

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor G. Thomas [Chair]

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, I.W. Davies, K.Davies, W.T. Evans, M.J.A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, A.S.J. McPherson, E. Morgan, B.A.L. Roberts, E.M.J.G. Schiavone and D.T. Williams

Also in attendance:

Councillor L.D. Evans – Executive Board Member for Housing

The following Officers were in attendance:

Ms A. Bracey	-	Head of Mental Health & Learning Disabilities
Mr J. Morgan	-	Interim Head of Homes & Safer Communities
Mr M. Palfreman	-	Head of Regional Collaboration
Mr N. Edwards	-	Interim Head of Integrated Services
Ms R. Jones	-	Regional Workforce Programme Manager
Mr J. Martin	-	Social Services & Wellbeing Act Implementation Manager
Ms S. Sauro	-	Performance, Analysis & Systems Manager
Mrs A. Thomas	-	Group Accountant
Mrs M. Evans Thomas	-	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen : 9.00 a.m. - 10.40 a.m.

1. APOLOGIES AND OTHER MATTERS

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R. Evans.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Karen Davies to her first meeting and, on behalf of the Committee, extended sympathy to Councillor Davies on the sad passing of her husband and former member of the Committee, Councillor Alun Davies.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM

There were no declarations of personal interest or of any prohibited party whips.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report in relation to the Social Care and Health Service which provided an update on the latest budgetary position as at 30th June, 2018, in respect of the 2018/19 financial year.

The Social Care and Health Service was projecting an overspend of £881k on the revenue budget and a net variance of £2k against the 2018/19 approved capital budget.

The following questions/observations were raised on the report:-

- Concern was expressed over staff shortages and problems being experienced with recruiting staff and officers were asked what the particular problems are and whether the staff shortages impact upon the service provided. The Group Accountant explained that the figures in the report relate to agency staff. There are over 100 members of staff in the Community Resource Team and there is quite a high turnover of staff. Remedial action has been taken this year to ameliorate the situation. If it is felt that a vacancy will have a particular impact then pool staff are used. She added that recruitment and retention of staff within the Community Resource Team has been particularly good this year. The Head of Homes and Safer Communities informed the Committee that the use of agency staff in Care Homes is a particular problem and steps are being taken to reduce our reliance on them. A recruitment drive is also being undertaken to make jobs in the care sector more attractive.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

5. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 1 - 1ST APRIL TO 30TH JUNE 2018

The Committee considered the Performance Monitoring Report for the period 1st April to 30th June 2018 (Quarter 1), which set out the progress against actions and measures in the New Corporate Strategy 2018-23 to deliver the 2018/19 Well-being Objectives relevant to the Committee's remit, as at 30th June, 2018.

The following observation was raised on the report:-

- Reference was made to the fact that some of the target dates are 2019 but some are 2021. The Performance, Analysis and Systems Manager explained that some of them are three year targets. She added that the Business Plan is set over a three year period and targets are validated every year.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

6. WORKFORCE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT: A REGIONAL APPROACH.

The Committee considered a report providing an overview of the collaborative work underway within West Wales in relation to workforce planning and development.

This work has predominantly involved the three Local Authorities within West Wales, however, the NHS is seen as a key partner and will be increasingly engaged as this work progresses. Regional governance is in place to ensure a co-operative approach across all partner agencies.

In West Wales workforce development has been adopted as one of eight strategic priorities by the Regional Partnership Board. The Regional Area Plan “Delivering Change Together” places a priority on attracting people to a career within the care sector and equipping them to develop new skills. To help achieve this:-

- an Integrated Regional Workforce Strategy Group has been established;
- a Regional Programme Manager for Workforce was appointed in July 2017;
- an initial scoping exercise has been undertaken on behalf of the Partnership by the Institute of Public Care which has identified a number of potential areas for collaboration in relation to workforce planning;
- effective relationship building and collaborative working has allowed a number of projects to develop including:-
 - Nutrition and Hydration in the Community;
 - Integrated Social Care and Health Worker;

In addition to the above developments, the Regional Programme Manager has worked closely with Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire County Councils to deliver the following:-

- the first regional submission for funding through the Social Care Wales Workforce Development Programme;
- development and delivery of a regional programme funded by SCW through Its Facilitation Grant.

The following observations/questions were raised on the report:-

- Concern was expressed that with the continuing out-sourcing of domiciliary care, how are terms and conditions, standards of training etc checked. The Regional Workforce Programme Manager conceded that it was an issue and steps are being taken towards establishing a fully integrated workforce. On a regional basis, managers look at workers’ requirements and training needs with the aim of ensuring that all workers receive the right training;
- Officers were asked how we can be sure that the private sector are committed to training. The Head of Integrated Services informed the Committee that the Authority has extensive commissioning arrangements with its partners. The Welsh Government has also introduced quite stringent rules around workforce regulation in the care sector. It is critical that we have a stable workforce and there are support measures in place as we have a strategic interest in ensuring that we invest in our workforce;
- Asked how hard it is to measure prevention, the Head of Regional Collaboration explained that the regional approach is about how to shift resources from acute services into prevention. He added that measuring the impact of that is something that officers are working on.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. DIRECT PAYMENTS POLICY

The Committee considered the Authority’s Direct Payments Policy which had been updated in line with changes in legislation.

Direct payments are a means by which individuals with eligible care and support needs can purchase their own services to meet those care and support needs. In

essence, the Local Authority gives the direct payment recipient a sum of money which is equivalent to the estimate of the reasonable cost of the service they would have been provided with. Direct payments are an alternative to receiving services arranged or provided by the Local Authority. They are designed to give the recipient greater control and choice over how their care and support needs are met. The Local Authority has a legal obligation to offer direct payments to anyone who has eligible care and support needs.

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 came into force on 6th April, 2016, as did the Care and Support (Direct Payments)(Wales) Regulations 2015. As a result, the Authority revisited its previous direct payments policy (which was a three counties policy across Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion) and amended it to reflect changes made by the aforementioned legislation. The Authority has decided to initially propose that the new policy be a Carmarthenshire County Council Direct Payments Policy. However, the contents of the new policy have been shared with Pembrokeshire and Ceredigion County Councils.

The following observations/questions were raised on the report:-

- Officers were asked with regard to someone moving to another county, how long would it take for the direct payment to commence. The Social Services and Wellbeing Act Implementation Manager explained that the Code of Practice to the Act states that if someone is applying to move to another county, they should inform their county and they should then receive an assessment before they move so there should be no delay. Some people forget to inform their Local Authority that they are moving in which case officers would work with the receiving Authority to prevent any delays;
- Concern was expressed that if someone is discharged from hospital and there was a delay with their direct payment then that would constitute bed blocking. The Social Services and Wellbeing Act Implementation Manager explained that the discharge planning protocol should avoid any such delays. He added that there are various means which can be used to avoid delays in discharging;
- Whilst acknowledging that direct payments provide independence, concern was expressed that it may be possible to take advantage of the people. The Committee was advised that there are safeguarding mechanisms and rigorous scrutiny arrangements in place including timesheets having to be submitted showing what money is being spent.

UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD that the amended Direct Payments Policy be approved.

8. MEALS ON WHEELS PROVISION

The Committee considered a report providing an update on the plan developed by the Communities Department in connection with the changes to the Meals on Wheel Service.

Following the decision by the RVS to withdraw from the provision of a Meals on Wheels Service in Carmarthenshire in October 2018, the department needed to review the 214 service users in order to assess the needs of each individual and offer various alternatives. It was also an opportunity to promote greater

independence and social interaction for the individuals while developing, where possible, community based initiatives to support the individuals and their local communities. The review process began in May and has now been completed.

The review has been a person centred process that has identified with the service user and their family the most appropriate options for the person. The department is satisfied that for each of the service users reviewed, alternative arrangements have been made and individuals have been set up with safe and suitable alternative arrangements. Notwithstanding some initial difficulties when reviewing individuals in the north west of the county, there have been very few concerns raised and the outcomes from the review have provided new and positive arrangements for service users. Examples include people using local cafes which offer a better choice of meals at a similar cost and people choosing Wiltshire Farm Foods, a service that delivers frozen meals countywide.

Based on the review outcomes, most individuals that were in receipt of a meals on wheels service have either opted to manage themselves, have accessed local businesses to assist with delivering a hot meal or chosen Wiltshire Farm Foods.

Very few have required further RVS support and the department is in discussion with both the RVS and third sector organisations to consider how best to meet the 17 remaining individuals' continuing needs including those who require assistance to heat up their meal and enjoy companionship.

The following observations/questions were raised on the report:-

- Concern was expressed that the new initiatives will not meet the requirements of the lonely and vulnerable in the same way as the service provided by the RVS did. The Head of Integrated Services advised the Committee that across Wales the meals on wheels service was seen as not meeting people's needs and they wanted something different. The general feeling was that there were other ways of meeting people's needs. He added that officers are exploring a whole stream of initiatives to reach out to people;
- Reassurance was sought that the new system is comprehensive and that that monitoring will be undertaken. The Head of Integrated Services suggested that, in order to allay members' concerns, a seminar be held for the Committee on the Prevention Strategy;
- Reference was made to the latest report by Age UK that almost 1:10 people over 65 are at risk of malnutrition and 50% of people admitted to hospital from care homes are suffering from malnutrition and concern was expressed that there is clearly a problem with malnutrition in the elderly. The Head of Integrated Services suggested that the Authority's Nutrition Strategy be included in the proposed seminar;
- Reference was made to the fact that not all local providers are listed on the Council's website. The Committee was informed that the Authority tries to facilitate access to all local providers, however, following feedback from service users that they are unable to access the information they need, it was acknowledged that the website needs updating. A workshop is being held in October for service users and carers to discuss improvements to the website;

- Officers were asked for further details regarding the 17 service users whose requirements have not yet been met. The Head of Integrated Services agreed to circulate this information to the Committee;
- Officers were asked if it was possible to contact the 214 service users to ask them whether they are satisfied with the new arrangements. The Committee was advised that a final evaluation could be undertaken which would capture that information.

RESOLVED

- 8.1 that the report be received;**
- 8.2 that a seminar on the Prevention Strategy be arranged for members of the Committee;**
- 8.3 that a final evaluation report on customer satisfaction in relation to the new arrangements be submitted to a future meeting for consideration.**

9. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

The Committee considered the list of forthcoming items and agreed that the items should be presented to the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting to be held on 22nd November, 2018 be agreed.

10. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 4TH JULY, 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4th July, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE