

AT A MEETING
- of the -
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE
PANEL held at the Council House,
Walsall on **Monday 25th October, 2004**
at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councillor Oliver (Chairman)
Councillor Ault
Councillor Barton
Councillor D.J. Pitt
Councillor Woodruff
Councillor Robinson
Councillor Beeley

In Attendance

Councillor Paul (Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care)
Councillor Hughes (Portfolio Holder for Children's Services)

132 **CHANGE IN MEMBERSHIP**

The following change in membership, for this meeting only, was noted:-

Delete:	Councillor Robertson
Substitute:	Councillor Robinson

Delete:	Councillor Walker
Substitute:	Councillor Beeley

133 **APOLOGIES**

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

134 **MINUTES**

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15th September 2004, a copy having previously been circulated to each Member of the Panel, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

135 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

None received

136 COST OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN WORKING GROUP

Following the cross divisional working group, the Assistant Director (Children's Services) – Social Care & Supported Housing, delivered a presentation to Members on the current financial position and action plan for Looked after Children. The presentation focussed on the following key issues:

- Current Financial Context
- Current Activity Context
- Strategy for Improvement

(See annexed)

137 UPDATES FROM WORKING GROUPS

137.1 The Modernising Services working group had set its first date to meet on 1st November 2004.

137.2 The CPA Housing Improvement Plan working group was currently awaiting nominations from the Regeneration, Environment Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Panel.

Resolved

That a meeting of the CPA Housing Improvement Plan working group be arranged as soon as practical

138 COMMISSION OF SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION

The Head of Quality and Performance management – Social Care & Supported Housing delivered a presentation to Members on the Performance Review of Social Services 2004. The presentation focussed on the following key issues:

- The purpose of Performance Assessment Framework
- The process of Performance Assessment Framework
- Improvements Observed in Children's Services during 2003-04
- Improvements Recommended in Children's Services during 2004-05
- Improvements Observed in Adult's Services during 2003-04
- Improvements Recommended in Adult's Services during 2004-05

(See annexed)

139 POOLED BUDGET EXECUTIVE GROUP

Resolved

That the report of the above group be noted.

140 ANTI POVERTY UNIT

The Executive Director of Social Care & Supported Housing gave an update on the current situation with the Anti-Poverty Unit and Fairer Charging.

He commended Health and Social Care Panel Members on taking a lead to commission a review of Anti-Poverty Unit activity and confirmed that the findings of the Review undertaken by the Resources Scrutiny Panel had now been reported back to them on 07/10/04.

The Resources Panel had indicated the need for an Anti-Poverty Strategy that was more broadly inclusive of other organisations and to continue the work within Benefits beyond 2005. Further work was also needed to provide detailed options for mainstream funding.

The Chair raised the issue that the Anti-Poverty Strategy of the Council must be distinct from the continuation and funding of the Anti-Poverty Unit. He voiced concerns that this may get submerged.

On the issue of Fairer Charging the Executive Director spoke of a recent satisfaction survey. The feedback identified a number of positive and negative issues with the vast majority of service users feeling listened to and informed of the process. Assessments were undertaken at the agreed dates and times with service users feeling the assessments were fair.

The survey also highlighted not all service users fully understood disability related expenditure and the appeals process. A commitment was made to undertake more work around clarification was emphasised as previous evidence suggested that up to 25% of service users might reduce their level of care in light of being charged.

Resolved

That Councillor Oliver liaise with James Walsh, Head of Finance – Social Care and Supported Housing regarding the planned survey of users.

141 FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED

That the forward plan be received

The meeting terminated at 1925hrs.

Chairman

Date