

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

2nd May 2019

Report of the Head of Adult Services – Mrs Angela Thomas

Matter for Decision.

Wards Affected: All

**UPDATE ON LAY ASSESSOR (ELECTED MEMBERS) VISITS TO
RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING CARE HOMES IN NEATH PORT TALBOT
COUNTY BOROUGH**

Purpose of the Report

The report presents a summary of the Lay Assessor care home visit programme during 2018, where Lay Assessors (Elected Members) carried out visits to independent residential and nursing care homes in Neath Port Talbot (NPT).

The report is seeking Member approval for the Lay Assessor care home visit programme to continue in 2019, with a reduced number of Lay Assessor visits to take place from 2019 onwards.

Background

As agreed by the Cabinet in November 2016, an annual Lay Assessor care home visit programme was established to help drive quality improvements in residential and nursing care homes located within NPT.

Following the pilot Lay Assessor project, which concluded in March 2016, the annual Lay Assessor care home visit programme commenced in February 2018.

During 2018, 14 Lay Assessors (Elected Members) participated in the programme who collectively conducted 20 visits to residential and nursing care homes within NPT.

Lay Assessor Programme 2018 Summary

Lay Assessors were provided with 'Dignity in Care' and 'Introduction to Dementia' training; positive feedback was received regarding the standard of training provided.

The Contract Monitoring Officer provided Lay Assessors with support and guidance which included a rota schedule, guidance booklet and a quick reference support guide.

All Lay Assessor visits during 2019 were organised in advance and care homes were only informed of the 'month' of the visit. Lay Assessors conducted all care home visits on an 'unannounced' basis and in pairs.

During 2018, Lay Assessors collectively conducted 20 visits to residential and nursing care homes within NPT.

Most Lay Assessor visits concluded with a report which was sent to the care home for consideration. Lay Assessor reports provided a range of feedback which included positive comments and recommendations for improvements, which were implemented by care homes when possible.

Feedback obtained from care homes stated many care home residents enjoyed the visits and Lay Assessors continued to be approachable, professional and courteous.

Care home feedback cited delays in receiving Lay Assessor reports as an area for improvement, which will be addressed through the proposed revised visit schedule for 2019 onwards.

Proposed Changes to the Lay Assessor Programme (2019 onwards)

It is proposed to reduce the number of annual Lay Assessor visits from 24 care homes per annum to 10 per annum. Therefore, each Lay Assessor pair will visit 2 care homes per annum.

The proposed reduction of Lay Assessor visits will result in each care home receiving a Lay Assessor visit every 2 years instead of every year.

The reduced number of Lay Assessor visits is intended to reduce time pressures on Lay Assessors (reducing the number of visits conducted by each Lay Assessor pair from 4 visits in 2018 to 2 visits in 2019).

The reduction in the number of Lay Assessor visits will also reduce the resources required to support and manage the programme.

Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken and included within a previous Committee Report dated 2nd April 2015, which is accessible using the following link:

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/g285/Public%20reports%20pack%2002nd-Apr-2015%2014.05%20Social%20Care%20Health%20and%20Housing%20Cabinet%20Board.pdf?T=10>

Workforce Impacts

There are no workforce impacts associated with this report.

Legal Impacts

There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

Risk Management

There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

Consultation

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendation

It is recommended for Members to approve the continuation of the Lay Assessor care home visit programme which, from 2019 onwards, will consist of 10 Lay Assessor visits per year to residential and nursing care homes within NPT.

Reason for Proposed Decision

It is the Council's intention to continue the Lay Assessor programme where Elected Members will visit residential and nursing care homes on a rota basis, in order to help drive local quality improvements in care homes within NPT.

Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

List of Background Papers

Report of the Head of Community Care and Commissioning - C. Marchant
2nd April 2015, which is accessible using the following link:

<https://democracy.npt.gov.uk/documents/g285/Public%20reports%20pack%2002nd-Apr-2015%2014.05%20Social%20Care%20Health%20and%20Housing%20Cabinet%20Board.pdf?T=10>

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