

Minutes of the Meeting of the Social Care and Welfare Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 March 2005

Present:

Members of the Committee	Councillor Cliff Baldry
	“ Jose Compton
	“ Jill Dill-Russell
	“ Peter Fowler
	“ Marion Haywood
	“ Chris Holman
	“ Izzi Seccombe
	“ Alan Smith
	“ Sid Tooth
	“ Dot Webster

Cabinet Portfolio Holders	Councillor Mick Jones (Young, People, Lifelong Learning & Families)
	Councillor Raj Randev (Adult Services)

Officers	Lynne Barton, Co-ordinating Manager
	Bill Basra, Principal Review Officer
	John Bull, Head of Adult Services
	Victoria Cook, Assistant to the Labour Group
	Marion Davis, Director of Social Care and Health
	Victoria Gould, Principal Solicitor
	Nicola Lomas, Children's Joint Commissioning Manager
	Ann Mawdsley, Senior Committee Administrator
	Nicole North, Assistant to the Conservative Group
	Deborah Vickers, Assistant Head of Children's Services
	Paul Williams, Area Support Co-ordinator

1. General

The Chair welcomed Members and Officers to the last of the Social Care and Welfare Overview and Scrutiny Committees before the May elections and thanked the Committee for their support.

The Chair reported that the Green Paper on Adult Social Care had been received. Marion Davis advised Members that the Green Paper was titled "Independence, Wellbeing and Choice" and the proposals for consultation on adult social care would give people greater control and more choice over the care they received. The following points were highlighted:

1. A copy of the executive summary would be distributed to Members with a fully copy to be supplied to the Group Rooms. Members requiring a full copy should contact Marion Davis. The document was also available on the website at the following address:
<http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics>
2. Members agreed to receive a report on the Green Paper at the meeting on 21 June 2005 and noted the seminar date of 14 July which would be open to all Members.
3. The closing date for responses to the Consultation was 28 July 2005.

(1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Andy Marshall.

(2) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Izzi Seccombe declared a personal interest, as her mother is a client of Social Services.

Councillor Sid Tooth declared a personal interest, as his daughter is a client of Social Services.

(3) Minutes of the Social Care and Welfare Meeting held on the 15 February 2005 and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 February 2005 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising

None.

Minutes of the Select Committee on Care Standards in Residential Homes on 21 February 2005

The minutes of the Select Committee held on 15 February 2005 were agreed as a correct record with the following correction:

Page 1 – Officers

The words Principal Solicitor to be replaced by Senior Solicitor.

Matters Arising

Page 9 – 5.5 Conclusion and next steps

Members agreed that coach tours to care homes around the county would be informative and give a good overall picture of different parts of the County to new Councillors.

Marion Davis reported that COMT had held discussions on Member induction and were outlining a programme that included a number of trips around the County. These trips would be open to both new and existing Councillors.

2. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

3. Supporting People Inspection

John Bull gave a verbal update to Members on the Supporting People Inspection, noting the following points:

1. Officers were preparing a detailed Action Plan which would be brought to a future Social Care and Welfare O&S Committee as well as Cabinet and full Council before going to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) for signing off.
2. The Five Year Strategy was due to be signed by all stakeholders at a meeting taking place in Kenilworth on the afternoon of 22 March and this would be brought to a future meeting.
3. Representatives from the Audit Commission and ODPM would visit the Council in May and the Action Plan needed to be signed off before that visit.
4. The next full inspection was expected to take place in March 2006.

Members agreed that the misunderstanding by the press of the County Council's role in Supporting People had not been helpful and the nature of the partnership responsibility for the programme needed to be emphasised in future press coverage.

The Chair thanked John Bull for his presentation.

4. Residential Respite Care for Adults

Members considered the report of the Director of Social Care and Health concerning the review of residential respite care for adults and outlining the Joint Review Action Plan.

During discussion, the following points were noted:

1. The Review had been carried out in conjunction with Health and Voluntary Sector colleagues and had previously been reported to the Committee.
2. There were various reasons for people wanting respite and a number of schemes had been developed to enable carers to have a break.
3. Respite was organised, where possible, without the upheaval to the cared for being taken out of their familiar surroundings.
4. It was important that, where possible, there was continuity and that a relationship was established between the respite carer, the usual carer and the cared for in ensuring that respite plans tallied with individual needs.
5. Additional funding in the sum of £500,000 had been received from Government to increase the provision of residential respite care for adults.
6. The Action Plan followed the thrust of the Green Paper on Adult Services with maximisation of choice and ensuring the suitability of carers and the safety of placements.

Members noted the progress of the review concerning the development of residential respite care, as referred to in the Joint Review Action Plan and endorsed the Action Plan.

5. Developing Short Breaks (Respite) Care Services for Disabled Children and Young People

Members considered the report of the Director of Social Care and Health outlining the proposed strategy to increase short breaks and to enhance services right across the range of community, foster and residential care.

Nicola Lomas highlighted the following points:

1. Warwickshire already provided a wide range of short break respite care for disabled children and young people. The strategy proposed to make the best use of resources to enhance the services across the categories of care by meeting the needs of cared for and carers.
2. National research showed that short breaks greatly contributed to the ability of families to cope.
3. Two distinct groups of disabled children and young people were emerging, those with complex health needs and those with challenging behaviour. These groups presented different problems and required different support.
4. There was a great deal of collaborative work being carried out with colleagues in health and education, including looking at pooled funding and common eligibility criteria to find ways to target children in need and to enhance the options available. The three PCTs, Education and Social Services had all signed up to the Strategy.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The only directly provided care in Warwickshire was foster care.
- ii. Out-of-county care was highly specialised to meet complex needs and was usually contracted with non-profit organisations.
- iii. The strategy aimed to increase the number of families accessing direct payments.
- iv. Members agreed that it was important that disabled youngsters be kept with their own families as long as possible and to do this, families needed a great deal of support, including respite care.
- v. Members acknowledged the difficult role of parents of disabled children and young people and the need to value carers and users.

Members supported arrangements to develop short break care for disabled young people contained in the report.

Councillor Alan Smith announced his retirement at the May elections and noted how much he had enjoyed his time on the Committee. He thanked Marion Davis and the Officers for their work.

6. Integrated Service for disabled children, young people and their families

Members considered the report of the Director of Social Care and Health presenting details of progress made towards a fully integrated range of service provision for disabled children and young people across the County.

Lynne Barton, jointly funded Co-ordinator of the Integrated Service, noted the following:

1. Parents and carers of disabled youngsters were at the heart of the vision, which had been embraced by Social Services and all three Warwickshire PCTs.
2. The Integrated Service had a dedicated, multi-agency team of 20 key workers supporting families.
3. The Service was currently working with 30 families and aimed to meet the needs of 50 families in the future.
4. Warwickshire used both of the two recognised models of key worker across the country – designated and non-designated key workers.
5. Warwickshire was one of 44 Pathfinders for Early Support and the Service hoped to adapt this model for older children.
6. Information sharing was still problematic between agencies, even where parental consent had been given.
7. 1500 brochures had been sent to parents and carers on joint working. Copies of the synopsis were available to Members on request.
8. A Parent's Forum had been established and would hold its first meeting in April.
9. The Company "Triangle" had been commissioned to produce a booklet for young people called "Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down" following participation groups with young people. Further participation groups would be held.
10. Progress had been made and lessons learnt, and the Service was working on a Progress Plan for a more integrated service by April 2006.

Following the ensuing discussion, the following issues were highlighted:

- i. The integrated approach had initially been used for autism and then more complex needs and would eventually cover the wider spectrum.
- ii. Warwickshire was mindful of all transitions made between age groups and services and it was a priority to ensure transitions were as seamless as possible.
- iii. Work was being done with Education to put clear protocols in place for the transition from Children to Adult Services as well as on a multi-agency basis to develop a pathway for young people.
- iv. Invitations to the Parent's Forum had gone to all parents with a known address. Work was ongoing to make contact with hard-to-reach groups.
- v. Members commended the report and the work done by those in the Service.

Members supported the progress that has been made to integrate services for disabled young people following the Best Value Review in August 2003.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7. Half Yearly update on Complaints & Representations Activity (April 2004 – September 2004)

The Committee noted the report.

8. Provisional Items for Future Meetings and Forward Plan Items Relevant to the Work of this Committee

Members agreed the provisional items for future meetings with the inclusion of a report on the Green Paper on Adult Services on 21 June 2005 and noted the Forward Plan items relevant to the work of this Committee.

9 Any other Items

None.

10. Report containing exempt information

It was Resolved that members of the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that their presence would involve disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

11 Modernising Adult Services Provision – Surplus Land Development for Residential and Nursing Care

John Bull gave a verbal update on progress on land developments in Mancetter and Whitnash.

Councillor Dot Webster announced that this would be her last Social Care and Welfare Overview and Scrutiny meeting and she had enjoyed working on the Committee.

Councillor Cliff Baldry announced that he would be retiring in May, that he had enjoyed working with everyone and wished the Committee all the best for the future.

The Chair and Members thanked Councillors Webster and Baldry for their contributions as valuable members of the Committee.

Chair of Committee

The Committee rose at 11.45 p.m.