

53. REPORTS

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

54. THE MORETON CENTRE

54.1 The Committee received an update from the Lead Cabinet Member for Social Services and Health and the Director of Social Services about the Moreton Centre in St. Leonard's on Sea.

54.2 The Committee noted that the Cabinet Committee had agreed in December 2002 to cease operating the Moreton Centre as a residential care home for long stay residents. The Cabinet committee had also welcomed the allocation from the Department of Health of £1m to extend and develop the Moreton Centre to provide a 30 place intermediate care scheme for older people. More recently there had been a Judicial Review about the Cabinet Committee's decision which had resulted in the case being dismissed and the East Sussex

County Council position being upheld. The current position was that an application had been made to Court of Appeal and the Council was waiting to see if leave to appeal was granted.

54.3 The Lead Cabinet Member, Councillor Glazier, informed the Committee that until a conclusion had been reached concerning the appeal, no further decisions in relation to the Centre could be made. However, Councillor Glazier was able to assure the Committee that day care provision would be provided, although discussions continued as to the provider of these services. The business case would assist with the decision making process.

54.5 The Committee noted the comments made and requested that they were kept informed as to the outcome of the appeal and any subsequent decisions in relation to the centre.

54.6 RESOLVED – to note the update and current position of the Moreton Centre.

55. MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT :SCRUTINY REVIEW

55.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chair of the Project Board.

55.2 RESOLVED – to note the report of the Project Board and submit the report to Cabinet on 3 June for Comment and County Council for final approval on 22 July 2003.

56. BEST VALUE REVIEW OF FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES – FINAL MONITORING REPORT

56.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chair of the Project Board, Councillor Slack, and also a report by the Director of Social Services.

56.2 Councillor Slack informed the Committee that good progress had been made with most of the recommendations. However, due to new Government guidance on preventative strategies for local authorities and the publication of the Victoria Climbié inquiry at a date later than envisaged, it had not been possible to monitor the progress of recommendations 8, 11 and part of 1. These recommendations related to child protection and early intervention.

56.3 The Committee noted that any action still in progress or yet to be implemented had been incorporated into the Business Plan 2003/04 for the Children and Families Division. Councillor Slack also informed the Committee that progress on these three key recommendations had been hindered by ICT difficulties. The Committee agreed that this should be brought to the attention of the Lead Cabinet Member for Social Services and Health.

56.4 Councillor Slack also suggested that a protocol needed to be devised in order for such matters as the ICT problems mentioned above to be promptly brought to the attention of the Lead Cabinet Member without the need for the approval of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee and with a view to avoiding any further delay. The Director of Legal and Community Services agreed to raise this matter at the next Scrutiny Chairman meeting.

56.5 Councillor Slack also requested that the Committee consider whether there were any recommendations they would wish to continue monitoring. It was suggested that the Committee may wish to continue monitoring the progress of recommendation 3 of the review in relation to lines of communication. The Committee agreed that they would

consider this at their next meeting in July once the new Committee had been constituted following Annual Council.

56.6 The Committee also noted that an SSI inspection of the Council's Children's Services was scheduled to take place early in 2004. It was agreed that the Committee may wish to consider action points arising from this.

55.7 The Committee acknowledged that this had been a pilot method of monitoring and noted that the Scrutiny Lead Officer would be submitting a report to the next meeting of the Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee and the next meeting of the Social Services and Health Scrutiny Committee. The report would consider the strengths and weaknesses of the single member monitoring method. The Committee agreed that the method had been informative, but suggested that it would also be useful if each Project Board formed a view as to how they thought the recommendations should be monitored and which of the recommendations were key issues for monitoring.

55.9 RESOLVED – to (1) note the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the Best Value Review; and

(2) ask the Director of Social Services and Director of Corporate Resources to submit a report to the Lead Cabinet Member for Social Service and Health asking him to consider the difficulties in relation to ICT arising from the Best Value Review of Family Support Services.

## 56. COUNCIL PLAN :QUARTER 3 MONITOIRING REPORT

56.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive.

56.2 The Committee indicated that they were concerned about the target set in relation to the number of children re-registered on the Child Protection Register (Ref 1.3a). The Director of Social Services explained to the Committee that this was a target set by the Department of Health. The Committee therefore requested that the Director of Social Services write to the Department again asking them to reconsider this performance indicator.

56.2 RESOLVED – to note the report.

## 57. FORWARD PLAN

57.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 May to 31 August 2003.

57.2 RESOLVED – to note the Forward Plan.