

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care held at County Hall, Lewes on 4 March 2010

PRESENT - Councillor Waite (Chairman)
Councillors Belsey, Healy, Scott, Taylor and Mrs Tidy
Janet Colvert – LINK representative

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, Lead Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
- David Liley, PPF Programme Manager
- Julian Fowler, Three Year Plan Co-ordinator
- Liz Felstead, Head of Workforce Planning and Training
- Barry Atkins, Head of Strategic Commissioning, Strategy and Commissioning Division
- Louisa Havers, Head of Performance and Engagement

32. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

32.1 RESOLVED to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 19 November 2009.

33. APOLOGIES

33.1 An apology for absence was received from Councillor Thompson.

34. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

34.1 Councillors Belsey and Healy declared a personal non prejudicial interest as they were trustees of Age Concern.

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

35. REPORTS

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

36. PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST, RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

36.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care, which gave an update on the actions in place to manage the Putting People First Programme and in particular risk management and governance. David Liley was in attendance to answer any questions from Members.

36.2 It was reported that the Programme was now well into the business change/implementation phase. From 1 April 2010 all new service users would be offered personal budgets, with existing clients being offered one at the point of review.

36.3 In response to questions from Members the following points and observations were made:

- It was considered that East Sussex progress towards PPF was good and that we were on target to achieve the self assessment milestones that had been set nationally.
- The risk of potential double running costs is due to the fact that a number of block contracts were set up before PPF and do not have enough flexibility in them. For example, if a service user decided not to take up a day centre place and use their personal budget for something else, the department would have to fill the place or still be liable for the cost. The situation would improve over time as contracts are made 'PPF friendly'.
- 'Soft market testing' was being carried out around the different ways that brokerage could be provided. However it was noted that there had not been much private sector interest to take on this area of work and more work needed to be done with the voluntary sector.
- Due to unfavourable financial circumstances and increasing demand due to demographic pressures it would be necessary for the value of care packages to be reduced in order to continue to help as many people as possible. It was recognised that currently some service users were receiving a higher level of funding for their care than the Resource Allocation System (RAS) would allocate in the future. This was not just an issue for this Council. Elsewhere, in order to align current resources with the RAS, Councils had begun reducing the money available for these particular care packages and it was likely that East Sussex would follow the same route. Members were assured that the process would be handled carefully and regular reviews carried out to ensure that there was no additional risk to service users.
- If current service users wanted to move across to a personal budget prior to their next due review they would be able to ask for an early review and this would be arranged.
- Extensive consultation around PPF had been carried out with stakeholders and user groups and there was a growing awareness of PPF and personal budgets. It was made clear to service users that if they did not wish to manage their own personal budget and care this could be done by the department on their behalf.
- Due to the structural changes around Mental Health services, the implementation of PPF in that area would be phased in gradually from April 2010.
- The department was working with Trading Standards on developing a 'Buy social care with confidence' scheme that would improve choice and quality of services provided. It was being established along the lines of with the 'Buy with Confidence' scheme and the aim was to have it up and running in October 2010.

36.4 RESOLVED to (1) recognise the good progress made so far against the PPF self assessment milestones; and

(2) note the action taken to mitigate the risks inherent in the PPF programme.

37. ADULT SOCIAL CARE ABSENCE AND WELL-BEING STATISTICS

37.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care, which gave an update on the current Adult Social Care Department's position on absence and

well being statistics. Liz Felstead and Julian Fowler were in attendance to answer any questions from Members.

37.2 It was reported that there had been an 18.8% reduction in the level of sickness from quarter three 2008/09 to 2009/10. This was mainly attributed to the First Care Attendance Management Pilot and a number of well-being initiatives including physiotherapy, reflexology and acupressure.

37.2 In response to questions from Members the following points and observations were made:

- The main reasons for sickness within Adult Social Care were infections, muscular skeletal and non work related stress.
- A range of measures were in place to reduce stress in the workplace, such as a counselling service and stress audits around environmental issues were being carried out by Health & Safety. Managers also had monthly supervision with their team and concerns could be raised then.
- The department recognised the impact that the new ways of working around PPF could have on staff. The new Self Directed Support Pathway would be evaluated after it had been in place for 6 months to check if there were any issues for staff around capacity.
- It was reported that the end of year target of 11 days absence would not be achieved and was estimated to be 12.39 days. However, it was acknowledged that this had been an ambitious target to accomplish.
- Members congratulated the department and staff on the huge reductions in absence levels.

37.3 RESOLVED to (1) receive an update on Adult Social Care absence and well being statistics in 12 months time to monitor progress against the target; and

(2) congratulate the department on their efforts to reduce the absences levels.

38. REFRESH OF JOINT OLDER PEOPLE COMMISSIONING STRATEGY

38.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which gave an update on the progress of the Strategy which will deliver a fit for purpose joint commissioning plan and meet both national and local priorities of older people and their carers in East Sussex. Barry Atkins was in attendance to answer any questions from Members.

38.2 It was reported that there would be three key documents around the Strategy:

- A detailed body of evidence that would contain national and local policy and needs analysis of the Strategy
- A summary document that would be the outward facing document widely circulated to the public
- A working three/five year action plan document including annual milestones. This would be updated on an annual basis.

38.3 Members asked that the following information be included in the Strategy:

- reference to Social Care Direct as an access point for service users to find out information and what help they might be entitled to.
- Within the Scope of Strategy guidance be provided for those people not covered specifically by the Strategy so that they know how to access support

38.4 RESOLVED to (1) support the proposed approach, framework and timetable for the refresh of the Strategy; and

(2) include mention of Social Care Direct within the Strategy and suggest that guidance be included within the Scope of the Strategy to provide information for those not covered so that they know how to access support.

39. CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) ASSESSMENT 2008-09

39.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which provided the CQC Assessment of Adult Social Care Performance for 2008-09. Louisa Havers was in attendance to answer any questions from Members

39.2 It was reported that in 2008/09 East Sussex Adult Social Care were assessed as 'Performing Well'. It had been noted that there were particularly strengthened areas such as the use of Telecare in prevention and working with Health in avoiding unnecessary hospital stays. It had been noted that an area for future improvement was around transport and ensuring that those in rural areas of the County did not suffer from social isolation.

39.3 The system of assessment has changed for 2009-2010. The Director is required to produce a self certification on what the department thinks its performance is in March 2010 and following this submits a fuller self assessment by 14 May 2010. The Self Assessment would include how the department would address areas for development. If CQC has concerns about information it receives from any Council it would come in and carry out a review.

39.4 Members considered that the report was a credit to all Adult Social Care staff and that it showed how much work had been done in recent years and how the many changes made had been beneficial.

39.5 It was noted that the CQC would take evidence from Scrutiny Committees and LiNKs on any areas of concern regarding the department and would investigate them further.

39.6 RESOLVED to (1) congratulate Adult Social Care on being awarded 'Performing Well' for delivery of Outcomes;

(2) to agree the action plan in place to improve service delivery;

(3) to receive a further report on the outturns from the action plan to the June meeting; and

(4) circulate to members a diagram explaining the timescales around CQC assessments.

40. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF SOCIAL CARE AND FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

40.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Review Board which presented the outcomes of the review and proposed recommendations for future improvements to the social care and financial assessment processes.

40.2 RESOLVED to agree the Review Board's report and submit it to Cabinet on 27 April 2010 for comment and County Council on 18 May 2010 for approval.

41. RECONCILING POLICY AND RESOURCES

41.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which provided feedback on the outcomes of scrutiny input into the Reconciling Policy and resources process in 2009/10.

41.2 RESOLVED to note the report.

42. QUARTER THREE MONITORING REPORT AGAINST THE 2009/10 COUNCIL PLAN

42.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Policy and Communications which provided an update on performance against the Council Plan for Quarter Three of 2009/10.

42.2 Members were advised that National Indicator 125 'Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation/intermediate care' had not been achieved as service users with higher dependencies were now being offered rehabilitation, yet were unlikely to achieve full independence at the end of it. The department recognised the benefit of rehabilitation, however small, and would continue to increase access to rehabilitation services for more service users. This was likely to mean that the figure would continue to fall as a result.

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

43. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

43.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Law and Personnel setting out the current work programme for the committee.

43.2 RESOLVED to note the scrutiny work programme and to consider Free Personal Care at the September meeting.

44. FORWARD PLAN

44.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 March 2010 to 30 June 2010.

44.2 RESOLVED - to note the Forward Plan.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 12.35pm