

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 20TH JANUARY, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor G. Thomas [Chair]

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, S.M. Caiach, T.T. Defis, W.T. Evans, H.I. Jones, D.J.R. Llewellyn, K. Madge, E. Morgan, E.G. Thomas, J. Williams and J.S. Williams

Councillor J.D. James – Substitute for Councillor B.A.L. Roberts

Also in attendance:

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

The following Officers were in attendance:

Mr J. Morgan	-	Director of Community Services
Mr L. Walters	-	Senior Business Support Manager
Mr D. Owen	-	Locality Manager [Llanelli]
Ms C. Poulter	-	Locality Manager [Aman/Gwendraeth]
Mrs M. Evans Thomas	-	Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen : 10.00 a.m. – 11.05 a.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor I.W. Davies and B.A.L. Roberts.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

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 Monday, 29th February, 2016 be noted.

6. WELSH LANGUAGE IN SOCIAL CARE SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The Committee considered an update report detailing progress being made by the

Community Services Department in implementing the Welsh Government's Strategic Document "More Than Just Words" which sets out the importance of the Welsh language when caring for older people.

The Citizen's Advice Bureau's report, English by Default (2015), has drawn further attention to the requirement for services to be naturally available bilingually, without the need for vulnerable individuals to request services in their first language.

"More Than Just Words" promotes the provision of an "Active Offer" which is the provision of a service in Welsh without someone having to ask for it as the Welsh language should be as visible as the English Language. The department is working towards delivering the Active Offer by:-

- ensuring that individuals' language is recorded correctly and consistently at all times. Which languages an individual speaks and which one is his/her first language is now a mandatory question on the enquiry forms for the department. However, as a large proportion of enquiries are prepared by other health professionals, the information is not always accurate;
- working with the Human Resources Department and the Learning and Development Department to support linguistically appropriate recruitment practices and training in order to up-skill existing staff. The aim was to ensure that in all service areas the percentage of Welsh speaking service users is matched by the percentage of Welsh speaking staff percentage. All staff should undertake the Language Awareness e-learning module and be made aware of the Active Offer training pack;
- ensuring that the Active Offer is provided when an individual is known to be a Welsh speaker. This entails ensuring that staff working with that individual are able to work bilingually, thus providing a natural choice to individuals who are often in crisis and do not wish to have to request a Welsh speaker to work with them.

The Authority is committed to providing services in Welsh speakers' first language and intends to promote the Active Offer through the use of Performance Indicators which will demonstrate successful provision.

The Committee noted that a separate update report on the training and up-skilling of staff with regards to the Active Officer would be presented to a future meeting.

The following issue was raised in relation to the report:-

- In response to a question asking if officers knew what proportion of our clients are Welsh speakers, the Director replied that historically language preference was almost a bureaucratic tick-box rather than a fundamental part of assessing someone's needs. He stressed the importance of assessing someone in their first language and pointed out that the Authority has made progress but more needs to be done.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. IMPLEMENTATION OF CHARGES FOR NON-RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL

SERVICES FOR ADULTS WHICH WERE PREVIOUSLY FREE - POST IMPLEMENTATION EVALUATION

At its meeting held on the 17th June, 2014 (minute 6 refers) the Committee endorsed the introduction of new charges for non-residential social services for adults which were previously free.

At that meeting, the Committee also requested that a review be undertaken to assess the impact of the introduction of the new charges, following a 12 month period. The Committee duly considered an evaluation report providing details of the impact of the new charges.

It was noted that the legislation referred to in point 2.12 of the report should read the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

The following issue was raised on the report:-

- Concern was expressed over elderly former clients who have stopped going to day centres because they can't afford the charge and officers were asked what was being done to keep track of these former clients to ensure that they are not suffering as a consequence. The Senior Business Support Manager explained that drop-out rates for new charges are monitored and anyone who drops out goes back into the system for review to ensure that they receive any services that they may be eligible for. The Director pointed out that there are a substantial amount of people who have been means tested and do not pay for services. There is also a clear analysis process beyond the means test which catches any unique circumstances.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE DEMENTIA AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Committee considered a progress report providing an update on the implementation of the recommendations relating to services for people who have dementia which were made by the Joint Scrutiny Forum following their review of dementia services in Carmarthenshire in 2011/12.

