

SOCIAL CARE & INCLUSION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

THURSDAY 15 July 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

Panel Members Present Councillor T Oliver (Chair)
 Councillor A Paul (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor J Barton
 Councillor V Woodruff

Portfolio Holders Present Councillor B. McCracken

Officers Present Paul Davies – Executive Director, Adult Social Care & Inclusion
 Andy Rust – Head of Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning Unit
 Brandon Scott-Omenka – Performance & Outcomes Manager
 Lloyd Haynes – Finance Account Manager
 Mick Hicklin – Links to Work Manager
 Craig Goodall – Acting Principal Scrutiny Officer

07/10 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors R. Burley, A. Griffiths and D. Turner.

08/10 SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no substitutions for the duration of this meeting.

09/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

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

10/10 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2010, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

11/10 LINKS TO WORK

The Panel received an update on the restructuring taking place at the Links to Work Service.

The Links to Work Service Manager reported that the redeployment process had been extended by four weeks as there were still four employees affected by the restructure.

The Portfolio Holder gave assurances to the Panel that everything will be done

to ensure that affected employees were redeployed. This was echoed by the Executive Director who explained he was committed to finding new positions for the employees although this may not be to an equivalent role.

The Chair explained that it was important that the Council was seen to be assisting disabled people remain in employment and urged a successful outcome with the redeployment process.

RESOLVED:

That a further report on Links to Work is considered at a future meeting.

12/10 AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS

The Panel received an update on the Transforming Community Equipment Programme which was developing a retail model for the current aids and adaptation service.

The Head of Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning gave an overview of the model that was being established locally. He explained that complex equipment needs would still be delivered by the Council and its partners, however, the vast majority of users only required simple items which would be delivered by the retail model.

The Executive Director reported that agreement had been reached with the Children's and Young Peoples Directorate to be involved with the new retail model. He explained that the Council's property strategy included the need to find space for the 'centre of independent living' required to demonstrate items; best practice at other local authorities had been assessed and it was important that the right solution was taken forward.

The Portfolio Holder explained that the future service was just a different delivery model and not a reduction in service. The proposed changes fitted in with the move towards personalisation.

The following are the principle points from the ensuing discussion:

- A social enterprise model to deliver the service was a possibility.
- Retail outlets across the country were currently increasing their stock of items. For example, some branches of Halfords were known to be giving as much floorspace to wheelchairs as they did to bicycles. However, retail capacity was still required to increase before the service could be introduced.
- Performance data demonstrated that a good service was being delivered. However, a small but significant percentage of users were not receiving their items within the defined time periods.

The Panel requested that the Head of Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning met with Walsall Disability Forum to discuss the proposed changes.

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning meet with Walsall Disability Forum to discuss the changes to the community equipment service.

13/10 WALSALL LINK

Members received an update on the development of the Walsall Local Involvement Network (LINK).

The Head of Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning explained that the LINK was now ready to be operating in Walsall and had identified a range of topics that it wished to consider.

The Executive Director explained that the LINK existed to fulfil a different role to the Councils Scrutiny and Performance Panels despite the fact that its role was to monitor health providers. It was important that the two bodies learned to work together.

14/10 PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

Members reviewed the outcome of the performance scorecard that had been monitored throughout 2009/10.

The Performance and Outcomes Manager presented an overview of the red and green indicators featured in the report. He explained that he would present a full range of available performance data to the next meeting to enable the Panel to design a new performance scorecard.

RESOLVED:

That the Panel design a new performance scorecard at its meeting on 7 October 2010.

15/10 IMPACT OF BUDGET REDUCTIONS ON LOCAL SERVICE PROVISION

The Panel received a presentation on the strategic business plan for the Joint Commissioning Unit between Walsall Council and NHS Walsall.

The Head of Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning delivered a presentation to the Panel setting out the aims of the strategic business plan which placed greater priority in early health interventions to reduce the need for expensive residential care in the long term. The Unit was aiming to save £24m over 3 three years.

The following are the principle points from the ensuing discussion:

- It was recognised that residents living independently at home was the best way of delivering quality of life to service users.

- Assurances were received that married couples would only be split up for the purposes of residential care in exceptional circumstances where there was a demonstrable medical need.
- Spending reductions would be achieved by efficiencies in back office functions and reduce use of out of borough placements unless there was a clear need for them. However, it was likely that some current services would change or be replaced and some service users could see their packages reduced where it was considered they did not require the care they were receiving.
- Changes to services would be carried out sensitively as the vulnerability of users was recognised.

The Chair noted that the delivery of the business plan was key and requested that the Panel be allowed to comment on any proposed service changes as they are developed.

16/10 FINANCIAL OUTTURN FOR 2009/10

Members were informed of the outturn revenue and capital position for the year ended 2009/10 for services within the remit of the Panel.

The Finance Account Manager reported that there was a revenue overspend against budget of £56,000 and a capital underspend of £10,000. He explained that demand for services had increased during the recession but expenditure had reduced.

The Panel and Portfolio Holder praised the strong financial management that had taken place during 2009/10 to mitigate the high overspend that had been predicted.

17/10 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered its work programme and the latest edition of Cabinet's forward plan.

RESOLVED:

That a first quarter financial monitoring report be considered at the 7 October 2010 Panel meeting.

18/10 WORKING GROUPS

RESOLVED:

That:

- 1. Councillors T. Oliver, R. Burley, J. Barton, V. Woodruff and A. Griffiths be appointed to the In-house home care working group;**

and;

- 2. Councillors A. Paul and V. Woodruff be appointed to the Personalisation Working Group.**

19/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted the date of the next meeting as 6.00pm on 2 September 2010.

The meeting terminated at 7.45 p.m.

Chair:

Date:

DRAFT