

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2011 at County Hall, Northallerton.

PRESENT:-

County Councillor Tony Hall in the Chair.

County Councillors: John Batt, John Fox, Bill Hoult, Brian Marshall, Joseph Plant, John Savage, Melva Steckles, Heather Garnett (as substitute for Helen Swiers) and Heather Moorhouse (as substitute for Herbert Tindall).

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector: Bridget Hardy and Alex Bird.

Present by Invitation: Jill Quinn (Alzheimer's Society) and Mike Padgham (Independent Care Group).

Officers: Derek Law (Corporate Director, (Adult and Community Services)), Seamus Breen (Assistant Director, Commissioning & Partnerships, (Adult and Community Services)), Julie Blaisdale (Assistant Director, Library and Community Services (Adult & Community Services)), Ray Busby (Scrutiny & Corporate Performance), Louise Barker (Legal & Democratic Services).

Apologies: County Councillors Pat Marsburg, Dave Peart and Peter Pople.

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

60. MINUTES

Alex Bird referred to Minute 56 in relation to Charging for Social Care Services. Feedback to her from local older people support groups in particular had been that they had struggled to meet, reach a view and then convey comments within the consultation period, which she now understood to have concluded.

Derek Law, Corporate Director, Adult and Community Services, reported that the expectation was that individuals directly affected by the proposals would have the opportunity to comment on the revised policy and charging regime, in so far as it affected their personal circumstances, within what was therefore in effect an extended consultation period.

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2010 and 9 December 2010, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

61. PUBLIC QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS

The Committee was advised that no notice had been received of any public questions or statements to be made at the meeting.

62. DEMENTIA DECLARATION AND LOCAL INVOLVEMENT FORUMS

CONSIDERED –

(a) The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader.

Ray Busby introduced the report stating that it been a long standing priority of the Committee and that it had been running alongside national work. He highlighted paragraph 2.3 of the report, which stated that the Committee decided that when the time was right, they would look again at two areas where elected Member interests would likely to add the most value. These were: contributing to improving awareness and support by helping to change attitudes in the wider community to people with Dementia and; Championing elected Member participation corporately, but especially in localities by participation in local Dementia forums. He also highlighted that there could be an opportunity to promote the launch of the Dementia Declaration on 25 February 2011, which would be ‘National Dignity Day’.

Ray Busby introduced Jill Quinn to the Committee and stated that she would expand on the Alzheimer’s Society role.

(b) Presentation by Jill Quinn, Alzheimer’s Society.

Jill Quinn gave an update on local activity with regard to Dementia Forums, particularly from the Harrogate and Craven perspective. Local Forums were now up and running and the key objective was to be active in the community. For her the critical question we all faced was how do we make Dementia everybody’s business and continue to raise awareness of the condition. She had been involved personally with the Sub-Group of the Dementia network that was focussing on workforce and training. Whilst a good deal of work had been done preparing training, particularly on line versions for staff, for her the key development area was to increase wider non-professional awareness. There was not enough education particularly of individuals who worked in those non-social care areas.

Information was given to the Committee regarding Dementia events, seminar/workshop organised by the Chairman of North Yorkshire LINKS, Kath Murray, on Friday 11 March at the Galtres Centre. Jill would have a particular slot on this day on Local Dementia Forum. The second major event would be the launch of the Dementia Declaration in North Yorkshire, when the declaration would be amended with a view to making North Yorkshire an exemplar Authority in terms of Member involvement and awareness of dementia in communities.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Committee sign the Dementia Declaration, adapted by the County Council entering to include a pledge to improve both Elected Member awareness of the condition and involvement with dementia issues at a local level.
- (b) That the Chairman consider extending an invite to the day to as wide a circulation as possible to attract media and press interest.
- (c) The Committee supports the proposal that one way of fulfilling that pledge would be to connect Local Members with their Dementia Local Forum organised by the Alzheimer’s Society. Further development work would be undertaken in this area.

63. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OLDER PEOPLES CHAMPION

CONSIDERED –

The annual report of the Older People's Champion and Adult and Community Services update.

County Councillor Shelagh Marshall introduced the report to update Members on the work she had carried out over the year as the Older People's Champion for North Yorkshire County Council.

She highlighted that she was a member of the 'Equalities Impact Assessment' Group, which had looked at several issues including bus pass use; the proposal to close 18 of the most heavily used libraries and the discontinuance of the mobile library service. She also highlighted that a consultation had taken place across the whole of Yorkshire and Humber to seek older people's views on changing the name of the 'Geriatric' unit in hospitals and for the name change to be adopted across the whole of the UK.

County Councillor Marshall stated that she was actively promoting the digitalisation agenda and that letters had started to go out to older residents of North Yorkshire to make them aware of some of the entitlements and rights to digital TV connection.

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Marshall for her report.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

64. JSNA, ADULT VISION FOR SOCIAL CARE BIG SOCIETY AND COMMISSIONING

CONSIDERED –

Derek Law, Corporate Director, Adult and Community Services, introduced this item and referred to the presentation he had used at the Members Seminar. The presentation revisited these issues commenting upon the implications of the vision for Social Care. The proposals within the White Paper came as no surprise to the County Council, which had made great strides in achieving many of the objectives in relation to the seven P's. Legislation which might cover issues to long term funding could well be part of one whole White Paper later in the Spring 2012.

With regard to the JSNA, Seamus Breen commented that this work needed to be linked to the transfer of public health to Local Authorities. A key feature for the future would be the transformation of the marketplace and more people buying direct for their services.

Mike Padgham started his presentation by thanking the Committee for the invite and indicated that he would be happy to come back to present a more detailed presentation on the Independent Care Sector at the next meeting. The Independent Sector covered a range of ownerships and circumstances ranging from the profit and private sector to the voluntary sector. There was a good deal of acceptance within the sector that it needed to change to meet the challenges and the new commissioning arrangements within the vision of Social Care. In a time of financial constraints, the market had found it financially challenging. It was entirely possible that we were entering another period of sustained care homes closures in the communities. Together with the Directorate there was a common approach to tackling care sector issues. Dialogue between the statutory and Independent Care Sector was still strong, it was important this continued if we were to overcome the problems that would be faced in the coming months.

In relation to the involvement of the Independent Care Sector and to the work of the Committee, it was suggested that Group Spokespersons at the Mid-Cycle Briefing consider options around the range of involvement of the Independent Care Sector from attending the Committee as witnesses and advisers through to full co-option membership along the same lines as the Voluntary Sector Representatives.

Seamus Breen undertook to provide more information to the Committee and Group Spokespersons on JSNA preparation for the coming year.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

65. EXTRA CARE HOUSING

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Director Adult and Community Services to outline the current position of Extra Care Housing in line with the Council's Our Future Lives policy and objectives within the Strategic Commissioning Plan and to advise Members of the Committee of background work presently underway.

Seamus Breen summarised the report, highlighting that progress had been made and the need to move forward more rapidly. He stated that Government grants had become more challenging to secure and the Directorate could no longer rely on Government funding for development.

He advised Members that the future of nine residential homes earmarked for potential closure and their relationship to extra care developments was still under discussion by the Executive and he expected the Council's position to become clearer by the end of March 2011.

RESOLVED –

That the work going on to progress the Extra Care Housing development agenda in North Yorkshire, be noted.

66. LIBRARY CONSULTATIONS

CONSIDERED –

Julie Blaisdale, Assistant Director, Library and Community Services, gave a verbal report to update the Committee on the recent Library Consultations taking place from 6 December 2010 – 25 February 2011. She stated that the total amount of savings that had to be made was £2 million, £1 million of which in the first year.

Derek Law, County Councillor Chris Metcalfe and herself had attended a number of public meetings and Area Committee meetings with a presentation as part of the consultation process regarding the future of the current service. She commented that the public meetings had been very well attended and that people were very interested to hear the proposals. The general feedback that had been received was that the public valued the current service greatly and did not want it to change.

Julie Blaisdale explained that they had to think of new ways to deliver the service and how local communities could be involved with the change. A fact sheet and consultation pack had been produced. It had been made available on the North Yorkshire County Council website, and had attracted a high number of visits. She also stated that once the consultation period had ended a good deal of time would be devoted to assessing all responses received, as no decisions would be rushed. She expected that recommendations would be ready for Members by April/May.

Members made the following comments:

- In response to questions raised regarding bringing the service into local communities and using volunteers to issue books, Julie Blaisdale explained they

had written to all Parish Councils and Town Councils about running a small library service and that there were many opportunities for communities to be involved. She stated that she was open to any ideas on how to run the service more cost effectively.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

67. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT REPORT FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE 2009/10

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Director Adult and Community Services on the Annual Performance Assessment for Adult Social Care 2009/10.

Derek Law outlined the report stating that it would be the last of its kind and that something would be brought in to replace it. He commented that he would like the Chairman and Committee to send a message to commend staff, especially those at the front line who had worked hard and maintained a high quality service during this difficult time.

The Chairman stated that he would be more than happy to send a letter to Derek Law from the Committee to circulate to staff congratulating them on their hard work.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That the Chairman write to the Adult and Social Care staff explaining that the Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee is pleased to hear of the supportive assessment from the Commission for Social Care Inspection on the work of the Adult and Social Community Services Directorate. The Chairman to express the Committee's appreciation for the continuing commitment, energy and professionalism, of staff during difficult times for anyone involved in Social Care.

68. WORK PROGRAMME

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Corporate Performance to agree the work programme at Appendix 1 to the report and update the work programme items and review the shape of work ahead.

Ray Busby presented the report highlighting that he had received two requests for work for the Committee to undertake:

- Scrutiny of the County Council Strategy for Support Carers and;
- Supporting People: Involvement of Members.

He suggested Scrutiny of the County Council Strategy for Support Carers would be referred to the next Mid-Cycle Briefing to consider what aims are to be achieved.

He also highlighted to Members the:

- Drugs and Alcohol Team Board workshop, Thursday 24 February 2011 at 10.30 am and;
- The postponement of the workshop to review the shape, impact and effectiveness of Re-ablement services in North Yorkshire, originally agreed for Wednesday 2

March 2011 at 2.00 pm. An alternative date would be discussed at the forth coming Mid-Cycle Briefing.

The Chairman suggested that the headings used in the Work Programme be changed to incorporate the 7 P's.

RESOLVED –

That the report be noted.

LB/ALJ