

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 12 December 2016

PRESENT: Councillor G. Thomas (Chair)

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, S.M. Caiach, W.T. Evans, K. Madge, E. Morgan, J. Owen, B.A.L. Roberts, J. Williams and J.S. Williams

Also in attendance:

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

The following Officers were in attendance:

C. Moore - Director of Corporate Services
A. Bracey - Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
R. Dawson - Head of Integrated Services
D. Eldred - Group Accountant
M. Evans - Senior Manager - Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Services
C. Richards - Senior Safeguarding Manager
S. Sauro - Performance Review Officer
C. Gadd - Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance as an observer:

L. Roberts – Area Manager CSSIW

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen - 10.00 am - 12.00 pm

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I.W. Davies, D.J.R. Llewellyn and E.G. Thomas.

The Chair highlighted that David Eldred, Group Accountant, was retiring and he was attending his last meeting of the Committee. The Chair thanked him for all his work and wished him well for the future on behalf of the Committee.

The Chair welcomed Lesley Roberts, the Area Manager for the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW), who was observing the meeting.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute No(s)	Nature of Interest
Councillor K. Madge	Minutes Nos. 6, 7, 8 and 9	Daughter works in Social Services. Wife works in Amman Valley Hospital

Councillor E. Morgan	Minutes Nos. 6, 7, 8 and 9	Daughter is a staff nurse
Councillor B.A.L. Roberts	Minutes Nos. 6, 7, 8 and 9	Daughter is a health visitor
Councillor J. Williams	Minutes Nos. 6, 7, 8 and 9	She is an unpaid carer for her husband

3. DECLARATION OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

5. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting to be held on Wednesday, 25th January, 2017 be noted.

6. REVENUE BUDGET CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the Revenue Budget Strategy Consultation for 2017/18 to 2019/20 and the proposals for the delivery of efficiency savings for the service areas under the purview of the Committee and the charging digests. It was noted that seminars had been held for Members on the main budget proposals.

Officers explained that departments had been asked to deliver savings that would have a significant impact on services. It was explained that the provisional settlement from Welsh Government received in October had been more positive than expected, as it had been cash neutral. However, it would still have an impact due to inflationary pressures, demographic changes and demands for services. The specific proposals for Social Care were outlined to the Committee and it was recognised that the majority of increased pressures tended to be in Social Services. The Committee noted that the budget proposals were aspirational and it may be difficult for some service areas to remain within the budgetary constraints. It was highlighted that more pressures were being put on Social Services and it was felt that this was not being recognised by national government.

Members asked about the effect of the Well-being and Future Generations Act (2015) and what was expected from the Council in making decisions. The Director of Corporate Services explained that the intention was for the Council to try to ensure that their decisions would not have a detrimental impact on the future. The Head of Integrated Services expanded on this and highlighted that it could not be viewed in isolation from the Social Care and Well-being Act 2016, which provided the framework for short term changes that would be able to help deliver the objectives of the Well-being and Future Generations Act in the longer term.

Concerns were expressed over the efficiency savings identified for reducing the existing double handled care packages and ensuring that the health and safety requirements of both staff and service users were met. The Head of Integrated Services explained that the proportion of double handled care packages was high in Carmarthenshire and the initiatives proposed would be undertaken safely. The proposals had been evidence based and there had been no challenge from service users.

The Committee highlighted the proposal for domiciliary care and to reduce the number of care packages of less than 5 hours and requested more information on how this would be delivered. The Head of Integrated Services highlighted that the proposals were based on an audit that had been undertaken on packages of care. It was explained that the service wanted to ensure that packages allowed re-ablement and officers would challenge partners so there were innovative options available. The Committee was reassured that packages were considered on a case by case basis and service users were not put at risk. It was agreed that the audit information would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

Members queried the efficiency savings in relation to Learning Disabilities and supported accommodation and concerns were raised that people did not fall through the net and received the support they required. The Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities explained that supported accommodation packages included a lot of one to one support, which was expensive and often not the best option for the service user. The proposals were intended to maximise independence and address needs in a different way so that there could be a step down from high dependency packages. It was highlighted that there were case studies that would be useful to share with the Committee at a future meeting. It was queried if the Health Board matched funded packages where required. Officers explained that cases were considered on need and a holistic approach was taken. Where a package was health focussed then the Service would challenge what was required.

The Committee asked what progress had been made in relation to rationalising grants for voluntary organisations. The Group Accountant highlighted that work was ongoing in delivering the efficiency savings of £123k put forward by the department for this financial year.

The Committee expressed concerns regarding hydration and nutritional needs of older people being met. Officers explained that these needs would be considered as part of the development of a care package and a nutrition strategy had been reported to the Committee at a previous meeting. Some Members expressed concern with the proposed increased cost of Community Meals from £4 to £4.30 outlined in the Charging Digest. It was felt that the service was not being proactively promoted and should be protected and remain at the same cost. The Committee was reminded that the current proposals were in line with the Committee's recommendation to the Executive Board last year to stagger the increased in cost of Community Meals over three years.

The Committee highlighted that the Service was important to people living on their own and examples were given of vulnerable people requiring this service. The Executive Board Member for Health and Social Care requested that officers be informed of any demand for such services in the community so their needs could

be assessed and the right provision put in place. It was noted that there was currently a decline in demand for community meals. It was highlighted that the service was not available in all areas, however, there were other options such as local businesses.

Members queried what impact it would have on the budget proposals if the price of the meals remained at £4 and how many people were receiving this service. The Group Accountant informed the Committee that it was around 300 people receiving the service and the impact on the budget would be an extra £20k. It was noted that efficiencies would have to be made in other areas and currently there was no alternative proposal.

It was proposed that the Committee not support the increase of costs of Community Meals and for the Executive Board to reconsider this proposal. Following a vote the Committee rejected this proposal.

RESOLVED

6.1 that the report be received;

6.2 that the Charging Digests be endorsed.

7. FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME - 2017/18 - 2021/22

The Committee received the Five Year Capital Programme 2017/18 – 21/22 as part of the budget consultation and considered the projects relating to its service areas. It was noted that feedback from the consultation process would inform the final budget report to be presented to Members in February, 2017.

The Director of Corporate Services highlighted that one of the main projects was the Llanelli Area Review and that £7m was still earmarked for this project. The Committee requested more information of progress on this project and in particular when the new care home would be built. The Head of Integrated Services explained that no definite proposals had been agreed and further information had been requested at the next meeting of the Committee as part of the ARCH project update.

Concern was expressed about existing residential homes in the Llanelli area that were declining and required investment to modernise them and it was asked if this was going to be addressed. The Director of Corporate Services explained that there was £3m allocated to a priority fund and maintenance was captured within this fund. However, the Council did not want to duplicate work that would be part of the ARCH project and priorities would be determined by the forthcoming proposals. The Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health also informed the Committee that there was a review underway of residential homes to identify what investment was required and a report on the review would be brought to a future meeting.

The Committee noted that the report proposed funding for Llanelli Leisure Centre and officers explained that this was also dependent on the progression of the Llanelli Area Review. Clarification was also provided regarding the new site development for Ysgol Dewi Sant and the Committee was informed that consultation was ongoing regarding the preferred site.

Members queried whether recipients of the Disabled Facility Grants, particularly those in rural areas, could use their own builders to undertake the required work rather than having a builder allocated by the Council. It was agreed that the question would be referred to the Housing Department.

RESOLVED that the report be unanimously received.

8. COMMUNITIES BUSINESS PLAN

The Committee received the Communities Departmental Summary Business Plan 2017-20 and the update on the progress made against the priorities set out in last year's business plan. It was noted that the full business plan would be presented to the Committee in April 2017.

The Committee noted that the Service User satisfaction survey questionnaires were on hold for the foreseeable future and asked why this was the case. The Performance, Analysis and Systems Manager explained that this information was incorrect and that a survey had been undertaken as part of the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act 2014. The results would be reported back to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Committee requested more information on the Community Inclusion element of the Plan and developing a model to replace Real Opportunities aligned to other local developments, including the Families First programme and Youth Service developments. It was noted that Members felt that the Youth Service did not target young people at a young enough age. The Performance, Analysis and Systems Manager highlighted that there was additional funding secured through the Cynnydd project that would assist with the earlier targeting of young people at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

It was queried what the purpose was of increasing citizen directed co-operatives opposed to utilising other partners. The Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities explained that it was linked to the changes in delivery of the Welsh Independent Local Grant and opportunities to use the grant in different ways.

