

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 16th SEPTEMBER 2015

NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO CONFIRMATION BY THE COMMITTEE AT ITS NEXT MEETING)

Present: Councillor G. Thomas (Chair)

Councillors: S.M. Allen (Vice-Chair), S.M. Caiach, I.W. Davies, K. Madge, T.T. Defis, W.T. Evans, E. Morgan, P. Edwards, H.I. Jones, E.G. Thomas, J. Williams

Councillor: P. Hughes-Griffiths – Substitute for Councillor D.J.R. Llewellyn

Councillor: S.E. Thomas – Substitute for Councillor J.S. Williams

Also in attendance:

Councillor J. Tremlett – Executive Board Member for Social Care & Health

In attendance as an observer: **Councillor B.A.L. Roberts**

The following officers were in attendance:

Mr. J. Morgan – Director of Community Services

Mr. A. Maynard – Interim Head of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities

Mr. D. Eldred – Group Accountant

Ms. S. Frewin – Senior Manager (Community Inclusion)

Ms. S. Sauro – Performance Review Officer

Mr. L. Walters – Senior Business Support Manager (Social Care)

Ms. J. Wilkinson – Assistant Locality Manager (Taf, Teifi & Tywi)

Mr. M. Hughes – Assistant Consultant

Venue: Spilman Street Chamber, Carmarthen (10:05am – 1:20pm)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors D.J.R. Llewellyn and J.S. Williams.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
Councillor H.I. Jones	Items 5-10	Daughter-in-law works in Social Care Services.
Councillor K. Madge	Items 5-10	Wife is a sister at Amman Valley Hospital and daughter works in Social Care Services.

Councillor E. Morgan	Item 7	Daughter is employed as a psychiatric nurse.
Councillor J. Williams	Items 7-10	Is an un-paid carer.

3. DECLARATION OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

4. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Chair informed the Committee that the Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs Forum had requested that forthcoming items be moved to the start of scrutiny committee agendas in order that due consideration be given to the reports scheduled to be presented at the next meeting.

The Committee RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at its next meeting scheduled for the 19th November 2015, be endorsed.

5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

Councillor H.I. Jones declared a personal interest in that his daughter-in-law works for Social Care Services.

Councillor K. Madge declared a personal interest in that his daughter works in Social Care Services.

The Committee considered the draft Corporate Safeguarding Policy that had been developed to cover all the Council's service areas and ensure that there were robust arrangements and procedures in place to safeguard children and adults. The draft document included details of the:

- Objectives and principles of the Policy and Guidelines
- Legal framework
- Responsibilities and duties of staff and elected members
- The Governance framework for Safeguarding
- Process for reporting, monitoring, and reviewing
- The referral process

The following issues were discussed during consideration of the draft strategy:

The Chair welcomed the strategy and in referring to the training that would be provided to support elected members in undertaking their safeguarding responsibilities and duties, urged all members to make every effort to attend such training sessions. A further suggestion that a choice of training session dates be offered to elected members was made, in order to accommodate those individuals

who worked. The Director of Community Services noted that the expectation from regulators was that all elected members be given training to assist them in their role within their respective communities and the training sessions would be an ideal opportunity for members to receive the basic information they required. The Head of Children's Services acknowledged the comments and noted that whilst no dates had been arranged as yet, different sessions could be arranged. He also noted that elected members would be welcome to meet with case managers in addition to the proposed training sessions, in order to see the work being undertaken by the relevant services and view real life case studies.

It was suggested that when considering items such as this, all members of the Corporate Parenting Panel be invited to attend as not all members of the Panel were members of the relevant scrutiny committees. The Director of Community Services agreed that this could be arranged when Corporate Parenting Panel activity reports were presented to scrutiny committees in the future.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse Corporate Safeguarding Policy for consideration by the Executive Board.

6. INTRODUCTION OF A CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY THAT COVERS ALL THE COUNCIL'S SERVICE AREAS

Councillor H.I. Jones declared a personal interest in that his daughter-in-law works for Social Care Services.

Councillor K. Madge declared a personal interest in that his daughter works in Social Care Services.

The Director of Community Services introduced a new Performance Framework developed by the Communities Department and sought the Committee's comments on how it might be used to inform members of the relevant services' performance. The new framework had been developed in-house to focus on the most important areas within the department as a way of monitoring the success or otherwise in meeting objectives.

