

# **SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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

**Members Present:**

**7 March, 2019**

**Chairman:** Councillor L.M.Purcell

**Councillors:** H.C.Clarke, A.P.H.Davies, C.Galsworthy, J.Miller, S.Paddison, D.Whitelock, O.S.Davies, C.Edwards and S.A.Knoyle

**Officers In Attendance:** A.Jarrett, A.Thomas, J.Hodges, C.Howard, C.Frey-Davies, A.Potts, S.Jenkins, D.Harding J.Woodman-Ralph and N.Jones

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

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## **1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

That the minutes of the previous meetings held on 10 January and 7 February 2019 be approved. Members asked in relation to 4.1 (10 January) if warden posts had been withdrawn from sheltered housing accommodation. Officers to clarify and confirm would Members prior to the next meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

## **2. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2018/2019.**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for 2018/19.

Members noted that the date for the presentation of the Autism Strategy would be confirmed by Officers prior to the next meeting.

### 3. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

#### Cabinet Board Proposals

##### 3.1 Revised Adult Services Assisted Transport Policy

The Committee received an overview of the Revised Adult Services Assisted Transport Policy, as detailed in the circulated report.

Discussion took place on the need for Policies to be written in a way that is clear and understandable by all, especially when they were subject to consultation. Officers agreed that in future all policies for consultation would be accompanied by an easy read version and where appropriate to include case studies as examples.

Confirmation was given that the proposed policy would affect existing and new service users.

Clarification was sought by Members that service users in receipt of mobility allowance would not be disadvantaged if they used the allowance to fund mobility transport aids rather than purchasing a car via the mobility scheme. Officers agreed that the wording within the policy would be amended to allow for further explanation of criteria as not all recipients of mobility allowance would be prevented from receiving transport it would be dependent on the individual's needs.

The Committee asked what was the intention of revising the assisted transport policy was it to realise savings as part of the Forward Financial Plan. Officers confirmed that the aim was not to achieve savings but to update the policy in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It was possible that some savings would be generated but this was not the purpose of the update.

Members queried whether, as part of the monitoring arrangements, comparative data be made available to ascertain the impact of the changes. Officers explained that as part of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 at the point of any changes or on an annual basis care plans would be reviewed.

Members asked that the post consultation report be brought back to the Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

It was queried why the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) stated that there was no Workforce Impacts, if the Council was withdrawing transport for some service users, would it impact on the transport section? Officers explained that it applied to external companies.

Further queries were raised in regard to the EIA and why only two groups, age and disability were affected under protected characteristics. Officers explained that this was the data collected by the Council but that this would be revised after the consultation period.

Member asked why there was a positive impact on protected characteristics of these two groups by proposing they access transport via family/friends rather than transport being provided by the Council. This would be a negative impact due to reducing independence. Officers explained that the provision of transport would be based on individual need so there would be no negative impact.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by Cabinet Board, subject to the following proposals:

1. That an easy read version be developed; to include case studies where appropriate;
2. That the wording around accessibility to transport based on receipt of mobility allowance be clarified.

3. That Cabinet Members consider the Equality Impact Assessment.

### 3.2 Adult Services Equitability of Service Provision Policy

Members received an overview in regard to the Adult Services Equitability of Service Provision Policy, as detailed in the circulated report.

The Committee highlighted the need to make policies clear and understandable as discussed in the previous item. In addition, policy titles needed to be clear and concise and Members asked that consideration be given to amending the word Equitability in the title. Also, that an easy read version be developed and where appropriate to include case studies.

In response to the queries in regard to Direct Payments. It was explained that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 allows Councils to set the level of payments by assessing what was reasonable and allows for choice. Additional costs above what was reasonable was paid for by the individual.

Discussion took place on the savings that could arise as a result of the implementation of the policy and whether the impact of the changes would be monitored. It was confirmed that the assessments were undertaken on a needs led basis and any savings would be an outcome of the re-assessment of need. The Policy was developed to ensure consistency in the provision of services.

Similarly, to the previous report discussion took place on the Equality Impact Assessment and how the impact was positive. Cabinet Board was asked to re-consider the Equality Impact Assessment.

The Committee was pleased that the person centred approach was being taken when carry out assessments. It was important to engage with clients and families when developing outcomes for the individual.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by Cabinet Board subject to the following proposals:

1. That an easy read version be developed to include case studies where appropriate;
2. That Cabinet Members consider the Equality Impact Assessment.

### 3.3 Children and Young People and Adult Services – 3rd Quarter (2018 – 19) Performance Report

Members received an overview of the Children, Young People and Adult Services 3rd Quarter (2018 – 19) Performance as detailed in the circulated report.

Concern was expressed at the focus of the performance indicators and the need to ensure information contained within the report was identifying key areas. Concern had been raised corporately on the number of indicators that were not identifying useful information. It was agreed that in future a suite of indicators for adult's services would be developed for Committee's information.

It was explained that children/young people were re-registered on the child protection register due to deterioration in their current situation. The decision to re-register was a multi-agency decision and was difficult to predict but risks were always a consideration at the multi-agency conference.

Clarification was received on the increase in the rate of people who remained in hospital awaiting social care packages. An explanation was given that the delay was due to the complex care packages needed. In addition, it was identified that there was a capacity issue within the service which had been addressed and indications were proving positive as a result.

Members were pleased that the average age of entry into a care home had increased to 85 years.

The Committee asked whether monitoring arrangements were in place for people who were referred to the voluntary sector for support. An explanation was given that monitoring

arrangements did not take place on an individual basis, but all voluntary organisations which provided support on behalf of the Council, was contracted via a Service Level Agreement, which was reviewed on an annual basis.

The Committee made reference to the adult and children's services first point of access service and asked for further details on the progress of the co-location. It was explained that work was on-going and quality assurance audits were undertaken as part of the monitoring of the service. Data would be included in future performance reports but there was no mechanism for monitoring the return rate of clients who were given advice only.

Members observed the increase in the number of complaints being received and asked if there was a pattern emerging. It was acknowledged that there was an increase in the numbers of complaints received and a report would be submitted to a future meeting of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Board containing details of all complaints.

The Committee noted that the numbers of vacancies had increased and queried whether this had resulted in an increase in caseload numbers within children's services. Members were reassured that caseloads had continued to be low and vacancies were monitored and were manageable as there was no agency workers employed in the service. In addition, any savings generated contributed to the forward financial plan.

The Director was asked if there were any areas of concern that needed to be raised with Committee. Confirmation was given that future reports identifying areas for further scrutiny would be submitted to Committee in due course.

Following scrutiny, the report was noted.

## **CHAIRPERSON**