RESOLVED that the report be unanimously received.

9. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING ADULTS REPORT 2015/16

The Committee considered the Annual Report on Adult Safeguarding (2015-16), which related to the last financial year and summarised the national policy context and the implications of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014.

The Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Services introduced the new Senior Safeguarding Manager and thanked the Senior Manager for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services, for covering the role in the interim.

The key issues in the report were highlighted to Members and it was explained that this was the last report from the Carmarthenshire Safeguarding Adults Board, as the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act established a Regional Board. It was noted that the Regional Board was currently chaired by the Director of Powys County Council and the lead partner for Adult Safeguarding was Carmarthenshire

County Council. The financial year 2015/16 had been a transitional year for the implementation of the new Act and development of the regional structure. It was highlighted that it would be useful for Members to receive further information on the Act and it was suggested for an all Members Seminar to be held to consider the Act one year on and what progress had been made. The Committee agreed that this would be beneficial after the local elections in May 2017 so that new Members would also be able to receive this information and requested that it be held in June 2017.

The Senior Manager for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services highlighted the main areas for the safeguarding of particular groups, such as older people in care homes. The Committee was informed of the Flynn Report "In Search of Accountability" following a Ministerial commissioned review into Operation Jasmine (an investigation into alleged abuse in care homes of older people). As a result the Regional Board was requested to develop a position statement and an action plan and progress against the Plan.

The Committee was provided with information on operational arrangements and case studies of how referrals were dealt with by the Safeguarding Team. The performance information indicated that the main client category for adult protection referrals was people over the age of 65 and the most likely place where alleged abuse occurred was in care homes. In regards to type of abuse the main category was neglect. It was noted that it was easier to identify issues in care homes than in people's own homes, as there were visits from professionals and families. It was highlighted that 152 referrals had led to investigations in 2015/16 and there was a trend of increasing number every year. This trend and the lowering of the threshold for adult safeguarding had resulted in more referrals to the Team. The Committee expressed concerns that there was a small safeguarding team to deal with referrals and asked whether this team would be increased. Officers confirmed that it had challenged the Council to consider increasing the pool of investigating officers and it was highlighted that safeguarding was everyone's business. The Committee noted that additional funding should be made available from National Government for the implementation of new legislation.

The Committee queried the outcomes for Carmarthenshire and whether there had been any prosecutions during 2015/16 following allegations of abuse. The Senior Manager for Mental Health and Learning Disability Services explained that not all the investigations would have been criminal and there was further work to be undertaken to assist with prosecutions. There was a lottery funded pilot project being undertaken in two areas (Carmarthenshire being one), which was concerned with justice for older people who had been victims of abuse. It was noted that sometimes people did not want to take out prosecutions but just wanted to stop the abuse. In addition there were occasions, such as in Operation Jasmine, where there was insufficient evidence for the Crown Prosecution Service to take matters further. It was noted that there had been no prosecutions during 2015/16, however, there had been in previous years.

The Committee expressed concerns regarding the care homes who were placed under measures of embargo, escalating concerns and terminated contracts and asked for assurances that people had not been put at risk. Officers explained that they were Welsh Government procedures and there were a variety of reasons for them to be implemented, such as practice, staffing or management concerns. It was highlighted that these figures had reduced significantly since the introduction

of a robust Provider Performance Monitoring Group. It was noted that escalating concerns protocol was a very intense process that managed risks and concerns through a robust action plan. Members queried whether the Council would still place residents in homes that were under escalating concerns procedures. The Head of Mental Health and Learning Disability explained that each case would be considered on an individual basis and it was confirmed that relatives would be informed of any concerns. It was asked how long concerns would be ongoing until they required the escalating concerns procedure to be implemented. Officers informed Members that it was national terminology and if concerns were raised then action would be taken.

The Committee agreed that the Head of Mental Health and Learning Disability would bring an update report on the Regional Action Plan that had resulted from work around Operation Jasmine and it would also include further information on the escalating concerns processes.

RESOLVED

- 9.1 that the report be unanimously received;**
- 9.2 that an all Members Seminar be arranged for June 2017 to provide information on the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 and progress that has been made in its implementation.**

CHAIR

DATE