

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

Present:

Members of the Committee	Councillor Les Caborn Jose Compton “ Jill Dill-Russell “ Richard Dodd “ Marion Haywood “ Sue Main “ Frank McCarney (Chair) “ Raj Randev “ Mota Singh “ Ian Smith “ Mick Stanley
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Other County Councillors	Councillor Alan Farnell (Policy & Governance) Councillor Colin Hayfield (Adult & Community Services)
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Officers	Graeme Betts, Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services Les Hamp, Finance Manager, Operations Antony Hopker, Communications Officer, News & Public Affairs Philip Lumley-Holmes, Financial Services Manager Ann Mawdsley, Senior Committee Administrator Jane Pollard, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
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1. General

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

(1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nina Knapman.

(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 Susan Main – Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
Councillors Mick Stanley - North Warwickshire Borough Council.

- (2) Councillor Jose Compton declared a personal interest as the Associate Manager of the Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership Trust.
- (3) Councillor Colin Hayfield declared a personal interest as a Non-Executive Director of the Warwickshire PCT.

(3) Minutes of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on the 20 September 2006

The minutes of the meeting of the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 September 2006 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising

None.

2. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

3. Performance Reporting

Members considered the report of the Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services outlining arrangements for reporting performance within the Adult, Health and Community Services Directorate.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

1. Members agreed that the information provided in the Performance Reports needed to be in larger print, be more visual (i.e. graphs), include trends and include baseline explanations of terms and acronyms. It was noted that the system would develop to one of exception reporting, highlighting areas of concern.
2. The October report of the Performance Management System provided information from July and officers were trying to shorten the timescale so that information received was more recent to enable Members to

monitor the performance of the Directorate and respond quickly to adverse trends.

3. This reporting would add to the corporate processes already in place to report on performance.
4. PriceWaterhouseCoopers had reported that while there had been an improvement in Adult Services, Warwickshire was not improving at a fast enough pace in line with other Authorities. It was agreed that the Directorate needed to be clearer about what targets they needed to set to keep up with the improvement across the country.
5. The Directorate was off target in terms of services for carers (Indicator C62) and the Strategic Director had written to the Manager of the Services highlighting concern that the performance remained relatively low and seeking an explanation.
6. The low intensity support service (Indicator C32) had only just started and the expected benefits were not yet apparent.

The Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to note the report and the intention to provide further reports on a regular basis.

4. Fairer Charging – Care at Home Services

Members considered the report of the Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services setting out proposals for a revised charging policy.

Philip Lumley-Holmes noted the following:

- i. The Cabinet approved a report in February 2006 prepared in response to the performance assessment report from CSCI and the 2004/05 Strategic Review of Older People resulting in a consultation being carried out on a proposal for a revised charging policy.
- ii. The proposals attempted to make the policy simpler, easier to understand and taking into account comments of users while trying to achieve a balance between the need to charge and keeping the process fair.
- iii. The recommended increase in the hourly rate to £8.70 from £3.89 an hour for home care was approximately halfway between the current rate and that of like Authorities.
- iv. The preferred increase to £8.70 would increase the buffer to Income Support + 40%, take 245 users out of charging and increase income by approximately £1m.
- v. If the proposals were approved by the Cabinet the new charges would be implemented by 1 January 2007 and run through to April 2008.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

1. Although the decision would be made by Members, it was felt that the additional revenue received should be kept within the service and contribute towards the strategy of the Directorate to return to a balanced budget over a period of time.
2. Following discussions with user groups and particularly the Forum for Learning Disabilities, an exercise of benchmarking disability expenditure taken into account in assessing available income for charging against other Authorities would be carried out and the results of this would be reported back to the user groups.
3. The process of Fairer Charging had been introduced by the Department of Health in 2003. The calculation was based on gross income + 25% buffer, taking into account costs for services such as disability services and was calculated to ensure users were in a position to pay charges and income was not taken away in total in charges. Every Local Authority was required to follow a formula for all users, which could not fall below income support levels.
4. The complaints procedure was available to users who were not satisfied with their charges.
5. The current charge had been set approximately 5/6 years ago and increased by inflation only on an annual basis.
6. Learning Disability Forums had been consulted, but the issue of people with learning disabilities living at home with their parents would be reviewed.
7. Members noted their concern regarding the refusal of some users to pay and it was noted that any bad debts would be reported to Members.
8. The Directorate would liaise with the Communications team to ensure that the changes were clearly explained to all users in an understandable way, demonstrating that the County Council were aware of the implications on people's lives but were trying to be as fair as possible.
9. Members thanked officers for the work they had done in consulting with users and preparing a clear report with a fair set of recommendations.

Having considered the report, the Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to recommend to the Cabinet that they approve the following:

- (1) Increase "buffer" to Income Support + 40% and increase the charge to £8.70, half way between our current charge and the group average.
- (2) Charging on planned hours is continued at the present time but a review of this decision is taken when the electronic time recording system is in place. In the meantime remove what is now seen as

- inconsistency with our banded charges and charge on the basis of a standard hourly rate rounded to the nearest half hour.
- (3) That we do not increase the savings figure from the current level of £21,000 but that this is increased annually in April in line with CRAG guidance.
 - (4) That for the time being we do not charge a higher rate for service users who receive more than 18 hours home care.
 - (5) That the rate for day care is increased from £2.22 per day or part day to £5.00 per day or part day.
 - (6) That rate for transport is increased from £1.07 per journey to £1.20 per journey.
 - (7) Providing all the above are approved it is proposed to implement the changes from 1 January 2007. This would need to be reviewed should any of the above recommendations be changed or not approved.
 - (8) That the proposed charges remain the same until April 2008.
 - (9) A further report on disability related expenditure be brought back to Members in due course.

5. Inspecting for Better Lives: A Quality Future

Members considered the report of the Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services summarising the recent Commission for Social Care Inspections' (CSCI) consultation document 'Inspecting for Better Lives: A Quality Future', which highlights proposals to introduce quality ratings.

Graeme Betts noted the following:

- i. All providers were moving towards a system offering quality of service and CSCI were introducing quality ratings to measure this.
- ii. A star rating system would be introduced from one to four stars with one being poor and four being excellent. Each service outcome would receive a rating as well as an overall rating.
- iii. CSCI would be working towards more consistent inspections and service.
- iv. In order to better judge baseline service, more unannounced inspections would be held, with one star services being inspected on a more regular basis.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

1. Members welcomed the outcome headings to be reported against.
2. Interim, informal ratings for Warwickshire homes were expected to be 2 or 3 stars and the Strategic Director would be working with Simon Robson, Head of Service for Local Provider Services to improve services and ratings.

3. The Directorate would be working closely with CSCI to highlight any concerns they had to strengthen the inspection regime and to improve services.

The Committee endorsed the proposed response in paragraph 7.1 to the CSCI consultation on next steps for the regulation and inspection of adult social care services.

6. Performance Report Full Year 2005/06

Members considered the report of the Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community Services summarising the performance of Libraries & Heritage for the full year 2005/06.

Graeme Betts noted that this was an historical report and the half-yearly performance report for the new Directorate would be considered at the November meeting.

Members made the following comments:

1. Future reports should take into consideration the changing pattern of users.
2. The number of complaints received had decreased but there had not been many compliments received.
3. Members queried the change in time for returning library books and how this had been communicated to Members and users.

The Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7. 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 changes:

8 November 2006

Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Partnership – to be considered by the Health O&S on 18 October and deferred to the A&CS O&S meeting on 13 December.

Corporate Business Plan Objectives to be included in a report from Graeme Betts on the Improvement Plan.

13 December 2006

Mental Health Trust to read Joint Commissioning with PCT on Adult Services (Graeme Betts)

8. Any Other Business

There were no items of urgent business.

The Committee rose at 11.30 a.m.

Chair of Committee