

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 15TH JUNE, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor G. Thomas [Chair]

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, I.W. Davies, W.T. Evans, P. Hughes-Griffiths (In place of D.J.R. Llewellyn), H.I. Jones, K. Madge, E. Morgan, B.A.L. Roberts, E.G. Thomas, 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:

Ms R. Dawson - Head of Integrated Services
Ms A. Bracey - Head of Mental Health & Learning Disability
Ms C. Harrison - Head of Strategic Joint Commissioning
Mr J. Rees - Joint Carers Development Officer
Ms Silvana Sauro - Performance Review Officer
Mr D. Eldred - Group Accountant
Mrs M. Evans Thomas - Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen : 10.00 a.m. - 12.45 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES AND OTHER MATTERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S.M. Caiach, T.T. Defis and D.J.R. Llewellyn.

The Chair welcomed back to the Chamber Councillors B.A.L. Roberts and J. Williams who had been in hospital.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

Councillor	Minute Item(s)	Nature of Interest
Councillor H.I. Jones	Item 6 – Unpaid Carers	Granddaughter works in Prince Philip Hospital. Daughter-in-law is a foster carer in Children's Services.
Councillor K. Madge	Item 6 – Unpaid Carers	Daughter works in Social Services. Wife works in Amman Valley Hospital.
Councillor E. Morgan	Item 6 – Unpaid Carers	Daughter is a staff nurse.
Councillor J. Williams	Item 6 – Unpaid Carers	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

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 Tuesday, 20th September, 2016 be noted.

6. UNPAID CARERS

[NOTE: Councillors H.I. Jones, K. Madge, E. Morgan and J. Williams had earlier declared an interest in this item.]

The Committee considered a report and received a presentation providing an update on the work that is ongoing in the county to support unpaid carers.

There are 24,000 unpaid carers in Carmarthenshire with almost 10,000 of them caring for up to or over 50 hours every week. The contribution to the local economy in the region is substantial.

A regional work stream developed under the Information and Consultation Strategy for Carers (commonly referred to as the Carers Measure) has been ongoing for three years with the strategy reaching its final term in 2016. Ongoing funding to assist the transfer of the strategic initiatives to the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act has been provided by the Welsh Government for a further two years at a slightly reduced rate (5% less per annum). This funding will be mostly utilised to deliver the ongoing work of the Investors in Carers Programme.

In line with the requirement to produce an annual report on the region's progress and delivery of the Carers Measure, the Committee was requested to endorse the draft Carers Measure Annual Report for submission to the Welsh Government.

In Carmarthenshire a Carers Action Plan was launched in late 2014 which targets activity in relation to the National Carers Strategy. Carers Health and Wellbeing, Carers and Employment, A Life Beyond Caring, young Carers and Young Adult Carers were themes therein and the Committee considered a monitoring report covering each activity stream.

The Committee also considered the Carmarthenshire Strategic Partnership Board for Cares Annual Report 2015/16.

It was noted that not recognising or support unpaid carers could lead to the following outcomes:-

- a decline in the numbers of carers/family members prepared to take on a caring role;
- poor health outcomes for citizens with a caring role;

- contravention the Human Rights and the Equalities Act.

These outcomes may result in increased costs to health and social care budgets.

The following issues were raised on the report:-

- concern was expressed that the Welsh Government needs to realise that funding must continue and it was suggested that approaches be made to Assembly Members in the Dyfed Powys area highlighting these concerns;
- in response to a question asking what payment is available for unpaid carers, the Committee was advised that Disability Allowance is the main benefit payable, however, that stops beyond retirement age, which unfortunately is when caring starts for some people. The issue of payment for young carers was very difficult because you cannot legally start work until you are 16 so officers were looking at time banking in that respect;
- reference was made to the importance of linking this issue with housing as a lot of elderly people live in accommodation which is unsuitable but as adaptations are means tested they could be very expensive. The need for such suitable housing to have good transport links was also stressed. The Head of Integrated Services agreed that the Authority needs to be more robust in supporting adults with housing and transport needs and officers were in the process of preparing a report on these issues for consideration by the Committee at a future date.

RESOLVED

6.1 that the report be received;

6.2 that the Carers Measure Annual Report be endorsed for submission to the Welsh Government;

6.3 that the Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health be requested to contact all Assembly Members in the Dyfed Powys area to voice the Committee's concerns over funding and asking them to put pressure on the Welsh Government regarding payments for carers.

7. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2015/16

The Committee considered the Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring Reports relating to the Social Care & Health Service which provided a near actual financial position in respect of the 2015/16 financial year.

The Social Care & Health Service was projecting an underspend of £115k on the Revenue Budget at the year end and a net variance of -£231k against the 2015/16 approved Capital Budget.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT (2015/16) AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN (2016/17)

In line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure the Authority must publish an Improvement Plan as soon as reasonably practicable after the start of the financial year and it must also publish an Annual Report on past performance by the end of October each year.

The Authority combines these two documents which enabled the previous year's results to be evaluated and future outcomes to be agreed. Combining both in a single document was seen as good practice by regulators.

The Committee proceeded to consider a report which included extracts relevant to the Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee.

The following issues were raised during consideration of the report:-

- it was pleasing to see that the delayed transfer of care (DToC) figure has come down and concern was expressed that a lack of carers was a contributing factor to these delays. The Head of Integrated Services explained that there were other issues to consider and not just the DToC figure e.g. some elderly/frail people may have many problems which require a lot of intervention to get them back into a "safe" position. She added that she is held to account by the Chief Operating Officer of the LHB to reduce this level;
- concern was expressed that the issue of DToC needs to be addressed over the next few weeks as by then winter will be fast approaching. It was suggested that a letter be sent to the new Assembly Member for Health, Wellbeing and Sport expressing the Committee's concern that the NHS system does not work in its current form, especially with regard to frail/elderly patients and getting them back to functional stability.

RESOLVED

8.1 that the report be received;

8.2 that the Executive Board Member for Social Care and Health be requested to write to the Assembly Member for Health, Wellbeing and Sport expressing the Committee's concerns over the fact that the NHS system does not work in its current form, especially for frail/elderly patients and getting them back to functional stability.

9. END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT - 1ST APRIL 2015 TO 31ST MARCH 2016

The Committee considered the End of Year Performance Management Report which outlined the end of year position in relation to performance monitoring for the services within its remit for the 2015/16 financial year.

The following issues were raised on the report:-

- the Committee extended its congratulations to the Transfer of Care and Advice and Liaison Service (TOCALs) team on winning several awards recently;
- asked if there was any progress on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

(DOLS), the Committee was informed that an update report would be presented to Committee at the September meeting.

RESOLVED

9.1 that the report be received;

9.2 that a letter be sent to the TOCALs team on behalf of the Committee, congratulating them on their success in winning several awards recently.

10. SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND REFERRALS UPDATE

RESOLVED that the update report detailing progress in relation to actions, requests and referrals emerging from previous meetings, be received.

CHAIR

DATE