

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

MINUTES of a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care and Community Safety held at County Hall, Lewes on 8 September 2011

PRESENT:	Councillor Pragnell (Chairman) Councillors Barnes, Ensor, Healy, Ost, Scott and Taylor Janet Colvert, LINK representative
Chief Officer:	Keith Hinkley, Director of Adult Social Care
Scrutiny Lead Officer:	Claire Lee, Scrutiny Lead Officer
ALSO PRESENT	Councillor Bentley, Lead Member for Adult Social Care Councillor Elkin, Lead Member for Children's and Adults' Services Mark Stainton, Assistant Director (Operations) Rita Stebbings, Assistant Director (Resources) Samantha Williams, Assistant Director (Planning, Performance and Engagement) Louisa Havers, Head of Performance and Engagement Tina King, Head of Finance and Business Information Lynn Mounfield, Head of Procurement Deborah Winterburn, Head of Occupational Therapy

13. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

13.1 RESOLVED to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 9 June 2011.

14. APOLOGIES

14.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Tidy and Dr Laurie Bush. Councillor Ensor was substituting for Cllr Mrs Tidy.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

15.1 Janet Colvert declared a personal interest as a service user and disabled person. She did not consider this interest to be prejudicial.

15.2 Councillor Taylor declared a personal interest as the owner of a residential care home. He did not consider this interest to be prejudicial.

15.3 Councillor Healy declared a personal interest as a Trustee and Board Member of Age Concern Eastbourne. She did not consider this interest to be prejudicial.

15.4 Councillor Scott declared a personal interest as the Lead Member for Environment at Hastings Borough Council which included responsibility for aspects of community safety. He did not consider this interest to be prejudicial.

16. REPORTS

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

17. HEALTH REFORM UPDATE

17.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Director of Adult Social Care on the current progress with the national reforms to the health service. Key points included:

- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) would be undergoing an assurance process between September and December 2011 in order that their viability to take on commissioning responsibilities could be assessed.
- The varied progress of the CCGs in East Sussex would be highlighted by the process. It is likely that the CCGs will take on commissioning responsibilities at different paces, depending on their level of development. This would potentially have implications for county-wide issues.
- The County Council would like to broaden joint commissioning arrangements and is working with CCGs and NHS Sussex to develop this area. Robust joint commissioning arrangements have the potential to support CCGs in meeting their commissioning responsibilities.
- The review of the public health service in East Sussex is due to report in October 2011 and a further stakeholder event would be held to discuss recommendations arising from the review.

17.2 RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the update and receive further reports in due course; and
- (2) request that a seminar be held for all Members to cover the public health agenda and health reform developments

18. MOUNT DENYS: CARE QUALITY COMMISSION INSPECTION

18.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care outlining the outcomes of the recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection and the actions taken to resolve the identified issues.

18.2 The following key points were highlighted by the Assistant Director (Operations):

- CQC had found issues at Mount Denys in all 13 of the outcomes inspected and had raised significant concerns in 4 areas, one of which related to the effectiveness of internal quality assurance systems.
- Immediate actions taken by the department had included:
 - Increase from 2 to 3 staff per unit (of 8-10 residents).
 - Overhaul of care plans with external support, including review of the most challenging service users' needs by a consultant psychiatrist.
 - Introduction of new, more person-centred activities.
- CQC had carried out a re-inspection and initial verbal feedback had been positive, suggesting that their requirements were now being met.
- The robustness of the internal Quality Assurance Framework had been improved by including a wider variety of information sources, including the views of service users, carers and staff.
- Audits of all other Adult Social Care directly provided services had been undertaken which had provided assurance that they are compliant with CQC requirements.

18.3 The Director of Adult Social Care added the following points:

- It would be important to ensure the department's systems of line management and quality assurance are robust both now and for the future. A third tier of more independent monitoring may be added to strengthen systems further.
- Demographic trends are leading to an increasing number of people with dementia and an increased number of those with challenging needs. The department would need to consider the most appropriate models of care for the future in this context, which may include different approaches to managing those with challenging behaviour. Mount Denys is unusual in the concentration of service users with very challenging needs in one unit.

18.4 The following key points were made in response to questions from the Committee:

- An action plan had been put together in response to the CQC inspection and would be made available once the CQC report had been published.
- A previous CQC inspection had been undertaken 18 months ago and the current issues had not emerged at that time. This suggests that issues had developed since the last inspection.
- Issues were likely to have emerged incrementally over time which had made them more difficult to identify.
- Health professionals are routinely involved in the care of service users at the unit as required according to individual needs.
- A comprehensive review of staff training needs had been undertaken and the additional staff employed had been required to have specific training appropriate to the type of needs catered for by Mount Denys.
- The number of incidents at Mount Denys had reduced as a result of the actions taken but it should be recognised that incidents would never be eliminated due to the nature of the service user needs and behaviours.
- The additional costs of up to £200k primarily relate to additional staffing and are therefore likely to be ongoing. The additional cost equates to an additional £125 per week per placement.

18.5 The Lead Member for Adult Social Care highlighted that the department was moving towards new models of care such as the Agewell programme but that this would take time to fully achieve. In the meantime, it was important to focus on the quality of care in current services.

18.6 RESOLVED to:

- (1) meet again to review the CQC report in detail once published and to invite a CQC representative to attend;
- (2) request copies of the audits of other directly provided services undertaken by the department and a copy of the revised Quality Assurance Framework;
- (3) request further information on the changes to staffing levels at Mount Denys and examples of the needs of service users at the unit;
- (4) undertake a scrutiny review to examine models of care for service users with dementia and challenging needs; and
- (5) recommend that the department consider peer review of directly provided services, potentially through the exchange of staff between them in order to bring a fresh perspective.

19. PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES

19.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which provided an overview of the procurement of services by the department, in particular how quality and value for money are achieved through the procurement process.

19.2 The Assistant Director (Resources) highlighted that procurement is one part of the commissioning cycle and that the existence of a dedicated Contract Procurement Unit (CPU) within Adult Social Care provides a consistent point of contact for providers.

19.3 The following points were made in response to questions from the Committee:

- The department has a formal process in place for addressing quality concerns about providers. Feedback such as complaints would trigger an audit, the outcomes of which would determine the further action taken. Action could include suspending the provider for a period whilst improvements are made.
- The department holds a preferred provider list from which alternative provision can be secured if any single provider was suspended for a period of time. This includes at least three home care providers covering each postcode area.
- The department's processes aim to complement the CQC regime and the Quality Monitoring Team regularly communicates with CQC regarding care providers.
- The Care Governance Framework is based around outcomes and uses a range of information sources including satisfaction surveys, interviews, complaints and information from the Quality Monitoring Team. Further development of the framework is being considered.
- Additional areas, such as providers' staffing arrangements, are taken into account as part of the wider commissioning process and outcomes for individual service users are monitored through the reviewing process.
- With the introduction of personal budgets which enable people to make more individual decisions about the care they wish to receive, individual experiences of care have become an even more important factor in measuring quality.
- The department will have a different relationship with providers in the future as increasing numbers of service users purchase their own care using direct payments. Developing tools such as the online care directory and the Support with Confidence scheme, which provide people with information to support their choices, provides some assurance of the quality of services chosen by individuals.
- It should be recognised that individuals may make choices which professionals may not regard as ideal. However, the department's role is to ensure people can make informed choices and to ensure basic safeguards are in place.

19.4 RESOLVED - to welcome the report.

20. FAIRER CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY

20.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which provided an update on the implementation of changes to the consideration of disability related expenditure within financial assessments.

20.2 The Assistant Director (Resources) advised the Committee that, although implementation of the changes was still at an early stage, the indications were that the objectives were being met.

20.3 The following points were made in response to questions from the Committee:

- A full assessment can be requested at any time if a service user's needs or financial circumstances change.
- The £580k annual cost of administering the financial assessment system includes visiting officers who undertake assessments both for disability related expenditure

and for maximising benefit take up. Efficiencies equivalent to 1.5 members of staff had been achieved and these resources had been redistributed to other work.

