

JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE EDUCATION & CHILDREN AND SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY

Friday, 23 June 2017

PRESENT: Councillor D. Price (Chair)

Councillors:

K.V. Broom, A. Davies, I.W. Davies, R.E. Evans, W.T. Evans, M.J.A. Lewis, J.P. Jenkins, G.R. Jones, K. Lloyd, K. Madge, E. Morgan, J.G. Prosser (In place of A.S.J. McPherson), B.A.L. Roberts, E.M.J.G. Schiavone, E.G. Thomas, D.T. Williams

Mrs. V. Kenny – Roman Catholic Church Representative

Also in attendance:

Councillor G. Davies - Executive Board Member for Education & Children
Councillor J. Tremlett - Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health

The following Officers were in attendance:

J. Morgan - Director of Community Services
G. Morgans - Interim Director of Education & Children's Services
A. Bracey - Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
S. Smith - Head of Children's Services
S. Sauro - Performance Review Officer
C. Gadd - Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen - 2.00 - 3.45 pm

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

It was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** to appoint Councillor D. Price as Chair for the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L. Bowen, B. Jones, D. Jones, A. McPherson, S. Najmi and G. Thomas as well as Mrs. E. Heyes (Parent Governor Member Llanelli Area), Mrs. K. Hill (Parent Governor Member Dinefwr Area), Mrs A. Pickles (Parent Governor Member Carmarthen Area) and Mrs J. Voyle Williams (Church in Wales Representative).

3. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor	Minute No(s)	Nature of Interest
Mrs. V. Kenny	Minute No. 6	Daughter works for Social Services
Councillor E. Morgan	Minutes No. 6	Daughter is a staff nurse

Councillor K. Madge	Minute No. 6	Daughter works in Social Services. Wife works in Amman Valley Hospital.
Councillor B.A.L. Roberts	Minutes No. 6	Daughter is a health visitor

4. DECLARATIONS OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

6. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SOCIAL CARE SERVICES IN CARMARTHENSHIRE 2016/17

[NOTE: Councillors K. Madge, E. Morgan and B.A.L. Roberts and Mrs. V. Kenny had earlier declared interests in this item.]

The Committee considered the draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the Effectiveness of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2016/17. Members were informed that there was a statutory requirement for the Director of Social Services to report annually on delivery and performance, as well as plans for the improvement of the whole range of Social Services. The Annual Report examined each Service area within Social Care and showed how service strategies, actions, targets and service risks would be addressed and delivered operationally by the Service this year based on the approved budget. The Report linked closely with the Business Plans for Community Services and Education & Children's Services.

Officers noted that it was a positive report overall and that throughout the report quotes had been included to represent the views of services users and organisations about the services provided. It was highlighted that there were some areas for improvement and the Committee may wish to take them into consideration when setting their respective forward work programmes.

It was noted that the Department had managed services within budget over the last 2 years, which was partly achieved through delivering more sustainable packages of care. This included not oversubscribing support as it could have a detrimental impact on the capability of an individual. There were also better and more robust systems for preventative work with families based on the signs of safety model. It was highlighted that there had been improved performance last year in regards to stability of placements for looked after children and continued improvement would be a priority for the Service. Other areas for improvement included Learning Disability and Mental Health placements in communities.

Officers highlighted that the Department had been developing their approach to the 'More Than Just Words' Welsh Government Strategy to provide an active offer of delivering services through the medium of Welsh. The Service was aiming to go further than just meeting the statutory duty and the importance of offering language choice was recognised, especially with regards to such services as dementia care.

Officers highlighted that there were increasing demand for services for people over the age of 85 years old and demand in this area would continue to grow. There would inevitably have to be an increase in spending on Adult Social Care to accommodate this demand in the coming years. Members highlighted that there should be greater emphasis in the growth in demand for this demographic in the report, as it had a big impact on the services delivered. Officers agreed that the report could include further information on the profiling of the demographics of the population. It was noted that the Carers' Service was a good service that assisted with managing demand and allowed people to remain in the community. It was recognised that carers had to be supported and it was noted that reviews of care packages within timescales would be a priority during 2017/18.