A live presentation of the new system was given which enabled the Committee to view the live data now been captured and the type of information that could be presented in future performance monitoring reports. The Director reminded the Committee that the framework is still in its infancy and was being further refined during regular meetings to monitor performance.

The following issues were discussed during consideration of the new framework:

Reference was made to preventative work and it was asked whether the new system could provide officers with an early warning of where there might be difficulties for certain services. The Director of Community Services stated that the data would be very useful in addressing problems or blockages in the system and was a key aspect of the monthly departmental performance management meetings. The electronic reports available allowed performance to be questioned and challenged and as it was live data, services could be managed more effectively rather than through retrospective reports which in the past, had been 2/3 months out of date. The Assistant Locality Manager added that the system

allowed the locality managers to use resources more efficiently on a day to day basis, enabling a swifter response to difficulties across the different locality areas.

It was asked whether such a detailed system might cause some staff to withhold or manipulate information so that their team or service area did not appear to be failing or overspending. The Director of Community Services acknowledged that there was always a risk of 'target cultures' giving rise to poor outcomes but that officers were seeking to generate a culture of understanding amongst staff in relation to the new measures and how they were designed to assist in understanding the business and ensure that resources were allocated appropriately. It was hoped that this would prevent teams from manipulating figures to make their work appear better. It was about balancing responsibility of care with fiscal prudence.

It was asked as to whether the system was able to provide detailed information according to ward area, such as the number of individuals suffering or at risk from certain conditions. The Director of Community Services stated that postcode searches were possible to investigate demand according to area but the challenge of using this method was that many individuals received treatment outside their home area (e.g. in a major town). He noted that further work was being undertaken to map the types of services and support that was available in each area (e.g. from voluntary groups) and the Assistant Locality Manager also informed the Committee that an in-depth population assessment of health conditions was already underway based on each locality area.

The Committee welcomed the new framework and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to accept the report.

7. COLESHILL CENTRE FOR ECONOMIC INCLUSION – PROGRESS REPORT

Councillor H.I. Jones declared a personal interest in that his daughter-in-law works for Social Care Services.

Councillor K. Madge declared a personal interest in that his daughter works in Social Care Services.

Councillor E. Morgan declared a personal interest in that his daughter is employed as a psychiatric nurse.

Councillor J. Williams declared a personal interest in that she is an un-paid carer.

The Committee received for its consideration a progress report on the Coleshill Centre for Economic Inclusion. The comprehensive report was presented following the Committee's request at its meeting in March 2015 and included a series of recommendations in relation to future models of service delivery at the Centre.

The following issues were discussed during consideration of the report:

Appreciation for the work of the Centre was expressed, especially for the opportunities being provided for a wide variety of individuals and it was suggested that more marketing work be undertaken to promote its activities. Reference was also made to the significant amount of European funding that had now come to an

end and more detail was sought on the staffing/building costs in relation to the income generated. The Senior Manager (Community Inclusion) stated that there were a number of projects under the Coleshill umbrella and all the rooms were currently rented out. An administration framework was also in place which supported other projects and brought in additional income. The Director of Community Services reminded the Committee that the 'hidden costs' associated with a service of this nature needed to be quantified rather than simply considering the basic income and costs. It was important to remember that those individuals employed by the Local Authority would find it difficult to secure employment elsewhere due to the additional support they required.

It was asked whether the Grounds Maintenance service offered by the Centre could be sourcing work from town and community councils, especially as many facilities were now being transferred to these councils from the Local Authority. The Senior Manager (Community Inclusion) stated that a meeting was planned with potential service users and discussions had already been held with a Town Council in the county. The Service was already maintaining the grounds in and around the Parc-y-Scarlets stadium. The previous European Social Funding had actually prevented this Service from competing in the open market but since this had now ceased, the Service was able to bid for work.

Reference was made to the drop in numbers of employees at the SA31 Café in County Hall and it was also suggested that this café was not fulfilling its potential when compared with the two cafeterias that used to exist within the two main administrative buildings in Carmarthen. The Senior Manager (Community Inclusion) informed the Committee that reduction in the numbers of staff at the SA31 Café had coincided with the ending of the COASTAL project and European funding. However, numbers were now increasing and it was expected that 10 students from Heol Goffa and Q.E. High School would access the catering opportunities during the year. With regards to the services provided at the SA31 Café itself, she noted that a focus group had been established to consider the future direction and questionnaires had also been circulated in County Hall to ascertain what types of refreshments employees wished to see provided there. The Director of Community Services reminded the Committee that the town centre had changed dramatically in the last few years with a wide range of food outlets now available to staff. It was therefore important that the SA31 Café marketed itself and highlighted how its services were different in light of the competition it faced from the town centre establishments.