- The increase in Fairer Contributions income reflects the implementation of Fairer Contributions and Personal Budgets.
- The number of people deciding to drop a service is monitored by the department. There are over 400 people who currently receive the higher level of allowance who are yet to have a full assessment.

20.4 RESOLVED - to request additional information on service users who had discontinued a service following the change in assessment of disability related expenditure.

21. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT

21.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which provided an update on work with District and Borough Councils to improve the grant process, develop an adaptations support service and support clients to identify alternative housing options.

21.2 The Committee noted that the changes being made would speed up the assessment and adaptation process and enable a more holistic approach to be taken to identifying needs and considering alternatives.

21.3 The Head of Occupational Therapy assured the Committee that clients can still access the grant if they do not wish to take up potential alternatives. However, the new process ensures that all options are discussed.

21.4 RESOLVED to:

- (1) welcome the actions being put in place to improve the process;
- (2) request a further report in 12 months to assess progress.

22. RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES

22.1 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive which invited comments on the draft Adult Social Care and Community Safety policy steers for 2012/13.

22.2 The Lead Member for Adult Social Care introduced the draft policy steers by explaining that proposed changes represented refinements to the existing steers to reflect the developing social care agenda. An additional steer relating to the transition service would also be included in the Lead Member for Children and Families' portfolio.

22.3 The Committee made the following comments on the draft policy steers:

- Recommended that mention of the department's 'signposting' role be included in policy steer 2 (choice and control)
- Recommended improving the wording of policy steer 4 (protection of vulnerable adults) by removing the word 'by' and making it clear that 'prevention and early intervention' relates to the protection of vulnerable adults within this policy steer.
- Indicated support for inclusion of the new 'transition' policy steer.
- Supported the proposed reference to the role of the police and crime commissioner within the community safety policy steer.

- 22.4 RESOLVED to:
- (1) forward the Committee's comments on the draft policy steers to Cabinet for consideration;
 - (2) establish a scrutiny board to act on behalf of the Committee to provide ongoing input to the RPP&R process until March 2012; and
 - (3) add a report on changes to the Safeguarding Adults Board in light of a current review to the Committee's agenda in March 2012.

23. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

23.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which provided an update on stakeholder engagement activity from April 2011 to September 2011.

23.2 The Assistant Director (Planning, Performance and Engagement) informed the Committee that the budget for stakeholder engagement had reduced by over 50% but the department had still met its objectives in this area by taking measures such as reducing the frequency of meetings and use of low cost venues. There had not been any negative feedback as a result.

23.3 The Committee noted that the department was working with the Local Involvement Network (LINK) and others to determine what people want from the 'local accounts' which are a new national requirement.

- 23.4 RESOLVED to:
- (1) request that information on forthcoming events/activities be communicated to all Members as they arise; and
 - (2) request a further report in 12 months to be circulated for information.

24. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE SOCIAL CARE AND FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

24.1 The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care which outlined progress against the recommendations of the scrutiny review.

24.2 The Assistant Director (Planning, Performance and Engagement) highlighted two particular areas of progress since the last report:

- The tone and wording of letters had been improved as recommended by the Review Board.
- An electronic 'trigger' system to alert the financial assessment team had been prototyped as part of the LEAN project. If this was found to be effective it would be rolled out more widely.

- 24.3 RESOLVED to:
- (1) welcome progress, particularly in relation to letters and the 'buddy' system; and
 - (2) conclude the Committee's monitoring of this scrutiny review.

25. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

25.1 The Committee considered its current work programme. It was noted that elections for the proposed police and crime commissioners had been delayed from May 2012 to November 2012. As a result the scheduled report on the impact of the commissioner role could be delayed from November 2011 to March 2012.

25.2 RESOLVED - to update the work programme.

26. FORWARD PLAN

26.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period to 31 December 2011.

26.2 RESOLVED - to note the Forward Plan.