

## **SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)**

**Members Present:**

**9 June 2016**

**Chairperson:** Councillor Mrs.D.Jones

**Vice Chairperson:** Councillor Mrs.A.Wingrave

**Councillors:** A.Carter, J.S.Evans, Mrs.S.Paddison, J.Miller, C.Morgan, L.M.Purcell, A.Taylor and D.Whitelock

**Officers In Attendance** Mrs.A.Thomas, A.Jarrett, N.Evans, Davies, G.Evans, I.Finnemore, Mrs C.Jones, R. Hopkins, L. Jones and S.Adie

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors P.D.Richards, J.Rogers, Mrs.A.Chaves, M.Ellis, A.R.Lockyer, A.L.Thomas, Mrs.L.G.Williams and Mrs.S.M.Penry

**Observers**

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1. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 MAY 2016.**

Members considered the minutes of the previous meeting and it was confirmed that Cllr Hugh James was in attendance at the meeting and the minutes should reflect this.

It was further noted that the paragraph included in the minutes "Members asked whether it would be possible for everyone affected to be allocated a social worker to undertake the assessment and develop support." The line "in a timely manner" should be added following the word support.

Members agreed the amendments.

2. **TO RECEIVE THE SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2016/2017.**

Members were reminded that there would be a forward work programme planning session held on 6<sup>th</sup> July but if any Member had any suggestions for the work programme they could advise the Senior Scrutiny and Member Development Officer in the meantime.

Following scrutiny the report was noted.

3. **PRE SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

**Cabinet Board Proposals**

I. **Commissioning and Support Services Business Plan 2016-17**

Members considered the Business Plan for Commissioning and Support Services for the period 2016-2017. Officers stated that plan covered a wide range of diverse services which showed the flexibility of the service.

Members asked how much money had been raised through benefits appeals tribunals for the citizens of the County Borough as no figure was included. It was confirmed that £1.4m had been realised for the citizens.

A question was raised in relation to 222 open case files for Route 16 that had been “back scanned” and what did this term mean? It was confirmed that this meant migrating paper files to electronic based files and further confirmation was given that all files had now been scanned and the service was now concentrating on the Looked After Children files.

Concern was raised that the service was unable to progress the Common Housing Allocation Policy or the Common Housing Register and would it be a priority in 2016/2017. Officers confirmed that the priorities were aspirational and unlikely to be completed within one year and it was more likely achievable over a 3 year period.

Members suggested that the Business Plan could be easier to read particularly for Members of the public if a list of acronyms had been

provided as it was difficult to remember them all. Further suggestion was made to use numbering in place of bullet points.

A question was asked in relation to the £4.3m substance misuse budget across the Western Bay area and how much is provided to Neath Port Talbot and is the level indicative of any substance misuse problems. Officers advised at the moment it was difficult to quantify as there were a number of streams included. It was agreed that a report would be presented to the Committee at a later date highlighting the work of the service and included any relevant financial information. It was agreed that this could be presented via the services report card.

Members queried the priority in relation to sickness and asked how does the service intend to keep the level below the corporate average. It was stated that this was a corporate priority that all service areas must include within their business plan. Currently the service is below the corporate average through good sickness absence management in line with the corporate sickness absence policy.

Members questioned the gaps in the plan where there was no supporting evidence on how the service would deliver its priorities. It was confirmed that the information was now available and a revised business plan would be circulated to Members.

Officers confirmed that all priorities within the plan had their own action plans that link to the officers objectives so that progress can be monitored. Officers further stated that all staff appraisals would be completed by the end of September.

Members noted that there had been a rolling programme of restructuring in the service and many staff had departed. Officers continued that it should be further noted that the use of Modern and Foundation Apprentices had invigorated the services and some have in fact been successful in obtaining permanent jobs.

It was stated that Members were aware of the pressure on staff and the Cabinet were extremely grateful to the additional work the staff have taken on which has provided service continuity.

Members asked why there were no scores collated within the risk management section. Officers confirmed that this information would be included in the revised business plan.

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

## **CHAIRPERSON**