

## **SOCIAL CARE & INCLUSION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL**

THURSDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

### **Panel Members Present**

Councillor C Ault (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor I Robertson  
Councillor R Martin  
Councillor V Woodruff  
Councillor G Clarke  
Councillor B Douglas-Maul  
Councillor A Paul

### **Officers Present**

Margaret Willcox – Assistant Director – Adult Services  
Clive Wright – Director, Walsall Partnership  
Elaine Carolan – Head of Strategic Development  
Mark Pitcher - Acting Work Stream Lead  
Lloyd Haynes – Service Finance Account Manager  
Matthew Underhill – Scrutiny Officer

### **65/09 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors T Oliver, B McCracken & J Barton

### **66/09 SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no substitutions for the duration of this meeting.

### **67/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

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

### **68/09 MINUTES**

#### **RESOLVED:**

**That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 JANUARY 2010, copies having previously circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.**

### **69/09 LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (LINK)**

The Director of Walsall Partnership provided an update (annexed) to the Panel regarding activity reviewing the Walsall LINK, explaining that he was reporting back on a number of concerns raised at the Panel's previous meeting including appointments to the LINK Board appointments and the extent of its powers. The key points of the update were as follows:

- The recent LINK Board meeting in January was notable for an improvement in tone and behaviour from the Board members. However, concerns still exist regarding the use of the Board's powers, highlighted by its intention, against advice, to act in contravention of and outside of its constitution. Examples of the Board acting beyond its powers include demanding an inspection of the Manor Hospital with two hours notice;
- As part of the process of reviewing the powers available to the LINK Board a workshop was held in January facilitated by the Department of Health (DOH). To assist with a direct dialogue it was agreed that Walsall Partnership would not participate in the event. Feedback received from BCHA who also attended indicates that the workshop was generally positive;
- A LINK Board member has approached NHS Walsall to establish if the LINK could be amalgamated into the MyNHS Walsall Health Parliament, a body which all local residents are able to join and offer their views on local health services, with discussion between the respective stakeholders scheduled to consider this issue;
- Officers have reviewed the LINK Constitution and determined that it will be necessary for five Board members to stand down at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM) proposed for this May, with an election taking place for their replacements. The immediate difficulty that exists is that the original LINK Board was not elected and consequently it may be necessary to hold a general election. It is hoped that by that time the LINK will be part of MyNHS Walsall which has a significantly higher number of constituents, around 7,500, from whom there may be candidates who may wish to stand for election to the LINK Board;
- The Director of Walsall Partnership explained that the very low level of membership of Walsall LINK was typical of LINK arrangements both regionally and nationally. Consequently there would be little benefit in any consideration of BCHA's activity as host to Sandwell LINK;
- The Panel expressed concerns regarding the recent actions of the LINK Board that were seemingly beyond its constituted powers. It was agreed that the Chair of the LINK Board would be invited to a future Panel meeting to discuss the current issues;

## **RESOLVED:**

**That:**

- 1. a further update regarding progress is received at the next Panel meeting;**
- and**
- 2. the Chair of the LINK Board be invited to a future Panel meeting.**

## 70/09 **Links to Work**

The Assistant Director provided an update to the Panel (annexed) in relation to the restructuring, including redeployment support for those in at-risk posts explaining that there had been no significant changes since the previous Panel meeting. The key points of the update were as follows:

- An evaluation of the capacity of each of the Links to Work sites is underway to determine their suitability for future service delivery. This includes consideration of moving from three to two sites to release unrequired capacity;
- All service users are being reassessed to ensure that the remodeled serviced effectively meet their needs;
- The union representative of those in at-risk posts reported that the position in early February was that eleven colleagues had now left on various packages, including redundancy and early retirement;
- There were now five at-risk posts. Two individuals were currently undertaking job trials. There were also two team leader posts for which all those in at-risk posts would be able to apply following the withdrawal of an official complaint from one of those in an at-risk post.

## 71/09 **PERSONALISATION**

The Head of Strategic Development introduced the briefing note (annexed) explaining that it provided an overview of Personalisation. The scheme has been introduced as a national directive requiring councils to give service users the opportunity of self-directed support (SDS), which allows individuals to choose the support they receive. The key points of the briefing and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The introduction of Personalisation means that the Council may outsource its care provision as service users are able to elect to receive their care from other providers. There will be significant opportunities for the third sector to meet many service users requirements;
- Individuals will in future be offered a personal budget, they may choose to take this as either a direct payment ( cash in lieu of service) or receive direct services or have a mix of both;
- The type and nature of service provision is also likely to change. For example, a service user currently receiving meals on wheels might elect to receive the cost of the service in the form of a direct payment which they would then be able to fund an alternative source for hot meals, for example, a local café. This would have to be agreed with by the council and be reviewed by officers;
- Officers have also developed an Access and Response Centre which is responsible for coordinating services for a range of social care service users including older people and young people with disabilities;

- The Government requires that by April 2011 at least 30% of service users have been taken through the new self-assessment process.

## 72/09 PERSONALISATION WORKING GROUP REPORT

The Chair introduced the report (annexed) explaining that the working group had sought to meet the objectives it was set by the Panel in trying to understand the implications of Personalisation for Walsall and together with officers identify potential local approaches to key elements of the scheme. To help achieve this a number of working group meetings were held in which different aspects of the programme were considered as well as guidance provided in terms of the action by officers in responding to its introduction. The key points of the report and the subsequent discussion were as follows:

- Officers are anticipating that up to 70% of service users would have completed the assessment process by April 2011, which would represent 100% of those currently eligible, with the remainder being those who will become new service users in the future;
- Officers explained that the management of a potentially significant personal budget, which could be as much as between £20,000 to £30,000 annually, may not be appropriate in all cases. Officers also acknowledged the importance of adopting a friendly and supportive approach to service users throughout the self directed assessment process;
- In terms of monitoring and auditing of personal budgets one possible approach that is being considered is the use of pre-funded "credit cards". The Council's audit team would then monitor how funding is being spent to ensure that it is consistent with a service user's care plan;
- Officers explained that safeguarding and risk will always be appropriately considered on an individual basis and where necessary appropriate risk assessments will be undertaken to ensure a service users approved support plan is fit for purpose. However, all approved support plans will have to be delivered within the existing budget envelope;
- The Chief Executive of Walsall Voluntary Action (WVA) explained that a number of potential roles had been identified for the third sector in delivering Personalisation in Walsall. For example, advocacy and financial services. This might include providing payroll services or the management of payments for service users;
- He explained that the sector required the support of a clear and transparent partnership between the statutory and voluntary sector to assist in developing a new operating model. This activity could be reinforced by refreshing the local COMPACT (The agreement that sets out shared principles and guidelines for effective partnership working between the Council and the third sector);
- The WVA would also have a potentially important brokerage and sign-posting role as well as a part to play in quality checking third sector organisations;

- The Chief Executive of WVA also expressed the view that it would be important for the public sector to promote the third sector and the services that it offers.

## **RESOLVED:**

**That:**

- 1. the Social Care and Inclusion Panel continues with the Personalisation working group in the next municipal year 2010-2011;**
- 2. service users continue to receive the appropriate level of support to assist them in meeting their health outcomes;**
- 3. the efficient use of resources in the achievement of outcomes for care recipients includes seeking to maintain existing services where required;**
- 4. the most vulnerable service users are not disadvantaged under the financial arrangements introduced under Personalisation;**
- 5. there was effective identification and monitoring of the most vulnerable service users;**
- 6. work continues into accessing all members of local communities to prevent future pressure on dependent care services;**
- 7. health and social care professionals were made fully aware of Personalisation to enable them to advise care recipients and signpost services;**

**and**

- 8. the development of an effective relationship between the Council, and the third sector continues to assist in the production of a shared approach to Personalisation.**

## **73/09 QUARTERLY FINANCIAL MONITORING**

The Service Finance Account Manager introduced the report (annexed) explaining that it provided guidance in relation to 2009/10 third quarter forecast. The key points of the briefing were as follows:

- A net overspend of £2.987m was predicted for this financial year. However, a corrective action plan (set out in Table 2) of £2.531m together with further estimated non-essential spend savings of £0.244m should mean this is reduced to £0.212m;
- There are a number of red and amber risks to the forecast, with red risks reflected in the forecast as overspends (Table 3). Amber risks total £0.567m across Disability and Older people services (Table 4);
- In relation to the Capital Programme, total Capital scheme expenditure is in excess of £0.940m, the schemes, including ICT infrastructure and Day care re-provision works at Goscote and Broadway North (Table 5), are expected to utilise their full allocation by the year end. However, there is a forecast overspend of £0.068m for the Streets Corner Access and Response Centre which will be funded from revenue;

- In relation to variances (Appendix 1) there is an under spend on the Supporting People main grant of £0.717m. The Department for Communities and Local Government has confirmed that this unspent balance can be carried forward. However, it is not ring-fenced funding and the Council may determine that it has other priorities to meet outside of Supporting People services.
- In relation to joint mental health service funding arrangements with Dudley, the Assistant Director explained that Walsall funding is only spent on services within Walsall.

#### **74/09 WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10**

The work programme and forward plan were noted

#### **75/09 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair confirmed the date of the next meeting as the 25 March 2010.

The meeting terminated at 7:30 pm

DRAFT