

AT A MEETING
- of the -
**HEALTH AND SOCIAL
CARE SCRUTINY AND
PERFORMANCE PANEL**
held at the Council House,
Walsall on **Monday 25 July
2005** at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor Oliver	(Chairman)
Councillor Walker	(Vice Chairman)
Councillor Ault	
Councillor Barton	
Councillor K Phillips	
Councillor Pitt	
Councillor Woodruff	

APOLOGIES

Apologies for non attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillor McCracken and Councillor Munir.

SUBSTITUTIONS

The chairman advised the committee of the following change to the membership of the committee for the duration of the meeting: -

- Delete: Councillor Robertson
- Substitute: Councillor Phillips

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or party whip advised at this meeting.

MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2005 be approved and signed by the chair as a correct record.

**INDEPENDENCE WELL-BEING AND CHOICE – ADULT SOCIAL CARE –
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

The council's response to the government consultation on the green paper Independence Well-being and Choice was submitted: -

(see annexed)

Kathy McAteer in referring to the report which has set out the council's proposed response to the green paper said that the deadline for responses to be submitted to the Department of Health is the 28 July 2005. To this end following the presentation to this panel at its last meeting consultation workshops were held with all managers, service users and carers.

The council's response has been prepared by taking into account all comments received. Generally the council's response is broad support for the proposals contained within the green paper, particularly proposals to expand service users' choice and control. The major concern however, is regarding the cost of implementing the changes given that there will be no additional funding made available.

Concern has also been expressed that no mention has been made within the green paper of support for Mental Health Services and this question has been asked within the response.

The panel were in broad agreement with the council's response but expressed some concerns which members felt should be included as part of the council's response.

The concerns centred around the potential for abuse of the direct payment system and this scrutiny panel's recommendation should be conveyed regarding the creation of safe guards to monitor the system against such potential abuse.

The panel expressed a further concern relating to the issue of community cohesion in terms of the possible proliferation of specific groups providing services for individual groups of people by virtue of their religion or ethnicity etc. Such groups could be seen to be against the spirit of community cohesion by encouraging certain groups of people in using their exclusive services to become detached from the rest of the population and continue to exist within isolated streams within that population.

The panel were of the view that this concern should also be incorporated as part of the council's response.

RESOLVED

That the response to the governments consultation green paper as detailed in the questionnaire attached to the report now submitted be amended to include the concerns raised by members at this panel.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES – FOLLOW UP BRIEFING REPORT TO THE DELIVERY & IMPROVEMENT STATEMENT REPORT

The report of the Executive Director was submitted: -

(see annexed)

RESOLVED

That the report be received and noted.

PUBLICATIONS (FOR INFORMATION)

The committee received the following publications for information: -

- Scrutiny Champions Network – June 2005
- Health Scrutiny Works – Democratic Health Network Booklet
- Health Briefing – West Midlands Health Partnership – June 2005

RESOLVED

That these publications be received and noted.

FORWARD PLAN – JUNE 2005

A copy of the Executive Forward Plan was submitted: -

(see annexed)

Members noted the Forward Plan and agreed that there were no items that could be extracted from the plan to be scrutinised at this stage.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting of the panel will be held on 29 September 2005 at 6 p.m. and at that meeting financial and performance monitoring reports will be submitted .

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 6.45 p.m.