

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

THURSDAY 7 JUNE 2012 AT 6.00 P.M.

**Panel Members Present:** Councillor T. Oliver (Chair)  
Councillor B. Douglas-Maul (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor D. Barker  
Councillor M.R. Burley  
Councillor D. Coughlan  
Councillor L. Rattigan  
Councillor J. Rochelle

**Officers Present:** Suzanne Joyner, Head of Community Care  
John Batchelor, Local HealthWatch Co-ordinator  
Matt Underhill, Scrutiny Officer

### **175/12 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received for the duration of the meeting from Councillor McCracken, Paul Davies, Peter Davis and Andy Rust.

### **176/12 SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

### **177/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP**

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

## 178/12 MINUTES

### Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April, 2012, copies having previously been circulated be approved as a true and accurate record.

## 179/12 WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

The Chair introduced the item explaining that it was intended to consider potential Work Programme items for the year ahead.

### *Local Healthwatch*

The Local HealthWatch Co-ordinator introduced the report (annexed). The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:-

- Following the passing of the Health and Social Care Act into law, the Council has a statutory duty to provide a local Healthwatch Organisation and an NHS Complaints Advocacy service;
- It was explained that Healthwatch would undertake all functions previously managed by the Local Involvement Network (LINK) and would also undertake signposting services previously managed by the PCT Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS);
- The Council is required to commission a Local Healthwatch Organisation which will be an independent body and which will take over from the LINK;
- In addition, the budget for the West Midlands Regional Complaints Advocacy Service has been divided between individual WM Local Authorities;
- It was explained that the Council was now preparing a questionnaire to enable local health and care service users to help shape the format of services provided locally. This will be available on the Council's website and will also be distributed in paper format to existing members of the LINK, together with around 13,000

MyNHS Walsall members. It is also anticipated that the questionnaire will be distributed to GPs surgeries and community centres. In total, around 20,000 questionnaires will be printed, alongside the online version and stakeholder consultations;

- It was explained that the tender process was expected to begin in September, 2012. It was anticipated that the new organisation would be appointed in early 2013 to allow fully time prior to the new arrangements becoming a statutory requirement from April, 2013;
- Following a Panel query, it was acknowledged that the consultation approach focussed on service users. However, there were limited resources with which to undertake the exercise. In addition, officers were working with the Council's Communications Team to identify the most effective means of gaining the views of those who were considered "seldom heard". It was anticipated that this would include working with Walsall Disability Forum and similar organisations;
- It was further explained that legislative restrictions meant that the consultation was able to seek views on only a limited number of questions over which local people would be able to influence, for example, whether they access services through a shop-front in the Town Centre, via GP surgeries or via the telephone;
- Following a query regarding the importance of ensuring that all health issues in the Borough were recognised, it was explained that while Healthwatch would be a legal body operating under licence from the Care Quality Commission, it would have the potential to sub-contract its services;
- Following a further question, it was explained that it was anticipated that the questionnaire would be sent out within the next few weeks with responses required by August. It was agreed that copies of the questionnaire would be circulated to Members for comment. It was also agreed that the Department of Health guide to Healthwatch would also be circulated to Members.

## **Resolved**

That copies of the Healthwatch questionnaire and Department of Health guide to Healthwatch be circulated to Members.

### *Further Work Programme Items*

The following Work Programme items were also agreed by the Panel:-

#### *Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board*

It was agreed that the outcomes of the next Board meeting would be shared with the Panel at its meeting in July. This would assist the Panel in determining which elements of the Board's activity would be most relevant for further consideration.

#### *Housing 21*

It was agreed that the Panel would consider aspects of the contract, including the cost of care.

#### *Benefits based charging*

It was agreed that the Panel would continue to consider this item.

#### *Community Alarms*

It was also agreed that the Panel receive an update at its next meeting regarding the current de-commissioning process and charging policy.

#### *Welfare Rights*

It was agreed that the Panel would receive a presentation from representatives of the Welfare Rights Team regarding the progress of their work in the Borough.

#### *Complaints to the Health Care Ombudsman*

It was agreed that the Panel would receive guidance from officers regarding the number of complaints made by local residents to the Ombudsman.

### *Adult Safeguarding*

It was agreed that the Panel would receive a report regarding work undertaken in relation to adult safeguarding within the Borough.

### *Nursing Care*

It was agreed that the Panel would receive guidance regarding the costs faced by individuals self-funding their care and the terms upon which the Council purchased this care.

### *Quality Assurance Team*

It was also agreed to receive an update on progress made by the Quality Assurance Team in relation to residential care quality within the Borough.

### *Community Re-ablement*

It was agreed that the Panel should consider the initial effectiveness of the recently introduced Community Care Model.

### **Resolved**

That the items identified form part of the Panel's Work Programme and the Forward Plan be noted.

### **180/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair informed Members that the date of the next meeting would be 12 July, 2012 at 6.00pm.

The meeting terminated at 6.35 p.m.

Chair:

Date: