

SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

TUESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2012 AT 6.00 P.M.

Panel Members Present: Councillor T. Oliver (Chair)
Councillor D. Barker
Councillor B. Douglas-Maul
Councillor L. Rattigan
Councillor J. Rochelle

Officers Present: Paul Davies, Executive Director, Social Care & Inclusion
Suzanne Joyner, Head of Community Care
Peter Davis, Head of Community Care (Operations)
Lloyd Haynes, Finance Account Manager
Andy Rust, Head of Vulnerable Adults & Joint
Commissioning Unit
Anet Baker, Joint Commissioning Manager, Mental Health
Heather Maybury, Manager, Customer Care Team

153/12 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received for the duration of the meeting from Councillor A. Paul.

154/12 SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Rochelle substituted for Councillor Alan Paul for the duration of the meeting.

155/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

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

156/12 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2012, copies having previously been circulated be approved as a true and accurate record.

157/12 **REVIEW OF BROADWAY NORTH**

The Head of Community Care (Operations) and the Joint Commissioning Manager, Mental Health provided the update. The main points of the presentation and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- It was explained that no decision had been taken in relation to the provision of services at Broadway North, while an event had also taken place with service users at the Town Hall. A number of service users expressed concern regarding opportunities for participation in consultation events. The Chair explained that the Panel was very conscious of the importance of hearing the views of service users and would continue to do so;
- It was explained that there was a significant amount of ongoing activity in relation to the consultation, with both formal and informal service user engagement. This included the formation of a project board with representatives from the council, the Mental Health Trust and the Joint Commissioning Unit (JCU). This group was focused on reviewing all aspects of respite, residential and care services. An additional aspect of consultation activity was the development of a Stakeholder Communication Plan led by Roger Merrick, Walsall Service User Engagement. A further element of the process was a desk-top exercise to determine the best way to deliver mental health services in line with the assessed needs of service users. These different strands of activity were being brought together in shaping the outcomes of the review. It was emphasised that it was intended to capture the views of as many service users as possible;
- The Chair expressed some concerns regarding the shared funding and delivery of services at Broadway North. He requested clarification following the meeting regarding the respective role of the JCU, the Mental Health Trust and the council;
- Following a query from a service user the Executive Director for Social Care explained that a review of services had been prompted by significant changes, including anticipated reductions in the level of benefit entitlement for those with mental health problems and a growing number of people with mental health issues. This would result in many individuals being unable to access services. It was important to review existing services to ensure that they were meeting needs. This formed part of the drive to deliver more effective services with increasingly reduced resources, this approach had resulted in fewer people in long-term hospital care, fewer people in out-of-borough placements and more people supported in the community.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

158/12 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING

The Finance Account Manager introduced the report (annexed) update. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The forecast for Social Care and Inclusion was currently £11k, while a breakeven position against Capital resources of £3m was also anticipated. The in year action plan, agreed by the Directorate Management Team in response to a predicted overspend position, had thus far delivered £1.46m of an overall target of £2.11m;
- In relation to agency staff it was explained that an independent chair of the adult safeguarding panel was a role that could not be undertaken by a permanent council employee due to the need to be independent. The costs attached to this role, £20k pro rata, were consistent with other councils and reflected the statutory responsibilities of the position. The independent chair also acted on the Children's Safeguarding Panel;
- Following a further query in relation to the use of agency staff it was explained that by the year end the directorate anticipated that there would be no more than ten to fifteen such staff being regularly used. This was out of a total staff of 800 – 900 and included a number of specialist practitioners required on a short-term basis who would be too costly to be retained permanently. It was also noted that the directorate had the largest no. of employees within the council, but the lowest number of agency staff;
- The issue of the monitoring of the quality of agency staff was also considered. Officers explained that the council's agency staff provider presented regular reports to the Corporate Management Team. It was agreed to provide the Panel with further information at its next meeting.

Resolved

- (1) That the Panel receive further guidance in relation to the monitoring of the quality of agency staff at its next meeting;

and

- (2) The report be noted.

159/12 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

The Customer Care Team Manager introduced the report (annexed) update. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- There had been 144 statutory complaints received during 2010/11 which represented a small increase from the previous years total of 128. This increase was witnessed across the region according to benchmarking against neighbouring authorities;
- Activity included the continued use of mediation, with this being used in three cases during the reporting period. The robust process of managing complaints includes the final letter of response being signed by a Head of Service. The highly positive approach to learning from complaints taken by the Social Care Directorate was also noted. This included Occupational Therapy (OT) now using a generic mail box in order that messages can be passed on to all staff in the absence of any individual. A need to increase the level of complaints management training of staff was also identified, with the importance of awareness sessions available to all managers responsible for responding to complaints identified, One: One training has also been provided. However, it was stressed that all managers are expected to be trained in and familiar with the management of complaints procedure;
- Officers explained that some complaints can be very complex, with twenty to thirty unrelated issues raised within one letter. This results in a very time consuming process with managers required to respond to complaints in addition to their normal duties;
- The Executive Director observed that given the period of significant change that social care and inclusion has undergone during the last two years, the number of complaints had been relatively low, while a strong number of compliments had also been received.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

160/12 CARERS WORK STREAM - UPDATE

The Head of Community Care introduced the report (annexed) update. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- A range of activity had been undertaken including the establishment of a Programme Board jointly with NHS Walsall. The Board's objectives include to develop a strategy for future services required to continue to support carers, identify and understand current spend and activity relating to carers support, across the council and NHS, identify activity and support available from the Carers Centre, as well as to develop a carers assessment format in line with Self Directed Support Principles;
- Examples of work to date include identification of services commissioned and funded via the previous Carers Grant, together with benchmarking activity. A request has also been made of Children's Services to provide a representative for the Programme Board to ensure all carers are identified regardless of age;
- A Communication Plan has also been developed which identifies how communication and engagement with individuals and groups will be undertaken in developing the strategy. There is a clear focus on ensuring that the council

champions, supports and raise awareness of carers and their issues throughout the borough;

- Following a Panel query a “carer” was defined as family carer who was unpaid (non-commercial). It was explained that the provision of a carers assessment to all those who were entitled was a commitment given by the council;
- Officers explained that community social workers proactively sought to identify family carers, while carers were able to make use of the funding they receive from their self-directed support funds in a manner of their own choosing.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

161/12 WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12 AND FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered the work programme and Cabinet’s Forward Plan.

Resolved

That the work programme and Forward Plan be noted.

162/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair informed Members that the date of the next meeting would be 3 April 2012 at 6:00pm.

The meeting terminated at 7.58pm.

Chair:

Date: