

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care held at County Hall, Lewes on 27 November 2008

PRESENT - Councillor Gubby (Chairman)
Councillors Forster, Taylor (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Tidy, Tunwell, Webb and Woodall

Chief Officer: Keith Hinkley, Director of Adult Social Care

Legal Adviser: Angela Reid, Head of Legal Services

Scrutiny Lead Officer: Gillian Mauger, Scrutiny Lead Officer

ALSO PRESENT - Councillor Bentley
- Councillor Healey
- Janet Colvert – Chair of LINK Interim Core Group
- David Liley - PPF Programme Manager
- Rita Stebbings - Assistant Director, Adult Social Care, Resources, Adults
- Alex Garnett - Head of Business Development
- Samantha Williams – Assistant Director Planning, Performance and Engagement
- Barry Atkins - Head of Strategic Commissioning, Strategy and Commissioning Division

25. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

25.1 RESOLVED to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 11 September 2008.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

26.1 Councillor Healey declared a personal non prejudicial interest as she was a Trustee of Age Concern.

26.2 Janet Colvert declared a personal non prejudicial interest in minute number 28 as she received some of the services that were being discussed.

26.3 Councillor Taylor declared a personal non prejudicial interest as he was a residential care home owner.

27. REPORTS

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

28. BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME CLOSURE

28.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Adult Social Care that provided an update and plan for closure of the Business Transformation Programme.

28.2 Members were advised that the majority of the Business Transformation work was now completed and that outstanding areas of work would now be mainstreamed. The team now had an approach and culture and there were more qualified accountants, project managers and procurement officers in place.

28.3 The programme had exceeded expectations in terms of efficiency savings with a net efficiency saving of £11.2m. There had been improvements to several of the performance indicators and the department was now in the top bandings for two unit cost indicators.

28.4 In response to members questions the following points were made:

- Improvements from the programme included assessments and care packages being carried out quicker, the increasing of the quality of services through the Preferred Provider Scheme and quicker assessments for people on whether they have to pay a financial contribution to their care packages
- It was hoped that when Atlas, part of Abacus, went live early in 2009, further efficiencies would be achieved through carrying out service users financial assessments in their homes.
- Real time telephone monitoring systems were being implemented and this would allow the monitoring of the quality of care provided. The care providers would dial a free phone number from the service users land line that would show which officer had attended and the time they had spent in the service user's home.

28.5 The significant scale of work that had been carried out was acknowledged by members. A future role for scrutiny would be to monitor how well the new systems were working for clients in the long term. The committee suggested that a press release be issued on the success of the Business Transformation Programme and that this highlighted the positive impact it had had for service users.

28.6 RESOLVED - to (1) support the closure of the Business Transformation Programme; and

(2) thank staff for their dedication and hard work on the project and to Councillor Tidy for her continued involvement in the projects; and

(3) receive a short update report in July 2009 containing facts and figures on the benefits that the Business Transformation Programme has given to service users.

29. PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST - UPDATE

29.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Adult Social Care on the Putting People First Programme. The programme will transform every aspect of the business that the department carries out and will see service users having more choice and control over the funding of their care. David Liley was in attendance to address any questions from Members.

29.2 In response to questions from members the following points were made:

- The programme would be implemented over a three year period, the first year to assess, scope and plan, the second to engage local people in redesigning social care services and the third year to implement and roll out changes.

- Pilots and prototyping projects were being started and discussions had started with staff, service users, carers and providing organisations. Planning will include self assessment and assisted self assessment, personal budgets and improving choice, safeguarding vulnerable people and safeguarding public resources.

- Adult Social Care now had a responsibility to provide information, advice and support to anyone who needed to plan social care for themselves or a member of their family. That would involve devising a common system of support for people irrespective of their entitlement to services funded by the local authority.

- The department would have responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults and the use made of their personal budgets, and for ensuring that proper arrangements for care have been made.

- The department was likely to face difficult choices in the future when investing to anticipate future local demand and prepare the local care market (statutory, voluntary and private sectors) to deliver more choice and better quality services.

29.3 Members suggested that use could be made of the East Sussex LINK to share information with service users and carers and to be part of the monitoring and support system around safeguarding.

29.4 It was suggested that after the election in June 2009 an all Member seminar be held to provide them with advice and information about Putting People First which they can then disseminate to residents within their wards. The committee would also be looking to tie in table top reviews in the new Council year with the Putting People First work programme.

29.5 RESOLVED - to (1) acknowledge and approve the Putting People First programme; and

(2) receive an update report to the Committee meeting in July 2009 that would include:

- a forward plan to show the timeline of the programme;
- an exception report highlighting any risks to customer services and finance;
- the benefits and outcomes of the programme for service users; and

(3) support the plans to use the Social Care Reform Grant to support Putting People First.

30. OUTCOME FROM CSCI INSPECTION AND ASSOCIATED ACTION PLAN

30.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Adult Social Care that detailed the outcomes from the Commission for Social Care Inspection 2008 and the associated action plan. Samantha Williams was in attendance to address any questions from Members.

30.2 It was reported that the CSCI in July 2008 focussed on three main themes: Preventative Services, Safeguarding People and Leadership and Commissioning. The outcomes were considered by Cabinet in September 2008. A significant achievement was the shift in 'capacity to improve' from uncertain to promising. The Inspection Action Plan had been to all the Department Management Teams and would be embedded within the 2009/10 Business Plan.

30.3 It was noted that equality and diversity training was compulsory for all members of staff, either through online training or directly delivered. Members considered it important that all areas of the County were considered when trying to reach minority groups to ensure that no areas were overlooked.

30.4 Members raised concerns that despite a predicted increase in numbers of staff from the independent sector receiving safeguarding adults training, from 11% to 25% in 2009/10, it still left 75% of the workforce untrained, which was a real cause for concern. It was however acknowledged that it was difficult to ensure independent sector staff were adequately trained as it relied on them being put forward for it. Work was being carried out to try to improve the figure and it was suggested by the Committee that the outcome should read '...to at least 25%...'

30.5 It was reiterated that although ideally service users using direct payments would request that their personal assistants undertake a CRB check, there was no obligation for the assistant to complete one.

30.6 RESOLVED - to (1) note the contents of the report; and

(2) agree to receiving quarterly progress reports against the CSCI Action Plan.

31. SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS PROGRESS REPORT

31.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Adult Social Care provided an update on the progress of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults agenda in East Sussex and made Members aware of the measures that had been put in place to strengthen the arrangements.

31.2 Members were advised that a key focus would be put on how the Safeguarding Board worked. It had a new Terms of Reference and would be further streamlined. For the new financial year there would be a minimum data set that the Board would monitor. There would also be a need to monitor the work of partners and to ensure work was co-ordinated better with Health.

31.3 It was suggested that key Members of the Committee could be kept up to date on safeguarding issues, as is done in Children's Services, and could meet after the Safeguarding Board meetings for a briefing. It was agreed that there was inevitable learning following on from recent cases in the media and that poor communications and decision making were often the reason that such incidents occurred.

31.4 RESOLVED - to (1) note the contents of the report and to receive further reports on a quarterly basis in recognition of the Council's role in respect of safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in East Sussex; and

(2) receive and ensure delivery of training in respect of Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults and that this be carried out in a multi-agency setting.

32. PROVISION OF SHORT TERM RESIDENTIAL RESPITE CARE

32.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Adult Social Care that provided an update on the position of provision of respite care following the work of the review board which reported to the Committee in June 2008. Barry Atkins was in attendance to address any questions from Members.

32.2 Members were informed that the respite placement dip from August to October was normal after the main summer holiday period. There was however a time lag in obtaining some of the information, which may also be impacting on the results. This issue was being addressed.

32.3 The department was looking to provide respite in the service user's home. This would for be ideal for a service user with dementia where it was important to maintain a constant environment. The carer would then be able to take a break away from the home.

32.4 As part of the national carers strategy £150m would be routed through PCT's to provide additional residential respite. The level of funding that the Authority would receive and the operational details around this had yet to be agreed.

32.5 RESOLVED to receive update reports to future meetings of the Committee that would be part of the Putting People First reporting to include information on:

- The impact of Putting People First on respite provision
- The development of the market to provide a wider range of services and the specific services to be provided through the Age Well PFI programme
- The details of funding and implementation of the national carers strategy (particularly relating to respite)
- The rewriting of the East Sussex Joint Carers Commissioning Strategy.

33. CO-OPTING A LINK MEMBER ONTO THE ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

33.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Law and Personnel that outlined the process for co-opting a LINK member to the Scrutiny Committee.

33.2 RESOLVED to (1) co-opt a LINK member onto the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee and support a report being presented to the Governance Committee to formalise the arrangement; and

(2) agree that the flowchart attached at appendix 1 of the report is used as the process for handling referrals to the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee from the LINK.

34. QUARTER TWO MONITORING REPORT AGAINST THE 2008/09 COUNCIL PLAN

34.1 The Committee considered a report from the Director of Policy and Communications that provided an update on performance against the Council Plan for quarter two of 2008/09.

34.2 RESOLVED to note the achievements made by the Adult Social Care Department.

35. FUTURE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

35.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Law and Personnel setting out the Committee's work programme.

35.2 Members were reminded that there would be a Directly Provided Services Board meeting at 10.30am on Thursday 11 December 2008 followed by a Reconciling Policy and Resources Board meeting at 1pm.

35.3 It was noted that the Integrated Community Equipment Services item would be presented to the meeting in March 2009.

35.4 RESOLVED - to note the Scrutiny work programme.

36. FORWARD PLAN

36.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 December 2008 to 31 March 2009.

36.2 RESOLVED - to note the Forward Plan.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 4.30 pm.