The figures on the rate of delayed transfers of care were highlighted and it was clarified that the graph reflected only delayed transfer of care for Social Care reasons. It was noted that there were numerous other reasons why transfers of care could be delayed, including medical reasons and family and friends being satisfied. Members raised concerns about the timeliness of care packages being put in place and whether there would be social workers in hospitals over the weekends. Officers explained that it was a performance target and the service needed to be more responsive and in reviewing how these services were delivered could result in a change to the working patterns of social workers.

In response to questions raised about out of hours services, officers explained that the Department had always had out of hours provision and was developing a new service to be able to respond to need out of normal office hours. It was highlighted that this was a positive step and would provide more than just the on call service that most other local authorities offered.

The Director of Communities Services highlighted that one large area of work for the Department, which the Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider in depth, was the workforce plan. It was explained that up to 23% of Domiciliary Care was delivered in-house and it was anticipated that the proportion delivered in this way was likely to grow. It was recognised that the Council could be more proactive in promoting their in house services. It was noted that there were some difficulties in recruiting care workers in some areas, which was being addressed by the service. Officers explained that there were challenges in employing sufficient numbers of care workers and the Council had abolished the lower end of the pay scale for these employees, which in effect resulted in a pay rise.

Members queried how independent providers were audited. It was explained that there was a quality assurance framework in place and they were also inspected by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW). Officers highlighted that they were also improved methods of tracking services to prevent such issues as call clipping. A more flexible approach was being taken to the provision of care, to which providers had responded positively. It was noted that having a mixed economy of care options in the area was positive.

It was commented that the development of care provision at Delta Lakes was an exciting opportunity and it would take time to develop proposals to best meet the needs of local people.

The other large priority area identified for the Service was pooled budgets, which was a national issue. It was noted that there were a lot of challenges around pooled budgets and despite all parties agreeing with the principles it was a complex issue. The Service would have to ensure that any changes would meet care requirements and the final decision would be made by Council. However, it was suggested that the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee may wish to include this item on their Forward Work Programme. Members were supportive of the principles of pooled budgets and highlighted the importance of meeting demand in a timely manner without losing the quality of care and personal choice.

Concerns were raised about the cost implications for the ongoing work on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. Officers noted these concerns and explained that the Service was trying to manage the demand and associated risks and a small team had been established for this purpose.

Members commented on Carmarthenshire Children's Rights Promise and it was queried if there should be further information contained within the report on securing play opportunities to meet this promise. It was noted that appended to the report was the priorities for the Service, which included exploring the potential of utilising schools out of teaching hours to enable children to have greater access to play opportunities. The Interim Director of Education & Children's Services explained that the UN Convention on Children's Rights underpins a lot of the work undertaken by different departments. For example, there was a vibrant Youth Council and Schools' Councils

Concerns were raised regarding the provision of Mental Health Services and it was noted that Crisis Teams stopped their services by midnight and it was often after this time that interventions were needed the most. Officers highlighted that there was a lot of work being undertaken to address access to services and successful interventions. It was explained that as part of the Mental Health Transformation Programme there was an ambition to deliver a 24 hour and 7 day a week service. The Transformation Programme was going out for consultation for 12 weeks over the summer and Members would be given the opportunity to comment on the proposals. It was highlighted that different service models were being considered. Members were pleased that Mental Health was coming to the forefront of discussions.

Members commented on the transportation of the elderly on discharge from hospital and the pressures it put on the ambulance service. Officers noted that Carmarthenshire Council was one of the few local authorities that retained its own transport section and was able to consider the best way to support services.

Members observed that there was some good practice for integrating people with learning disabilities into communities and also noted occasions where this had not been as successful. Officers highlighted that good practice in this area was an ambition of the Service and there were systems in place to review this work with third party providers.

The Committee noted that overall it was a positive report.

RESOLVED that that the Draft Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the Effectiveness of Social Care Services in Carmarthenshire 2016/17 be received.

CHAIR

DATE