

Minutes of the Meeting of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 August 2006 at Shire Hall, Warwick

Present:

Members of the Committee	Councillor Les Caborn
	Jose Compton
	“ Jill Dill-Russell
	“ Richard Dodd
	“ John Haynes (replacing Councillor Mota Singh for this meeting)
	“ Nina Knapman
	“ Sue Main
	“ Frank McCarney (Chair)
	“ Raj Randev
	“ Mota Singh
	“ Ian Smith
	“ Mick Stanley

Officers	Graeme Betts, Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services
	Victoria Cook, Assistant to the Labour Group
	Rosie James, Service Manager – Supporting People
	Richard Killingbeck, Service Manager - Information, Access and Policies
	Ann Mawdsley, Senior Committee Administrator
	Nicole North, Assistant to the Conservative Group
	Jane Pollard, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
	Ron Williamson, Head of Resources

1. General

The Chair welcomed Councillor Sue Main and Councillor Raj Randev as new Members of the Committee and Councillor John Haynes who was replacing Councillor Mota Singh for this meeting. He also welcomed Ron Williams, the new Head of Resources in the Adult, Health & Community Services Directorate and, Rosie James and Richard Killingbeck to the meeting.

(1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marion Haywood and Colin Hayfield.

(2) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Members declared personal interests as set out below:

- (1) by virtue of them serving as District/Borough Councillors as follows:-

Councillors Les Caborn and Jose Compton - Warwick District Council.
Councillor Richard Dodd - Rugby Borough Council.
Councillor Susan Main – Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
Councillors Mick Stanley - North Warwickshire Borough Council.

(3) Minutes of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on the 12 July 2006

The minutes of the meeting of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 12 July 2006 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising

Page 4 – 4. Enhanced Engagement with Users and Staff

- a. Graeme Betts reported that arrangements were being made by Peter Seal and Jon Whiting for Members to visit homes. Members agreed that it was important that these visits were made by small groups to get a balanced picture.
- c.&d. Information was being collated on managers and area contacts and would be available for Members in September.
- f. Once the visits to homes had been made (a. above) a programme for visiting a broader network of provision would be considered.

2. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

3. Developing Adult, Health & Community Services

Members considered the report of the Strategic Director for Adult Health and Community Services setting out the proposals for the structure of the new Directorate agreed by the Cabinet on 27 June 2006.

Graeme Betts noted the following:

- i. The report outlined the vision emerging for adults in Warwickshire, taking into account the Government agenda and key national drivers and reflecting feedback from users, Members and staff.
- ii. Members needed to focus on the outcomes they sought and the feedback they wanted in terms of these outcomes.
- iii. Systems and structures would have to be put in place and work done with partners to deliver the outcomes people wanted through local, accessible services.
- iv. There had been a positive response from staff and there was a lot of support for engaging at a local level.
- v. A final report would be taken to the Cabinet for approval in October.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were made:

1. Members commended the comprehensive report, which was a good start in improving the service.
2. Discussions were ongoing with the Children, Young People and Families Directorate on shared services and the splitting of the budget.
3. Heads of Service were in place to take up the challenges for all services and these would all need to support each other and have in place strategic frameworks, which underpinned the whole Directorate in order to achieve the aims set out.
4. A report would be brought to the Committee in November looking at the Mental Health Trust and proposing the most effective model to deliver a better, more integrated service together with colleagues in the Health Authority.
5. The Library Service was seen as an innovative service and the need for accountability within the service had been recognised. A report would be brought to the Committee in the future looking at the way forward.
6. The broader plan needed to tackle disrepair, which existed in some library buildings, which were often key buildings within communities.
7. Trading Standards were accountable to a large number of different central Government bodies, which was representative of the wide range of services they undertook, and the burden this put on the service was acknowledged.
8. The impact the Single Status process would have on the Directorate was acknowledged and it was noted that this area was being dealt with corporately.
9. The achievements of the Directorate would depend largely on the ability to deliver partnership working across agencies. It was agreed that the severe financial crisis within the NHS at the moment made partnership working extremely challenging and there was a need to be open and honest about the difficulties ahead and

an acknowledgement of the need to work together to deliver on agendas and maximise opportunities.

10. Work was also ongoing with the District and Borough Councils through Supporting People.

The Committee endorsed the report and noted the intention to submit a further progress report in January 2007.

4. Supporting People

Members considered the report of the Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services noting the Audit Commission Supporting People Inspection Judgements and considering the report submitted to Leaders Liaison Group on 29 June 2006.

Rosie James made the following points:

1. The Council had been judged to be poor with uncertain prospects for improvements for the second time and it was noted that the Audit Commission raised the bar on an annual basis, raising expectations of where the Council would be against a number of criteria.
2. An outside consultant was assisting with the development of an Action Plan to ensure this met the requirements of the Audit Commission. This would be taken to the Partnership Board, Commissioning Body and back to this Committee for endorsement.
3. Visits were being made to other authorities to look at good practice elsewhere.
4. Closer work was being done with the Communications team to highlight the good news stories.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

- a. There had been limited attendance at the Partnership Board and Commissioning Body meetings and this was felt to have an impact on the service, particularly in light of the fact that the Council was the only partner inspected.
- b. There was a need for Officers and Members to learn lessons from inspections and to use the County Council's role as lead to progress the agenda and to get all partners involved.
- c. Members acknowledged the good work done by the team and noted their role to get the message out to District and Borough Councils.
- d. Supporting People would be high on the agenda with the new PCT Executive.

- e. There was a need to identify areas of weakness and to address the challenges and show CSCI that Warwickshire had come to grips with Supporting People.
- f. Members agreed to receive updates on Supporting People as part of the Strategic Director's Monthly Performance Report and requested that the next report include an overview of the governance arrangements and an analysis of attendance over the past year.

The Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the Audit Commission Supporting People Inspection Judgements, the report submitted to Leaders Liaison Group on 29 June 2006 and the intention to submit an action plan by 25 August 2006 and progress reports monthly to this Committee.

5. Update on the Direct Payments Scheme

Members considered the report of the Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services informing Members of the progress to date in increasing the number of people using Direct Payments in Warwickshire and plans for a more substantial and inclusive use of direct payments in 2006/07.

Richard Killingbeck noted that while Warwickshire had been broadly meeting moderate targets, the County was falling behind other Local Authorities. He added that the Service had now been set a target to double the number of Direct Payment users by next year and a lot of work was being done to reach that target.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

1. The Direct Payment agency rates varied across the County according to availability and market rates and work was ongoing with the Rowan Organisation to give users greater choice and independence
2. The requirement on the service was to offer an amount to cover the reasonable cost of employing a service provider to meet the needs of the user. If the user chose a different, more expensive agency they would be expected to pay the difference.
3. Service users were being consulted through questionnaires and the offer of individual interviews to review the support service being received. A report would be brought to Members with the results of the review and recommendations on whether the current contract should be continued.
4. The use of Direct Payments increased choice, control and power for service users, but also increased their responsibilities and the

- use of agencies allowed users to negotiate times, services etc without the problems attached to employing staff.
5. Money paid to users was kept in separate bank accounts and monitored every three months. Users were allowed to build up the equivalent of eight weeks in reserve and anything more than that was reclaimed from the user.
 6. Supporting People services were currently not covered by Direct Payments.
 7. Users were the consumers and purchasers of services and as such had to deal with any problems that arose, with the help and support of the Rowan Organisation.
 8. As part of the setting up process, staff looked at all issues to minimise risks and make the process as safe as possible. Annual reviews were carried out, and if it was deemed that there was an increased level of risk, reviews would be carried out more frequently.

The Committee agreed to:

- a) Note the progress made in implementing Direct Payments in Warwickshire and the plans for a substantial increase in the use of Direct Payments in 2006/07.
- b) Receive further reports on progress in meeting the targets for Direct Payments in 2006/07 as part of the reporting on the Adult Social Care Improvement Plan.
- c) Request a further report on the costs and benefits of extending service user choice through Direct Payments.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

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

Members agreed the provisional items for future meetings and Forward Plan items with the following additions:

1. Addition of Supporting People update in the Adult Social Care Monthly Performance Reports
2. 8 November 2006
Mental Health Trust Report

Jane Pollard tabled inspection reports for Members to read in preparation for the Select Committee on 20 September 2006. She noted that the morning of the 20 September would be used to look at where Warwickshire were in terms of national minimum standards and the

afternoon to look at where Warwickshire should be moving towards strategically.

7. Any Other Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The Committee rose at 12:40 p.m.

Chair of Committee