

SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ROOMS A&B NEATH CIVIC CENTRE

Members Present:

17 October 2019

Chairperson: Councillor L.M.Purcell

Vice Chairperson: Councillor C.Galsworthy

Councillors: A.P.H.Davies, J.Miller, S.Paddison,
D.Whitelock, A.N.Woolcock, C.Edwards,
W.F.Griffiths and H.C.Clarke

Officers In Attendance A.Jarrett, J.Hodges, K.Warren, A.Potts,
R.Shepherd, S.Bradshaw, S.Waite,
C.Matthews, A.Turner, M.Hayes, E.Cullerton,
J.Davies, V.Smith, S.Curran, C.Davise and J.
Woodman-Ralph

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

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Member made a declaration of interest at the start of the meeting:

Councillor C.Galsworthy Re: Fairness of Service Provision Policy and the Review of Community Support Services – Local Area Co-ordinators as she is a Personal Assistant to her mother.

2. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 5 September 2019 be approved subject to the following amendment:

Page 6 – Trem y Glyn Residential Care Home Feasibility Study

That the paragraph containing the following:

The committee asked if the evaluation would be the same as previously undertaken where it was identified that the need for residential care was reducing.

Be replaced with:

The committee asked whether the evaluation would be using the same criteria as was used when the previous evaluation was undertaken which concluded that the need for residential care was reducing. It was explained that the strategy had changed from a focus solely on direct payments to developing additional options for residential care.

3. **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

The committee chose to scrutinise the following cabinet board items:

Western Bay Carers Annual Report

The committee received an update on the progress of the implementation of the Western Bay Carers Partnership Board Action Plan for 2018-19, as detailed in the circulated report.

Members were pleased that the Annual Report contained case studies which were very informative. In addition, Members were pleased that information had been produced in community languages but felt that consideration should be given to providing plain English and easy read versions.

The following queries were raised by Members:

- Has there been any increase in the numbers of carers' identifying themselves as carers?
Social Workers continue to try to identify carers as part of their day to day work and additional awareness raising campaigns have taken place within Adult Services. Children's Services developed a training programme with schools to try to identify and support young carers. 1,600 young people took part in the 1 hour session and 200 young carers came forward asking for support. In addition, 2 young carers are members of the Youth Council and are very proactive in bringing issues forward.

- Were there any plans to engage with the Youth Clubs?
Transport was a major issue for young carers to access Youth Clubs. Also, when asked young carers enjoy being with other carers so they can share their experiences. These meetings take place on a weekly basis and transport is provided to facilitate this. Links were also made with other agencies to ensure that young carers received all the support needed.
- Why could the carers' assessment not be undertaken at the same time as the service users' assessment? This had been identified by some carers as a preferred option.
Officers explained that feedback received gave a different view and that the Carers' Service undertook these on behalf of the Council. If any carer preferred to have both assessments at the same time that would be arranged.
- Why was the funding for the Western Bay Carers Partnership Action Plan not equally shared between partners.
Officers explained that the criteria for splitting the funding had been agreed historically when it had been established. With the new West Glamorgan Carers Partnership between Neath Port Talbot and Swansea the funding would be split between the two authorities.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

Western Bay Safeguarding Boards Annual Report 2018/19

Information was received in relation to the Western Bay Safeguarding Boards Annual Report 2018/19 as detailed in the circulated report.

Members were pleased with the establishment of the Junior Safeguarding Board in Neath Port Talbot. Similar arrangements were being made in Swansea.

An explanation was received that the number of care settings across the region would be available in the next West Glamorgan Safeguarding Annual Report.

Members were concerned that only now a protocol for Children's Care Homes and their duties in relation to missing children was being developed. An explanation was given that this was a new protocol and was being developed with South Wales Police as a result of the

increasing number of private residential care homes for children opening in the county borough. No regulations exist to limit the numbers of these homes which were predominately being used for children from other authorities. Pressures had been identified by the Police at the number of call outs being received from these homes when a child in their care goes missing even though the majority of cases the homes know where the child has been staying. Work was ongoing looking at the definition of a child that goes missing to assist the Police. Confirmation was received that South Wales Police was responsible for the Police costs incurred when searching for a missing child.

In answer to Members queries, confirmation was received that the Council had monitoring arrangements in place for children being looked after who go missing. Barnardos interview all children after an episode to try to find out the cause for that child going missing. Only the Police have data on all the children reported as missing. Out of County children placed in private residential care homes were still the responsibility of the placing authority.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

Assisted Transport Policy

The committee received information on the outcome of the public consultation on the Adult Services Assisted Transport Policy as detailed in the circulated report.

Members asked for legal clarification on the mobility elements of both Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA). It was explained that the regulations require the Council to disregard the mobility elements of both PIP and DLA when calculating a person's obligations to contribute towards the cost of their care and support. They have no applications when considering what practical transport/mobility resources a person may already have or be able to access when assessing whether there may be a need to provide transport to a day service.

Members were reassured that service users would not be expected to find their own transport if the carer was unable to take them to day centres due to personal commitments. Transport would still be provided.

In response to Members queries it was explained that there would be no impact on valley communities. The assessment was based on an individuals need. If the outcome of the assessment was that the service user could use public transport but there was no public transport, the council would ensure that transport was provided to enable the service user to access day services.

Discussion took place on whether there would be an impact on the workforce who provided the transport. It was explained that Officers did not feel there would be an impact as service users would continue to need to be provided with transport.

Member's asked whether there was any opportunity for other agencies to access the Council's transport services during any down time. Officers would raise with the relevant department.

The committee was concerned at the lack of response to the consultation by service users, despite there being 1,800 users of the service. Officers clarified that every service user received a letter, a number of awareness raising events were arranged and social media was used to promote the consultation.

Further discussion took place on the preparation with service users to enable them to travel independently and to know what to do in the event of something happening out of the usual routine. This included discussion with the relevant bus drivers so that they were aware of possible issues. At Members request officers would investigate what training was provided by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Transport Directorate internally and whether there was any external training given. Additionally, carers would be eligible for a free bus pass to escort service users if they met the Welsh Government criteria.

Following scrutiny, the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by cabinet board.

Fairness of Service Provision Policy

Members received information on the outcome of the public consultation on the Adult Services Fairness of Service Provision Policy as detailed in the circulated report.

The committee was pleased with the changes to the Policy as proposed by a previous meeting of the Social Care, Health and

Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee. In addition, the Committee was happy to have an annual report but asked that if there were any identified issues a report would be brought back to Committee earlier than annually.

Members asked for clarity in regard to responses received during the consultation period on when service users were able to access Direct Payments. Officers explained that under the Act if a need was assessed the Council would have to offer Direct Payments.

In answer to Members queries, the Council did hold a list of all the approved contractors that services are commissioned from but this list would not be shared with service users to use with their Direct Payments. This could be seen as the Council interfering with the service users' choice. The Council does ensure that the monies are spent appropriately. If necessary the Council would put in the service and withdraw Direct Payments.

Following scrutiny, the committee was supportive of the proposals to be considered by the cabinet board.

Review of Community Support Services – Local Area Co-ordinators

Members received information on the extension of the remit of Local Area Co-ordinators from their current geographical areas to cover the wider Local Authority.

An explanation was given on the differences between Local Area Co-ordinators and Connectors. Local Area Co-ordinators (LAC) provided early intervention and prevention support to vulnerable people, across all ages and demographics. Connectors looked for community services that were an alternative to services that are no longer available. In future, Connectors would work along-side the LAC to assist them in their role.

Confirmation was given that the current number of Local Area Co-ordinators had been increased to six as the service has been expanded across the county borough.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice and Early Intervention Annual Plan
2019 – 2020

The committee received the background and summary of the content of the Neath Port Talbot Youth Justice Plan 2019 – 2020 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the circulated report.

Members were pleased that premises had been identified for the Educational Centre.

Members asked for clarity on the support received from the Child, Adolescent, Mental Health Service (CAMHS). It was explained that there were monthly consultation meetings with CAMHS which enabled quicker access to services. Discussions were currently taking place with CAMHS to develop a specialist post within the service.

Also, in future CAMHS would be undertaking audits of past cases to learn from these. After completion a report of the outcomes of these audits would be brought to committee.

Members queried whether there was a link made in the data to neuro diverse conditions as there was nothing included in the data contained within the report. Officers explained that previously the data collected had been controlled by the Western Bay Youth Justice Board. The West Glamorgan Youth Justice Board would be collecting data on a local level and would include information in regard to education. In future, reports being considered by Committee would include local data.

It was highlighted that as a result of working closely with children's services and the Police at an earlier stage to prevent behaviour from escalating into criminal activity, the numbers of young people with escalating behaviour had dramatically reduced.

Also, with the introduction of regularly meetings with Court representatives and their presence on the Management Board, positive working relationships had developed.

Following scrutiny, the committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the cabinet board.

4. **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

The committee noted that an All Member Seminar had been arranged for the 24 October 2019. Also, the Autism Report would be ready for consideration at the next meeting.

CHAIRPERSON