In response to a question on the impact of future austerity cuts on the Coleshill Centre, the Interim Head of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities suggested that this might actually increase the number of users at the Centre rather than cause a decrease.

In light of the Committee's request at its meeting in March 2015 for an accurate business plan, clarification was sought as to the next steps in the process and when the Committee would have sight of the final proposals for the Centre. The Director of Community Services and the Executive Board Member for Social Care & Health advised that as this was not a change in policy, this matter would not be required to pass through the political process, however, it would be useful for the Committee to scrutinise the action plan on an on-going basis. The Director envisaged that a further report would be ready for the Spring 2016.

It was asked whether the micro and social enterprises operating from Coleshill were taking advantage of any tax benefits to which they were entitled. The Senior Manager (Community Inclusion) noted that staff had received training that week in relation to the latest changes to such benefits. Officers were also working alongside the Education & Children Department's NEET Strategy Group and Transition Service to ensure a seamless transition for youngsters into projects or initiatives at Coleshill by utilising these services' existing administrative processes.

Reference was made to previous discussion on supportive employment opportunities and it was suggested that the Local Authority could do more to ensure that as many individuals as possible were assisted and offered opportunities to work for the Authority and that this be included alongside one of the recommendations within the report. The Director of Community Services and the Senior Manager (Community Inclusion) welcomed the suggestion and agreed that a clearer statement could be included in the action plan outlining the Authority's commitment to increase employment opportunities for individuals with specific needs, in a similar way in which care leavers had also been provided with employment opportunities in recent years.

It was asked whether facilities similar to those at Coleshill were also available to residents in the north of the county, particularly in the Carmarthen area. The Interim Head of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities informed the Committee that similar opportunities were available in Carmarthen (e.g. Social Activity Centre in Johnstown) but that many services were being provided in different ways by the voluntary sector. He agreed that the services available could be included in future reports.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. INTRODUCTION OF A NEW CHARGE FOR A PLACEMENT INTO A FLEXI-BED IN A CARE HOME

Councillor H.I. Jones declared a personal interest in that his daughter-in-law works for Social Care Services.

Councillor K. Madge declared personal interests in that his wife is employed as a sister at Amman Valley Hospital and his daughter works in Social Care Services.

Councillor J. Williams declared a personal interest in that she is an un-paid carer.

The Committee received for its consideration, the proposal to introduce a new charge for a placement into a flexi-bed in a care home. Members noted that the matter had been referred to the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee by County Council, following its meeting on the 8th July 2015.

The Chair and members of the Committee expressed disappointment that this matter had not been presented to the Scrutiny Committee, prior to its submission to the Executive Board in June 2015. The Director of Community Services acknowledged the Committee's comments but reminded members that the proposal had been endorsed by County Council at its meeting on the 24th February 2015 as part of the Revenue Budget Strategy 2015/16 to 2017/18. As the decision had been taken by County Council, officers had progressed with the

proposal.

The following issues were discussed during consideration of the report:

The difference between Convalescence and Flexi-Beds was queried as it appeared that there was little to differentiate between the two. The Director of Community Services and the Senior Business Support Manager (Social Care) informed the Committee that Convalescence Beds were provided to enable older people to maintain their independence, to gain confidence and progress with their recovery in preparation for their return home or other long term care arrangements. Flexi-Beds on the other hand were to assist in facilitating a hospital discharge and prevent hospital admission, especially when awaiting the start or restart of home-based care packages or when awaiting minor adaptations to the home such as handrails. The Director acknowledged that from a public perspective, there would appear to be an overlap in these two services and that it might be an appropriate time to review the scheme's long-term sustainability, particularly in light of the Convalescence beds available across the county. However, this was a separate task to the decision as to whether or not to charge. The Committee agreed to this suggestion.

It was suggested that it was unfair to penalise individuals financially when it was the Local Authority's fault that they might have to utilise a flexi-bed in the first instance (e.g. an individual waiting for a hand rail or other supports to be installed in their home). It was also felt by members this reflected a breakdown in communications between the Authority's services and that Social Care and Housing Services needed to work much more closely to ensure that individuals could return home immediately.

