

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 4TH JULY, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor I.W. Davies [Chair]

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, R.E. Evans, W.T. Evans, M.J.A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, A.S.J. McPherson, E. Morgan, D. Price (in place of G. Thomas), B.A.L. Roberts, E.M.J.G. Schiavone and D.T. Williams

Also in attendance:

Councillor J. Tremlett – Executive Board Member for Social Care & Health

The following Officers were in attendance:

Ms C. Harrison	-	Head of Strategic Joint Commissioning
Mr K. Barlow	-	Senior Manager, Complex Needs & Transition
Mr I. Llewellyn	-	Forward Planning Manager
Ms S. Sauro	-	Performance, Analysis & Systems Manager
Ms J. Thomas	-	Locality Manager
Mr R. James	-	Performance Planning & Business Officer
Ms A. Thomas	-	Group Accountant
Mrs M. Evans Thomas	-	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen : 11.10 a.m. - 12.40 p.m.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor G. Thomas.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. DECLARATION OF PROHIBITED PARTY WHIPS

There were no declarations of prohibited party whips.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

5. REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report in relation to the Social Care and Health Service which provided an end of year near actual financial position, in respect of the 2017/18 financial year.

The Social Care and Health Service showed an underspend of £212k on the revenue budget at year end and a net variance of -£752k against the 2017/18 approved capital budget.

The following question was asked on the report:-

- With regard to vacancies, officers were asked whether they had recruited and about the effect that vacancies have on staff. The Committee was advised that there were difficulties in recruiting social workers last year but this year all vacancies have been filled.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

6. CARMARTHENSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2017/18

The Committee was informed that in line with the requirements of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2009 the Authority must publish an Annual Report on past performance by the end of October each year and under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 the Authority was also required to publish an Annual Report on its Well-being Objectives.

The Council's draft Annual Report included the Well-being Objectives relevant to the Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committee. The report provided an overview of 2017/18 performance, progress reports for all 15 Well-being Objectives and a link to track progress on every specific action and target set for each Well-being Objective. The report also provided additional performance information on out-turn data (September) and National Survey for Wales Results (June), which would be updated when results became available.

The following questions/observations were raised on the report:-

- With reference to people being kept in hospital waiting for social care packages, officers were asked how long they have to wait. The Committee was advised that each scenario is unique as they may involve packages of care in rural area, complex care needs, mental incapacity etc. However, it was hoped that no-one would have to wait more than 4 weeks. The majority of people leave straight away and it is only in the more rural areas that the difficulties lie;
- Reference was made to the fact that discharge planning starts 24 hours before a patient is discharged and officers were asked why this process could not be brought forward to reduce any delay. The Committee was advised that on admission to hospital wards identify patients who will require support on discharge so physiotherapy and occupational health assessments are arranged at that time;
- Officers were asked how the Authority compares with other Welsh Authorities in terms of lead-in time. The Committee was informed that officers are currently undertaking a piece of work, Independent Pathways for Older People, which will include comparative data. This report will be presented to Committee at a future meeting;
- Concern was expressed over the fact that in 2017/18 62.1% of carers felt supported to continue their caring role which was a decline on the previous year's figure of 78.5% and officers were asked for an explanation. The Committee was informed that we have more carers but not all of them have care and support plans and unfortunately officers are only able to survey those who have care and support plans in place. It was therefore not possible to compare these figures year on year. The Locality Manager further clarified that officers now use a different way of recording this

measure in that carers and the cared for person have a joint care and support plan so there are less individuals to survey. It was pointed out that to the lay person it would appear that there are less people satisfied with the care that they are receiving and the Performance, Analysis and Systems Manager agreed to amend the narrative.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

7. LDP PLANNING POLICY IN RELATION TO DISABILITIES

At its meeting held on 19th April, 2018, during consideration of the Draft Learning Disability Strategy, the Committee resolved that officers from the Authority's Forward Planning Division be asked to consider including in the LDP the provision to give priority to applications from people with disabilities.

The Forward Planning Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the preparation of the revised Local Development Plan, the relevant planning policies and the potential considerations for people with disabilities. He explained that unfortunately there is very little scope for intervention.

- Reference was made to the fact that officers are identifying sites especially for disabled blocks and concern was expressed that this would remove someone's choice of where they want to live. It was felt far better to consider allowing extensions to existing properties and building bungalows. The Forward Planning Manager explained that if you become too obsessive over identifying specific sites then you lose the flexibility to be able to respond;
- Asked if a review could be automatically built into the policy, the Forward Planning Manager explained that one of the values of the annual monitoring process is that it flags up all the failings. He added that he would look into whether it could be included in the SA monitoring framework;
- Asked whether there could be flexibility to be more responsive to existing housing e.g. a child confined to a house which needs adapting/extension etc. the Forward Planning Manager advised that that should be foremost in a planning officer's mind when considering such an application;
- Ask what happens across Wales in this regard, the Committee was informed that the approach is inconsistent with very flexible approaches in some Local Authorities and others are dogmatic;
- Asked if it would be possible to provide SPG on this issue before the LDP review is finalised as this will provide planners and committee members with guidance in the interim. The Forward Planning Manager explained that SPG has to link back to the LDP and he would have to find the right policy framework in order to do that. He added that if a new policy is being prepared with regard to planning applications involving people with disabilities then the SPG would have to be prepared at the same time so that they are both adopted at the same time. A quicker way would be to create a guidance note which can be far more responsive.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. MEALS ON WHEELS PROVISION

The Committee considered a report providing an update on changes to the Meals on Wheels service in the county.

Officers were advised by the RVS that it intended to withdrawn from the provision of a Meals on Wheels service in Carmarthenshire and that the service would end no later than October 2018.

In view of the fact that the Communities Department needed to review 214 individuals and the service was to finish by October 2018, two officers were allocated to review the service users so that the review process could begin promptly. Service users would be moved onto alternative services as soon as it was considered appropriate. This was a pragmatic decision based on the total number of individuals requiring review and for some this has meant that they are already accessing alternatives.

The purpose of the review is to assess the needs of each individual and offer various choices to the person. It is also an opportunity, in line with the new approach adopted by RVS, to promote greater independence and social interaction for the individuals while developing, where possible, community based initiatives to support the individuals and their local communities.

The review process began in May in the Teifi Towy Taf locality and resulted in 72 individuals being offered alternative arrangements. Based on the review outcomes, most individuals who were in receipt of a meals on wheels service have either said that they would manage themselves or have accessed local businesses to assist with delivering a hot meal. Very few have required further RVS support.

The intention is to commence reviews in the Llanelli area and subsequently the Aman Gwendraeth area. Prior to doing so, a briefing note will be sent to the relevant local Councillors advising them that officers would be pleased to hear from them should they know of any community group or have any ideas as to how best to support the individual.

As part of the project plan, regular meetings are being held with the RVS and weekly discussions are held between the Authority and the Regional Manager to advise of all review outcomes. RVS state that their support will be tailored to offer a range of practical support, companionship, volunteering opportunities and activities.

Some examples of the possible choices with regard to future provision include:-

- frozen meals delivered by Wiltshire Farm Foods and an RVS volunteer (a befriender) popping in to help heat the meal at a suitable time and having the additional time to socialise. Wiltshire Farm Foods operates across the whole county;
- RVS volunteer/befriender picks up the individual and takes them to a local pub (pub clubs?)/café for a meal;
- RVS volunteer/befriender picks up the individual to attend a lunch club;
- RVS to establish new activity and lunch clubs;
- local business delivering meals.

The following questions/observations were raised on the report:-

- Concern was expressed that one system is being disbanded and another system introduced where we may not have the capacity to do it. The Head of Strategic Joint Commissioning explained that one system is not being replaced by another as all individuals will be able to choose the provision that suits them best;
- Concern was expressed with regard to the elderly heating food in the microwave and burning themselves. The Committee was advised that the assessment not only covers their nutritional needs but all of their needs including their personal circumstances. The Head of Strategic Joint Commissioning agreed to speak to the provider regarding the heat resistance of the containers used for microwave meals;
- Concern was also expressed that the elderly may stock pile the meals in the freezer and not actually eat them. The Committee was advised that if such an issue is brought to the attention of officers and that there is evidence that an elderly person is not eating then their situation would be reassessed.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

9. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORTS

The Committee noted the reasons for the non-submission of the following reports:-

- Country Cars
- West Wales Regional Partnership Board (Young Carers)
- Initiatives to Safeguard Teenagers from Harm

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

10. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meetings to be held on 25th September, 2018 be noted.

11. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 21ST MAY, 2018

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st May, 2018 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE