

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

21 January 2016

Chairperson: Councillor Mrs.D.Jones

Vice Chairperson: Councillor Mrs.A.Wingrave

Councillors: Mrs P.Bebell, J.S.Evans, J.Miller, L.M.Purcell,
A.Taylor, D.Whitelock and H.N.James

Officers In Attendance L. Barry, N. Jarman, Mrs.A.Thomas, N.Evans
and G.Evans

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors P.D.Richards and J.Rogers

1. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 DECEMBER 2015.**

Noted by the Committee.

2. **HOUSING OPTIONS SERVICE REPORT CARD**

Members received the report of the Head of Business Strategy, Commissioning and Public Protection in relation to the Housing Options Service Report Card.

Officers informed Members that the legislative framework had recently changed and placed additional responsibilities on the Council.

Members noted that there was a new indicator in place in relation to the number of private rented tenancies made available by the Housing Options Service that were suitable and likely to be available for at least 6 months. Officers stated that the target had already been exceeded by the end of the 3rd Quarter and confirmed that for 2016/2017 the target will be set higher in line with the current year's performance.

Members asked whether the number of people requiring the service would rise above the 2000 currently seeking advice. It was confirmed that the number requiring advice remains constant year on year however, what is likely to change is the level of work that will need to be done with the individuals going forward. This will increase because of the new statutory duties.

Members queried the sickness absence figures and were advised that with marginally less staff the level of sickness absence had reduced significantly.

Members noted the good work undertaken by the staff within the service and requested that their thanks be extended to the staff.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

3. **TO RECEIVE THE SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15.**

Noted by the Committee.

4. **PRE SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinise the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

- i. Annual Report – Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2013 – 2016

Members considered the update report on the progress on the implementation of Valuing Carers, the Carers Information and Consultation Strategy 2013/2016.

Members stated they had slight concerns over the statement that there was a lack of a co-ordinated 'Cultural Change' and asked if officers were confident this was happening. Members were advised that this report was a backward look to the previous year but there had been movement since then and the service has moved on significantly.

Members highlighted that Appendix A was difficult to understand particularly in relation to the RAG status and this was not clear. It was asked whether the template was a local document or a Welsh

Government template. Officers stated that it was a generic template from Welsh Government but took on board the issues and assured Members that future reports will included an easily identifiable RAG status. It was also agreed that future reports would include local information appropriate to Neath Port Talbot.

Members asked whether carers work towards a set of standards and governed by a code of conduct. It was confirmed that this was the case.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

- ii. Changes in the way in which Adult Social Care Services will be delivered in line with the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

Members considered a report that informed Members of the service delivery changes required within Adult Social Care to maximise choice and independence in line with the Social Services Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014.

Members were advised that under the Sustainability section of the report an amendment was required. The section should now read:

Sustainability

In the current financial climate the council needs to identify the most cost effective ways to support its vulnerable adults and carers, while still providing services that meet the increasing levels of complex conditions and needs. In offering choice to individuals, the allocation of public funding must take into account not only individual eligible need but also the overall demand for finite resources. Ultimately, the Council will have to consider how needs identified in the Social Care Assessment can be met in a way which is both cost effective and ensures a fair allocation of scarce resources among those requiring support.

Every case will be decided on an individual basis, however in the interests of responsible financial management the Local Authority has to look at the levels of social care provision in the community, and therefore the following will apply:

- When a care and support package is being designed, the council will ensure the cost effectiveness of the community

package will meet the assessed needs. This will take into account the personal outcomes of the service users and the range of provision available in NPT.

- Direct Payments will be actively promoted to enable individuals to maximise their choice and independence.
- Only Neath Port Talbot funding will be taken into consideration when determining the cost of a community care package. NHS and Independent Living Fund monies will be excluded from these cost calculations.
- When the cost of a support package exceeds what can be provided through social care in the community, the council will work with service users and carers to explore a range of options to ensure that individual's preferred package of support can be provided. This may include service users supplementing the Council's allocated resources via alternative means such as; private resources/personal assets, benefits, Continuing Health Care, community resources, and/or third sector. However, the Care Manager must be satisfied that the final support plan meets eligible need and that any risk is managed in line with Neath Port Talbot's Positive Risk Taking Framework.

There may be individuals who disagree with the outcomes identified within a care plan and the way in which the Neath Port Talbot Council will meet identified outcomes and/or disagree with the provision of service to meet those outcomes. As a result the authority will have developed an appeals process which sets out how an individual can appeal against the decision making process. This appeals process will not replace the council's existing complaints procedure but will run alongside it to quality assure our decisions.

Members asked for confirmation that this will be included in revised documentation and officers stated that the amendments would be included in full in the minutes and all relevant documentation would be amended to include the revised text.

Officers highlighted that the changes would result in the Local Area Co-ordination of services funded from Western Bay and is a model that has been successful in Western Australia. Members were informed that 3 posts have been created and recruited to that will be responsible for linking the community and developing relevant services.

Members asked what would be the outcome if an individual refused to accept direct payments. Officers stated that there was currently a lot of resistance because Direct Payments were something new. Members were also advised that work had been undertaken to inform the relevant staff fully as there had been some misunderstanding on the impacts of Direct Payments. Where an individual refuses Direct Payments then the Council will provide an appropriate care package.

Clarity was sought on the term community and how this should be interpreted. Officers stated that there were many explanations of what a community could be but this was generally going to be an area where services would be joined up to provide the most relevant services for individuals. It was further clarified that the use of social capital would assist in achieving the outcome. Members asked what was meant by social capital and officers confirmed that this was a term used to highlight what resources people had available to them to deliver services.

Members were advised that a cultural change is required because the change would move away from a one size fits all approach to a service that is suitable for individuals.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

iii. Medication Policy

Members considered a report that sought approval for a revised medication policy in respect of domiciliary care services for older and disabled people.

Officers asked Members to note that the original policy had now been split into two distinct parts i) the Medication Policy and ii) Medication Handbook.

Following scrutiny the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

CHAIRPERSON