It was suggested that the Health Board was taking advantage of the Local Authority as it could simply discharge patients from hospital to meet its targets, even though individuals were unable to return home for genuine reasons. It was asked whether the first three weeks could be free of charge, subsidised by the Health Board. The Director of Community Services informed the Committee that there had recently been some constructive dialogue with the Health Board regarding convalescent beds and the Authority had just received funding from the Health Board purchasing such beds to relieve pressure on hospital wards. He noted the Committee's proposals and agreed that officers could undertake a review of the flexi-bed scheme in the future as well as consider the impact of different charging rates. However, this would not necessarily address the budget pressure.

In response to a query about the next steps, the Director of Community Services reminded the Committee that this decision would need to be reversed by the Executive Board and that consideration would also need to be given to the fact that £73,000 had already been removed from the Department's budget and this funding gap would need to be addressed. It was then proposed that the Committee request the Executive Board to reverse its decision and that the Council's financial reserves be used to meet the shortfall for this financial year. It was also requested that due to the strength of feeling amongst Committee members about this matter, the Chair and Vice-Chair attend the meeting of the Executive Board at which this matter would be discussed, to voice the Committee's concerns.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that:

- 8.1 The report be received.**
- 8.2 The Executive Board be requested to reverse the decision of County Council and recommend that the shortfall in this year's budget be met by utilising the Council's financial reserves.**
- 8.3 The Committee supports the undertaking of a review of the Flexi-Care Scheme to ascertain its suitability for the future.**
- 8.4 As part of a review of the Scheme, officers consider different charging rates depending on the length of time spent in a flexi-bed.**
- 8.5 The Committee wishes the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee to attend the relevant meeting of the Executive Board to express the strength of the Committee's feelings in relation to this matter.**

9. COMMUNITY NUTRITIONAL STRATEGY FOR CARMARTHENSHIRE INTEGRATED SERVICES

Councillor H.I. Jones declared a personal interest in that his daughter-in-law works for Social Care Services.

Councillor K. Madge declared a personal interest in that his daughter works in Social Care Services.

Councillor J. Williams declared a personal interest in that she is an un-paid carer.

The Committee UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to suspend standing orders during consideration of this item so that the remaining agenda items could be considered.

The Committee considered the draft Community Nutritional Strategy for Carmarthenshire and noted that it had been developed in response to recommendations made by Welsh Government in its 'Health Promotion Action Plan for Older People'. The report outlined the main barriers to good nutrition for this group in the community and proposed that the Council implement a holistic community nutritional strategy with a focus on five priority areas and consider available options to support good nutrition for older people.

The following issues were discussed during consideration of the report:

It was acknowledged that there had been a decline in the numbers receiving meals on wheels and that there was a need for a new approach, especially as individuals' lifestyles and tastes were different now to what they had been and that changes to assessment criteria meant that many were no longer eligible. The Assistant Locality Manager suggested that whilst meals on wheels might have appeared to be meeting individuals' needs, they had never been monitored or the appropriateness for certain individuals questioned. It wasn't clear whether

individuals would actually eat the meal and in turn, this was not meeting their nutritional needs. The Executive Board Member also noted that the proposals outlined within the strategy had come about through concerns about social isolation and that very often, individuals needed more than just a delivery of a meal but also social interaction and assistance with other matters such as dealing with their mail.

It was asked whether the meals on wheels service was statutory or non-statutory. The Assistant Locality Manager clarified that if it was an assessed need, then providing a meal would be a statutory responsibility, however, with new and emerging legislation, it was unclear as to what the requirements would be in the future.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to endorse the Community Nutritional Strategy for consideration by the Executive Board.

10. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

Councillor H.I. Jones declared a personal interest in that his daughter-in-law works for Social Care Services.

Councillor K. Madge declared a personal interest in that his daughter works in Social Care Services.

Councillor J. Williams declared a personal interest in that she is an un-paid carer.

The Committee considered the Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Reports relating to the Social Care & Health Service for the period up to 30th June 2015. The Service was projecting an over spend of £679,000 on the Revenue Budget at the year end and a net variance of -£228,000 against the 2015/16 approved Capital Budget.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED to receive the report.

11. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS

RESOLVED that the explanations for the non-submission of the Safeguarding Adults from Abuse Annual Report 2014/15 and the Intermediate Care Fund Projects Evaluation, be noted.

12. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 3RD JULY 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on Friday 3rd July 2015, be signed as a correct record.

13. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEES, HELD ON THE 23RD JULY 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the joint-meeting with the Community Scrutiny Committee held on Friday 22nd May 2015, be signed as a correct record.

SIGNED: _____ (Chair)

DATE: _____