

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

(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)

**Members Present:**

**16 October 2014**

<b>Chairman:</b>	<b>Councillor Mrs.S.M.Penry</b>
<b>Vice Chairman:</b>	<b>Councillor</b>
<b>Councillors:</b>	H.M.Bebell, Mrs P.Bebell, J.S.Evans, Mrs.D.Jones, L.M.Purcell, A.Taylor, R.Thomas and D.Whitelock
<b>Officers In Attendance</b>	Mrs.C.Marchant, Mrs.A.Thomas, N.Evans, S. Adie and S.Garland
<b>Cabinet Invitees:</b>	Councillors P.D.Richards and J.Rogers

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1. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM  
MEMBERS**

The following Members declared an interest

Cllr. P Bebell	Is a Member of the Community Health Council
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2. **TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS SOCIAL CARE,  
HEALTH AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON  
15TH SEPTEMBER 2014**

The Committee noted the minutes.

3. **SICKNESS ABSENCE - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update in relation sickness absence figures for the areas of Public Protection and Home Care Services.

In relation to Public Protection Members were advised that the figures were skewed due on individual being on long term sickness absence and if that individual was not included in the figures than the average days lost per individual would be 1.15days. Members were informed that where individuals are on long term sick then all opportunities are explored assist the individual in returning to work.

With regards Home Care, Members asked what the costs were in relation to covering sickness absence and whether agency staff were still used. Members were informed that the only areas that accrue additional costs because of sickness absence was Home Care and Residential Respite Care. However, Members were further informed that agency staff were not used to cover the absence but it was covered by current employees who were given additional hours.

Following scrutiny the Committee noted the progress made in addressing sickness absence figures.

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

The Committee noted the report.

5. **TO SELECT APPROPRIATE ITEMS FROM THE CABINET BOARD AGENDA FOR PRE-SCRUTINY (CABINET BOARD REPORTS ENCLOSED FOR SCRUTINY MEMBERS).**

### **Tackling Food Fraud**

In relation to Public Protection, members were advised that sickness absence levels are well below the council average. The figures presented included the long term sickness of one individual who has since returned to work. If this sickness were excluded from the figures it would reduce the average days lost per individual to 1.15 days.

In relation to meat products Members enquired whether the issues of Halal meat were inspected and it was confirmed that inspections are undertaken to ensure that legislation is adhered to.

Members received the report highlighting the work being undertaken by Environmental Health and Trading Standards teams to tackle food fraud.

Members were reminded of several high profile cases, in particular the recent horse meat scandal. However, this had not been a significant issue in Neath Port Talbot. Members queried the number of laboratories available to the EH & TS teams to test food skills. Officers responded that the number of laboratories had reduced however this had not, to date impacted on the council's ability to test any suspect food products. Members were advised

that as resources reduce there will be additional pressure on laboratories to be able to fulfil statutory obligations.

Members were advised that as resources dwindle there will be additional pressures on the units to be able to fulfil its statutory obligations.

Following Scrutiny the report was noted.

### **New Social Work Model, Outcome of Consultation on New Service Model.**

Members received a report that informed members of the outcome of the recent public engagement on the proposed new social work model for people with disabilities.

Members asked whether GP's had been part of the engagement exercise as they were integral because of the role they had in relation to prescribing treatments including drugs. Members were informed that there had been no specific engagement and this is something that will need to be addressed when the proposals are implemented. This is because when new "Community Networks" are developed in conjunction with the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg Health Board links with GP practices will be key.

Members were further advised that the paper presented to them was in effect a principles paper and as more components of the new social work model come forward, more information will be presented in more depth.

The Committee noted its disappointment that the Primary Health Care team was not involved at the beginning of the process. However, Members were advised that there was now a post in existence that covers district nurses and social.

In the future it is envisaged that Social Workers will be more community based. There will be a more engaged social work workforce and in the future they will be co-located with partner organisations. Members were advised that there is currently co-location in existence but there is a need to break down barriers that will allow better partnership working.

In relation to a query of whether there was integration between the organisations IT system Members were advised that this had been one of the biggest problems in developing the joint working and the reason for this was stated that both organisations had failed to develop a joint IT strategy between them, but this was something that was now being looked at as a

possible All Wales solution. The issue now is that funding may be an issue and there is need to identify funding after being turned down previously.

Following Scrutiny the Committee was supportive of the proposals.

### **NPT Mental Health Commissioning Strategy 2014-2017**

Members considered a report that provided information of the outcome of the recent consultation on the Daft Mental Health Services Commissioning Strategy 2014-2017.

With regards the consultation feedback Members welcomed the wide ranging consultation that had taken place but asked if transport had been a consultee. It was believed that with the possibility of cuts to bus subsidies this could have an impact on transport requirements for individuals who suffer with mental health issues.

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

#### **6. ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

#### **7. ANY URGENT ITEMS (WHETHER PUBLIC OR EXEMPT) AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN PURSUANT TO SECTION 100B (4) (B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Because of the need to deal now with the matter contained in Minute No.8 below, the Chairman agreed that this could be raised at today's meeting as an urgent item pursuant to Statutory Instrument 2001 No.2290 (as amended)

Reason:

Due to the time element.

#### **8. PRIVATE URGENT REPORT - SUPPORTING PEOPLE LOCAL COMMISSIONING PLAN 2014/2017**

Members received the private urgent report of the Head of Community Care and Housing Services, which was tabled at the meeting. Members were advised that it was Mandatory to prepare a Supporting People Local Commissioning Plan and submit it to Welsh Government.

Members were informed that there had been previously been a cut in the grant but it was unknown what the future grant allocation will be. It had been suggested the grant would be circa £380k but this had not been confirmed. Members agreed that it is problematic to plan when the financial contribution is unknown.

Members endorsed the recommendations contained within the report on the understanding that further reports are presented to the Committee in the future and that each specific report include full Equality Impact Assessments to allow Members to fully understand the impact of any potential budget cuts once they become known.

**CHAIRMAN**