A number of initiatives have been development to support people in their communities:-

Dementia Friendly Communities – this is a national movement that aims to improve society's response to people who may have dementia so that people feel included and safer. Pontyberem was the first official dementia friendly community in Carmarthenshire and the Alzheimer's Society has appointed a project officer for a year to increase the number of dementia friendly communities across the Hywel Dda area. Ammanford and Llanelli now have Dementia Friendly Community steering groups and are on their way to official recognition. Other communities are also interested in progressing this. Local businesses have attended Dementia Friends awareness session and have been encouraged to make their premises more dementia friendly. A community that can respond positively to people who may have dementia should be a good place to be for everyone.

Encouraging people to seek help – there can be a perception that nothing can be done to help if people are showing signs of dementia, however, although the condition has no cure, there are medical interventions that can slow the course of the disease and the opportunity to plan for the future can reduce problems when the condition advances. For some time, efforts have been made to produce news stories relating to dementia for the local press to raise awareness. Last year a different approach to engaging the public was suggested and a number of amusing cartoon strips were produced by a local artist. They were positively received by carers of people with dementia and the decision was taken to publish in the local press. The initiative also received coverage in the national press. The cartoons have now been made into a poster which it is hoped will catch the attention of people who might not be interested in the usual written material. Increasing the low rates of diagnosis of dementia is a key health improvement target for both the Council and the Hywel Dda Health Board.

Community Memory Clinic and “drop-in” centre – memory clinics are usually located in hospital settings which can be difficult to access. In late 2013, a decision was taken by the GP cluster in Amman Gwendraeth to fund a community memory clinic. Establishing this clinic was complex because it involved integrating different parts of the Health Service. The clinic is held on two mornings a month in Llandybie Community Hall. Three GPs who have had additional training provide the medical input on a rota, along with the memory clinic nurse, a support worker from the Alzheimer’s Society and a social worker from the Community Resources Team. As well as medical appointments, people are encouraged to drop in to speak to the professionals who attend. The response from people attending has been uniformly positive. They appreciate the informality and the ability to park right outside. The drop in aspect has been growing with time and it is a valued form of support. There was interest in developing this model in other locations and it was anticipated that other community clinics would be established in the next year.

In keeping with the goal of Carmarthenshire being a dementia friendly county, staff are undertaking various training programmes including Dementia Friends awareness sessions and increasing the skills of domiciliary and care home staff in order to help them understand how to respond to people who may have dementia.

Cartref Cynnes, the new extra care development for people who have dementia, has opened in Johnstown and the extra care development in Ammanford will be opening in the Spring.

The Social Services Improvement Agency will be holding an event in February to showcase positive examples of work with people who have dementia, which will include developments in Carmarthenshire. This was an indication that, although there was much more required to support people who have dementia, Carmarthenshire has a nationally recognised reputation in this field.

The following issues were raised on the report:-

- Reference was made to the Community Memory Clinic in Llandybie and officers were asked if any progress has been made on developing this model in other locations. The Locality Manager (Aman/Gwendraeth) advised the Committee that other locations in the Gwendraeth Valley are being looked at in addition to Kidwelly and Nantgaredig;

- In response to a question as to whether all the rooms have been taken up at Cartref Cynnes, the Committee was advised that occupancy is currently at 80% which is way ahead of the letting schedule.

The Committee was advised that this would be the last meeting attended by Catherine Poulter, Locality Manager (Aman/Gwendraeth) as she would be retiring soon. The Committee paid tribute to Catherine, thanked her for her hard work and assistance over the years and wished her well for the future.

RESOLVED

8.1 that the report be received;

8.2 that arrangements be made for the Committee to visit Cartref Cynnes.

9. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee noted the reason for the non-submission of a report on the Carmarthenshire Carers Action Plan.

RESOLVED that the non-submission be noted.

10. MINUTES OF THE JOINT EDUCATION & CHILDREN AND SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING - 23RD NOVEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Joint Education & Children and Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committees held on 23rd November, 2015 be received.

11. MINUTES - 19TH NOVEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 19th November, 2015 be signed as a correct record.

12. MINUTES - 14TH DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 14th December, 2015 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE