

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2011 at 10.30 am at County Hall, Northallerton.

PRESENT:-

County Councillor Tony Hall in the Chair.

County Councillors: John Batt, John Fox, Bill Hoult, Pat Marsburg, Brian Marshall, John McCartney, John Savage, Melva Steckles, Herbert Tindall

Representative of the Voluntary Sector: Alex Bird

Representative of the Independent Care Sector: Mike Padgham

County Councillor Clare Wood, Portfolio Holder – Adult Services

Officers: Helen Taylor (Corporate Director Health and Adult Services), Seamus Breen (Assistant Director, Commissioning & Partnerships, (Health and Adult Services)), Mike Webster (Assistant Director, Contracting, Procurement and Quality Assurance, (Health and Adult Services)), Debbie Hogg, (Assistant Director Resources, (Health and Adult Services)), Linda Porritt, (Benefits, Assessment & Charging Co-ordinator, (Health and Adult Services)) , Ray Busby (Scrutiny Support Officer, (Policy, Performance and Partnerships)).

Apologies: Dave Peart, Margaret Hulme, Helen Swiers

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

104. MINUTES

County Councillor Bill Hoult expressed his disappointment that there was no record of his comment and question about the commercial choices providers face as personalisation of social care increasingly becomes the norm. Ray Busby advised he had decided not to minute them as they had not been directly material to the outcome of the Committee's discussion on Dementia day services. He completely agreed that the Committee should retain an interest in the challenges personalisation and changed commissioning arrangements presented for providers; a point echoed by Alex Bird. It was agreed that the absence of a reference to this discussion at the last meeting did not bring the accuracy of the minutes into doubt.

RESOLVED –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2011, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

105. 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.

106. NORTH YORKSHIRE VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Director Health and Adult Services.

- a. Informing Members how North Yorkshire County Council intends to implement the Government's vision for social care as set out in the Department of Health publication, a vision for Adult Social Care: Capable Communities and Active Citizens.
- b. Describing the development of a series of booklets outlining the Council's vision for adult social care in North Yorkshire, the process of engagement to date and in the future.

Seamus Breen explained the statement set out the pathway people might expect when approaching the Directorate for help. Currently customer contact to the County Council regarding social care matters was in the region of 16,000 a year, of which half were ordinarily signposted or diverted to other services.

Re-ablement had been a key feature in reducing costs. The thinking was that after an initial period of support, should ongoing support be needed a dialogue regarding the option of a personal budget would be entered into.

Reassurance was sought about how the Directorate would ensure a person was continuing to receive support after opting for a personal budget. Seamus Breen explained the mechanisms in place which included recourse to advocacy alliances, intervention and regular reassessment.

Whilst Members complemented the document they also raised the following:

1. Arguably there was limited reference in the text to prevention; as a result a reader might not be able to ascertain its relative priority.
2. Whilst there was some reference to volunteering, the document was largely silent on the crucial contribution of the voluntary and community sector in early intervention and prevention. Members asked whether an explicit statement regarding prevention was needed together with some explanation of how that dovetailed with North Yorkshire County Council's commissioning priorities.

Seamus Breen responded that the intention had been to convey that prevention and early intervention underpinned the vision. Book 1 especially was centred on prevention, though he would revisit the wording to ensure that this was properly reflected in the narrative.

He confirmed that older people's services would feature in one of the later Books in the series.

Members raised the impact of personalisation on the relationship between social care and health. There was some work to be done locally to progress personal health budgets. The aim of discussions with health colleagues was to agree an integrated service that appeared seamless for all users.

In response to questions it was agreed that further information be made available describing how Members could access the documents that comprised the vision and then feedback their comments.

RESOLVED –

- i. The publication of the booklets outlining the vision for adult social care as it seeks to further implement national policy and Council strategies, and the opening of dialogue and consultation, be noted.
- ii. A future report be received updating members on the feedback from the consultation.
- iii. The Committee express its support to the Directorate in establishing further targeted consultation if changes are proposed for a particular service.
- iv. It be noted that one of the five Books would focus on older people's services and the Committee would expect an early briefing on its content and scope.
- v. The Corporate Director consider the following:
 - a. The emphasis on intervention and prevention could helpfully be made clearer in the document.
 - b. Information should come to Members on the details and content and direction of travel of subsequent books.
 - c. More information be made available regarding circulation and accessibility of the document.
- vi. On welcoming the concept of the health and social care vision the Committee's future role would be to stress test future service proposals and developments against the overall approach and philosophy in the vision.

107. CHARGING AND ASSESSMENT OF CLIENT CONTRIBUTIONS

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Director – Health and Adult Services.

To inform members of the committee of the up to date position since the implementation of the new Fairer Contributions charging policy for community based services, provided by Health and Adult Services (HAS).

To provide members of the committee with feedback from customers as a result of the new charging policy.

The Chairman mentioned the previous Call-In decision and that invitations had been issued to the six signatories, none of whom were present at the meeting.

Debbie Hogg, Assistant Director Resources, explained that five months data was an unreliaibly short length of time to reach definitive decisions about trends. Many service users were still in a period of transitional relief and therefore protected from the full impact. User opposition to the changes may become more vocal at the end of that period and thus a more accurate assessment of customer reaction could only confidently be made later next year. In relation to income, £7.2m was received from charges last year prior to the new changes, comprised mostly from personal care and home and day care. £3m had been received up till the end of September and although the figures were not wholly comparable, the projection was that the amount of income levied and recovered would be less than last year.

The reduction in service income may in part be attributable to the success of re-ablement services in reducing long-term support and moving people to independence and “out of the system”.

Alex Bird reported that there was some concern in the wider community and in particular from third sector providers at the number of individuals coming to them for support at the end of the re-ablement period.

RESOLVED –

- a. It was agreed that the Chairman be authorised, in consultation with Group Spokepersons, to determine the most appropriate meeting date when an update report would be submitted.
- b. It was agreed that further information be made available to Members on a break-down of the figures in Table 2.6 and 2.7.

108. ESTABLISHING NORTH YORKSHIRE'S HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Director – Health and Adult Services regarding the formation of a Health and Wellbeing Board.

Overall, Members were pleased at the strong lead taken by the County Council with support and co-operation from all partners.

In principle, the Committee strongly supported the constitutional and structural proposals. Whilst not critical of the clear intention to establish a Board that was representative of key partners, Members did have concerns however that a membership of 20 plus may be too large to maintain focus and may ultimately hinder strong, responsive decision-making.

A number of Members expressed fears that rural issues might not feature at the top of the agenda. They were reassured however, when the Portfolio Holder commented that the strong political leadership and ownership of the changes being shown by the County Council would ensure the rural dimension is at the forefront of the Board's programme. She also emphasised that a number of the clinical commissioning groups were themselves from rural areas and therefore strong advocates of effective rural access to services.

Members emphasised the importance of the Board's priorities being influenced by meaningful communication with older peoples groups

The Chairman expressed the view that in time the Scrutiny Committee would want to be part of the discussions on how the Board was held to account for its actions.

RESOLVED:

When the Executive is asked to approve the arrangements for establishing a Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board for North Yorkshire, the Chairman report the Committee's comments below:

- a. The Committee has concerns about the proposed size and membership of the Board, whilst not having critical comments to make about its makeup.
- b. Feedback from the consultation and the representations was noted, as was the principle that meetings be held in public.
- c. The Committee makes no comment to the issue of NHS provider representation and advice.

- d. The importance of the Board's priorities being influenced by effective and meaningful communication with older people's groups.

109. CARERS STRATEGY

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Corporate Director – Health and Adult Services.

The Committee has maintained an interest in how the Council supports carers, not necessarily as a topic by itself, but in the context of other reviews, most notably Access to Dementia Services in the County.

In the light of emerging Government policy the Committee thought it timely to review activity and progress against the Carers Strategy, focussing in particular on the personalisation agenda.

Mike Webster reminded Members that the Committee had been an original consultee when the North Yorkshire Carers Draft Strategy had been considered. As the report suggested, changes in legislation had meant that an interim statement was appropriate. Details were given of recent and current initiatives to support carers in the community.

Sarah Wileman advised the aim was to ensure consistent and equitable services across the County. This had been the principle underlying the re-negotiation of contracts for night sitting support in the Hambleton and Richmondshire area for example.

Members reinforced comments made at earlier meetings about how critical it is to engage with primary care practitioners to identify carers early.

County Councillor John Batt sought information on the support for people when the person they cared for died. Sarah Wileman confirmed that Carers Resource would continue to offer support for those experiencing such loss.

There was some discussion in relation to the long standing request from Harrogate Carers Resource that the Committee examine how the County Council supports carers. The Chairman confirmed he would write in relation to these matters emphasising the points made but also advising that in the future when carers issues were raised he would bear in mind that carers organisations could offer insight and advice.

RESOLVED -

The Committee is asked to:

- (a) Note progress to date in developing services for carers, the development of the Carers Statement 'Supporting carers in North Yorkshire' and the intention to work with partners to prepare a three year carers strategy 2012-2015.
- (b) The Chairman write to David Harborne, Carers Resource, in the manner outlined below:
 1. Outlining the assessment the Committee had undertaken of the County Council's support for carers. In the light of Members comments at the meeting, Members had received the reassurances they had sought, that the County Council and its partners continued to demonstrate a clear commitment to this agenda.
 2. Explaining the Committee's position on contractual issues in relation to organisations that supported carers, i.e., these were not normally a scrutiny

consideration; they were more properly a matter between the Directorate and the organisation concerned.

3. Regarding the wider aspect of carers and personalisation, the Committee values the expertise, advice and challenge that carer organisations can bring to scrutiny.

110. WORK PROGRAMME

CONSIDERED –

The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader.

The Committee has agreed the work programme.

The report gives members the opportunity to be updated on work programme items and review the shape of the work ahead.

An undertaking was given to share whatever information comes to the Group Spokespersons Briefing on the dialogue with users and carers in the Stokesley area regarding services for people with Dementia.

The Chairman had reviewed the annual report of the Safeguarding Board North Yorkshire for Adults and confirmed that there were no areas of serious concern; had his assessment been any different he would not have taken the decision to defer the item to the next meeting. It had been clear that the Committee would not be able to give this matter either the time or the seriousness it warranted. He had agreed therefore that it could be deferred to the next meeting when a broader report and information would come forward on Safeguarding generally in the community.

A date had been fixed of 30 November for the review of the draft Alcohol Needs Assessment undertaken by the Substance Misuse Team, should this meeting go ahead further information would be made available to Members on the content of that document and arrangements for the meeting.

RESOLVED –

The Committee agree the work programme as amended by discussion at the meeting

The meeting concluded at 1:05 pm.

RB/ALJ