

SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

THURSDAY 18 APRIL 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

Panel Members Present: Councillor T. Oliver
Councillor B. Douglas-Maul
Councillor D. Barker
Councillor R. Burley
Councillor L. Rattigan
Councillor J. Rochelle
Councillor D. Coughlan

Officers Present: John Bolton, Interim Executive Director
Peter Davis, Head of Community Care
David Lockwood, Housing Standards & Improvement
Manager
Matthew Underhill, Committee Governance & Business
Manager

248/13 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received for the duration of the meeting.

249/13 SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

250/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

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

251/13 MINUTES

Following a Panel query it was explained that a presentation had been given to the Health and Wellbeing Board by recently elected members of the Board of Healthwatch. In addition Healthwatch are expected to appoint a chief officer shortly.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2013, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

252/13 DISABLED FACILITY GRANTS (DFGs) AND AIDS & ADAPTATIONS UPDATE

The Housing Standards & Improvement Manager introduced the presentation. The following is a summary of the presentation and subsequent discussion:

- It was explained that 27% more schemes were approved in 2011/12 than in the previous year. While in the last three years 7% more schemes have been approved than for the proceeding five years. This has been achieved through a combination of higher productivity, with 38% more individuals assisted than in

2011/12, together with faster delivery, including the time from referral to approval via the agency service being 22% faster than 2011/12. In relation to the waiting list, the rate was as high as 551 at the end of March 2010, but the current rate was 120;

- In response to a Panel query it was explained that the consent of Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), as well as private landlords, is required before schemes can go ahead in tenant's properties, although whg provide automatic consent to certain types of adaptations, including stair lifts. However, more significant works such as a platform lift would require whg approval. This is partly because there may be alternative accommodation within whg housing stock which has already been adapted to which a tenant could be moved and mean that undertaking the works is not necessary. It was also explained that a panel meets on a weekly basis to consider schemes for approval;
- It was explained that since 2008/09 there has been a 49% reduction in the average cost of DFGs from £12,575 to £6,467. There has also been a 51% reduction in the number of very expensive schemes (£12k to £30k);
- Following a Panel query it was confirmed that adaptations to the homes of private residents can be funded through a land charge (LC) being placed on the property, with £107,000 already recovered since 2011. It was further explained that with the cost of DFGs falling the amount that needed to be recovered via LCs will also be reduced. Following a further Panel query it was explained that procurement savings had been achieved of up to 39% as a consequence of the Regional Lift procurement arrangements;
- It was explained that of a total of 393 DFGs carried out within the current financial year with three instances where it had not been possible to complete works within the planned timescales;
- The Panel were also guided that in relation to customer service the Mencap Town Centre Hub provided a second "Changing Places" facility in Walsall town centre, reducing the need for a resident to go home to change. While Hollybank House is a 21 bed re-ablement centre;
- In relation to preventative adaptations, for those who do not meet the DFG criteria, it was explained that sixty-five households have been helped, with £375k land charged to date. In response to a Panel query it was explained that Neighbourhood Community Officers (NCOs) would often make local residents aware of this service. It was also explained that a rapid response minor works initiative is also in operation. The purpose of the scheme was to support those discharged from the Manor Hospital in returning to their own homes;
- In relation to linked services it was explained that the Health Through Warmth scheme had been targeted at DFG residents, with 238 households helped;
- Many Panel Members expressed strong support for the performance of the DFGs and adaptations service. Following a query from the Chair it was explained that the approval of schemes crosses over from one financial year to the next. While in terms of capital funding the allocation from government of £1.5m was fully committed. It was also explained that, as a consequence of the continuing reductions achieved by the service in the cost of adaptations, the full capital allocation received from the council may not be used. However, officers agreed with Members that it would be important that capital funding remained sufficient to meet demand and fluctuations in cost. It was also explained that a reverse e-auction bidding process had been used to ensure that the best value contractors were appointed to undertake works.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

253/13 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES COMMISSIONING LED REVIEW

The Interim Executive Director and the Head of Community Care introduced the update. The following is a summary of the update and subsequent discussion:

