

SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Committee Rooms A/B - Neath Civic Centre)

Members Present:

5 October 2017

Chairperson: Councillor L.M.Purcell

Councillors: A.Llewelyn, H.C.Clarke, A.P.H.Davies,
C.Galsworthy, H.N.James, J.Miller, S.Paddison,
M.Protheroe, S.H.Reynolds, D.Whitelock and
C.Williams

Officers In Attendance S. Curran, Miss.C.Davies, A.Griffiths, J.Hodges,
N. Jarman, A.Jarrett, Mrs.A.Thomas and
A.Davies

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors A.R.Lockyer and P.D.Richards

The Committee noted that this was the last meeting for the Director of Social Services, Nick Jarman and thanked him for his contribution with a round of applause.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

The following Member made a Declaration at the commencement of the meeting:

Cllr M Protheroe- the private report of the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing on Hillside Secure Children's Home as he sits on the Board of Governors at Cefn Saeson School.

2. MINUTES OF THE SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 7TH SEPTEMBER 2017

Members noted that the minutes stated that the Western Bay Commissioning Strategy for Care Homes for Older People 2016-25 had been withdrawn from the agenda at the last meeting and queried if the minutes should have stated the reason why the report had been withdrawn. Officers confirmed that it had been due to illness and

confirmed that the report would continue to be included on the Forward Work Programme of the Committee and requested until it was presented to the Committee.

The Committee noted the minutes.

3. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18 AND ACTIONS REGISTER**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme and Actions Register.

4. **GWELLA PROJECT**

The Committee received information in relation to the Gwella Project as contained within the circulated report.

The Director had been unable to provide the detail required by the Committee at the last meeting hence Members had requested this report as a way of providing further information on the project.

The Director had stated that he had been unimpressed by a presentation given by Gwella and Members queried why this was. He explained that in his role as the Chair of the Safeguarding Board he felt the presentation had been non-specific and lacking in detail but he stressed that this had been a personal view and the Safeguarding Board took a decision to proceed with Gwella and he stood by this decision.

Members asked in what way had expectations of Gwella not been fully realised and the Director explained that there had been some slippage in the project phases.

The Committee asked for information in relation to the Group who oversee Gwella and were informed that they report to the Safeguarding Board.

Members queried the 4 Local Authorities that had been identified as the sites for the pilots and wanted to know who had approved these sites and when. The Director did not know the origin of the pilot areas.

The Committee expressed concern at continued future work with Gwella and asked what assurances could be given at this stage. The

Director explained that the Children Act 2004, the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the operation of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and they are not creatures of the Council and there are no official oversight and scrutiny arrangements of the Boards. Members were assured that it is the frontline services of the Council who ensure safeguarding responsibilities are met and it is these services who are held to account and scrutinised.

Members were informed that the Gwella project is funded by Welsh Government.

The Committee felt it was important that they continue to scrutinise Neath Port Talbot Council's involvement in the Safeguarding Board.

Following scrutiny it was agreed that the report be noted.

5. **ELECTED MEMBERS VISITS TO SOCIAL CARE AND NURSING HOMES**

The Committee received information relating to the Lay Assessor Programme of visits to Social Care and Nursing Homes within the County Borough as contained in the circulated report.

Members who had been part of the previous Lay Assessor Programme commented that the visits had been interesting and constructive and were keen to see the programme continue.

The Committee agreed that attendance at training must be mandatory and completed before any visits take place.

The Committee approved the recommendations to continue the Lay Assessor Programme which will consist of annual 'unannounced' visits to be carried out by Lay Assessors to all independent residential and nursing homes in Neath Port Talbot and to attend mandatory training sessions.

Cllr John Miller abstained will abstain from the Lay Assessor Programme.

6. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

6.1 Hillside Secure Children's Home Placement Fees 2017-18

The Committee received information on the placement fees to be applied to Hillside Secure Children's Home as contained within the circulated report.

Members drew attention to the Financial Impact whereby the service aims to fully recover its costs. Officers confirmed that Hillside operates at no cost to the Authority and it is a service which fully recovers its costs.

Following scrutiny it was agreed that the report be noted.

6.2 Community Resource Team Annual Report 2016/17

The Committee received the annual update on the progress of delivering the integrated Community Resource Team model as contained within the circulated report.

Members asked for more information in relation to the workforce and Officers committed to circulating the workforce chart to Member via email

Members noted that the total numbers of unscheduled care admissions into hospital are 1.6% lower than in 14/15 however the length of stay had increased by 9.6%. It was discussed that it is important to understand what is behind these lengthy stays and officers stated that a piece of work had been undertaken by staff in the hospitals looking into these issues. Members praised this pro-active approach and requested that a copy of this report be brought to a future meeting of this committee.

Members queried the overspend which is attributed to an increase in the cost of assistive technology and the fact that after the budget was set Carmarthenshire Council gave notice that the charge for their lifeline service was to increase significantly. Officers explained the Service Level Agreement with Carmarthenshire would be subject to a future report to this Committee.

Members commented that aspects of the report were difficult to cross reference and officers explained that they would take this into account for future reports.

Members asked why total number of bed days data for those over aged 75 was not collected. Officers explained that the data is available but the intermediate care fund is focussed on those aged 65 and over and this is the data that is collected for the purposes of this report.

The Committee raised concern at short packages of care. They understood these were based on specific need and discussed how other ways to address need could be met i.e. volunteers for socialisation and encouraging independence.

Members commented that they have received positive anecdotal stories about the work of the team.

Following scrutiny it was agreed that the report be noted.

7. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

RESOLVED: that pursuant to Section 100(A) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act

8. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

8.1 Manager's Report Hillside Secure Children's Home

The Committee received information on the young people, staff and service planning and development for the period 1st May 2017 to 30th August 2017 as contained within the circulated report.

Members thanked the management for the welcome they had received on a recent visit and congratulated them on the awards they had received.

The Committee asked if any good practice could be taken from Hillside to other education establishments when dealing with difficult young people. Officers explained that Hillside is the only secure unit in the UK with an affiliated school and they are involved in a peer education review to explore best practice; Members looked forward to hearing more about this as it develops.

The Committee expressed concern at the recent changes in staff and were assured that all issues had been dealt with in probity.

Members asked for more detail in relation to the staff rota and were pleased to learn that concerns raised by the staff had been listened to.

Members expressed concern at the levels of staff sickness absence and in particular absences related to stress and asked for information about how members of staff are supported. Officer explained that supervision and counselling is offered as the Council's Sickness Absence Policy is adhered to. Members understood that stress related absence is not always work related stress and the figures do not highlight this. They went on to discuss staff morale and were pleased to note that the movement of staff between Hillside and Cefn Saeson School was helping to alleviate staff morale as well as regular supervision sessions.

The Committee were pleased to note that the unit is developing its use of music with the young people.

Members agreed that the interests and wellbeing of the children at the unit is paramount and the focus is always on making it a caring and stable environment.

Following scrutiny it was agreed that the report be noted

CHAIRPERSON

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