- Officers explained that it was intended to present a report to the Panel on the potential options being considered for the Broadway North Centre prior to it being considered by Cabinet. It was also explained that approximately eight months ago the Park Hall Community Association (PHCA) began operating from the Broadway North Centre. It was further explained that this formed part of a widening of services within mental health. PHCA had introduced a number of additional activities at Broadway North, which had seen around 200 learners attending the centre each week. In addition, the onsite café had witnessed a 40% increase in footfall. In response to a Panel query it was explained that the activities provided by PHCA were available to the general public, as was the café. However, specialist health and social care support was only available to those who had been referred to the Centre;
- Officers explained that day services were now functioning well, with the activities provided by PHCA adding to and building on the services previously offered at the Centre. However, the focus of the review was around the respite and crisis beds;
- Following a Panel query it was explained that work was underway to properly formalise the terms on which PHCA were based at Broadway North to that of a tenant under licence;
- Following a further Panel query officers agreed to provide further details of the number of individuals making use of the Centre on a monthly basis;
- The Chair emphasised the importance of the Panel receiving guidance regarding the proposals prior to a formal decision being taken. He highlighted the Panel's long-standing interest in the review, including holding a meeting at Broadway North in February 2012. He noted that it was very clear that there were many strongly held views about Broadway North. The Chair observed that two distinct issues existed in relation to Broadway North. In terms of day care services he agreed with officers that the position appeared to be very positive and he had not been amongst those who had been apprehensive at the prospect of PHCA operating from the Centre. However, in relation to respite care it was apparent that a number of issues existed. The Chair highlighted the question of the suitability of the site including the absence of en-suite facilities. However, he also highlighted that the Centre had enormous potential to play a key role in providing effective social care services to the local community;
- Following a Panel query it was explained that Dudley, as part of the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust, do not make a financial contribution to the cost of running the Centre. However, some Dudley staff do participate in the delivery of services at the Centre. It was also explained that Dudley had contributed to the review process;
- The Panel requested that it should receive a more detailed report setting out guidance regarding the current operations at the Centre, together with options and recommendations in relation to respite care. It was emphasised that the

Panel would wish to receive this report prior to a final decision being taken on the types of services to be offered at Broadway North by Cabinet.

Resolved:

That the Panel requests that it receive a report which details current operations, together with options and recommendations regarding the future of crisis and respite care at Broadway North prior to a final decision being taken by Cabinet as to the type of services to be offered at the Centre; &

the report be noted.

254/13 DRAFT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

The Interim Executive Director introduced the report. The following is a summary of the report and subsequent discussion:

- The Interim Executive Director explained that the presentation of the report was intended as an opportunity for the Panel to contribute to the final strategy due to be completed in two weeks. He explained that the Social Care and Inclusion Directorate had placed an emphasis in the report on the importance of social care, particularly for older people;
- A Panel Member pointed out that the strategy highlighted the importance of the environment in health and wellbeing and queried why there was not a planner on the Board. The Interim Executive Director noted that on a practical level he felt the board was probably already too large to be able to operate effectively, he also highlighted that the makeup of the Board had been approved by Council. However, he noted the Panel Member's concern;
- A further Panel Member highlighted the activity of a working group which was currently considering the Site Allocation Document (SAD) for Walsall. He explained that Members had already strongly suggested that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy reflects the importance of green spaces in the promotion of healthy lifestyles. The Interim Executive Director agreed and explained that this was the kind of consideration that should be reflected in housing developments for older people;
- A Panel Member expressed concern regarding the number of documents that have been previously produced seeking to improve health and wellbeing in Walsall. The Member highlighted that significant inequalities persisted in the borough including homes that were overcrowded, damp and in a poor state of repair. The Member suggested that perhaps the focus of resources should be a the less affluent areas of the borough, with improvements to schools identified as a key priority.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

255/13 LEARNING DISABILITY & SPECIALIST HEALTH SERVICES

The Interim Executive Director introduced the briefing. The following is a summary of the briefing and subsequent discussion:

- The Interim Executive Director explained that it was his view that the most valuable measure of success of any council operated supported employment scheme for the learning disabled was assisting individuals into permanent work either in the public or private sector. It was his view that assisting three to four people a year into permanent work should be considered a success;
- The Chair explained that many Members and the Panel were fully aware of the long journey that had been made from adult training centres to Links to Work and the current variety of national schemes, including Recruitability Plus. He also highlighted that he was aware of an increase in the volume of concern expressed by carers regarding the support and outcomes that the current provision offers;
- The Interim Executive Director explained that it was difficult to determine the most appropriate strategy for this service. This was in part due to the difficulty with council operated supported employment schemes where often continuation of these schemes requires the retention of some learning disabled staff able to enable the operation to continue to function. However, these individuals were in fact capable of moving into permanent employed work elsewhere. The Interim Executive Director explained that he was considering seeking to increase the number of those with learning disabilities employed by the council, with his directorate potentially taking a lead. He further explained that job carving could be used to create a new post which could be given to an individual with learning disabilities.

Resolved:

That the Panel will receive a report detailing employment support for those with learning disabilities at its next meeting; &

the report be noted.

256/13 WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13 AND FORWARD PLAN

Resolved:

That the work programme and Forward Plan be noted.

25713 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair informed Members that the date of the next meeting would be set an Annual Council in May.

The meeting terminated at 7.30 p.m.

Chair:

Date: