

## **Membership**

### **Councillors**

● absent

- Ged Clarke (Chairman)
- Fiona Asbury (Vice Chair)
- Victor Bobo
- John Clarke
- Barrie Cooper
- Mike Cox
- Jim Creamer
- Bob Cross
- Vincent Dobson
- Rod Kempster
- Geoff Merry
- Carol Pepper
- Tom Pettengell
- Alan Rhodes
- Mel Shepherd
- Chris Winterton
- Brian Wombwell

### **Officers**

Jon Wilson - Service Director, Personal Care and Support (Younger Adults)  
Steve Edwards - Service Director, Children's Social Care  
Caroline Baria - Service Director Joint Commissioning, Quality and Business Change  
Paul Davies - Governance Officer  
Martin Gately - Scrutiny Coordinator

## **1. Chair and Vice-Chair**

The appointment by the County Council of Councillor Ged Clarke as Chair and Councillor Fiona Asbury as Vice-Chair was noted.

## **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 16 May 2011 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **3. Membership**

The membership of the committee, as set out above, was noted.

#### **4. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Asbury and Wombwell.

#### **5. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by members or officers.

#### **6. Agenda Order**

With the consent of the committee, the order of items was changed.

#### **7. Child Protection**

Steve Edwards presented an update on the Safeguarding Improvement Programme, since the last report on 28 February 2011. The timeliness of Initial and Core Assessments was much improved over the last twelve months. In the field of adoption, more children and families were being approved, and more matches made than previously. Caseloads were now sustainable rather than high. Recruitment was in progress to fill the 8% of posts which were vacant. An unannounced Ofsted inspection in February had been positive. A further full inspection, focussing on safeguarding services, was anticipated in September or October. Mr Edwards responded to members' questions and comments.

- Instead of paying for agency workers, might it be cheaper to have a consortium arrangement with neighbouring authorities? - As vacancies were filled, the use of agency workers decreased. However they might still be needed in particular circumstances. The idea of a "bank" of workers could be discussed with neighbouring authorities. At present, the county used a preferred agency provider.
- Where would the new Performance Team for the north of the county be based? - Mansfield or Ollerton.
- What was the external partner involved in the transformation programme? - IMPOWER, a medium sized private consulting firm in the social care field, had been commissioned through a formal procurement process.
- Would Ofsted report before the inspection framework was due to change in November? - Yes. Ofsted had asked if the authority would like an early inspection before the framework changed.
- Why had the number of adoptions increased? - There had been increased effort to get families to apply to become adopters and to match them with children in care. It would be a challenge to continue to find Nottinghamshire people to become adopters. All ages of children were being adopted, including children with significant physical disabilities.

- Was the authority able to recruit experienced workers as well as new graduates? - In the last recruitment campaign, 40 candidates had been interviewed and 12 posts filled, half of them with experienced workers. There was now an induction programme for newly qualified social workers, with no child protection work for the first two years, a mentor, and Advanced Social Work Practitioners to give guidance. It had not been possible to fill more than 12 posts because of the quality of candidates. Although candidates were qualified, they might not have had sufficient voluntary experience to be appointable.

It was agreed note the progress being made, and to request a progress report on the safeguarding improvement programme in due course.

## **8. Financing Adult Social Care**

Caroline Baria briefed the committee on changes in finance for adult social care arising from the County Council budget. The department reviewed all its services, with the outcome reported to Council in October 2010. After consultation, savings and efficiencies were approved by Council at the budget meeting in February. Savings and efficiencies were to be achieved through 44 projects, with half the savings coming from eight "high governance" projects. Ms Baria summarised these eight projects, their timescales and how the programme was overseen. Already ten projects had been completed, and savings of £9.3m achieved by the end of May. Other programmes were on target. She and Jon Wilson answered questions from members.

- With the raising of eligibility criteria, how many service users would no longer qualify for care? The burden would fall on their families and friends. - Some 155 people had been identified as having moderate needs, and who received day services or home care. Savings would arise from new people identified in the future. The department would use discretion in individual cases, if it was felt that demand for other services might increase if a service was withdrawn.
- The new model for day services might be unpopular with some service users. How would it be promoted? - There had been positive feedback from service users and staff about the pilot at Willow Wood. The new model would build on experience at this pilot.
- Was the sale of care homes achievable in the lifetime of the current administration? - This could not be answered directly. A timetable had been prepared, including the preparation of a tender document which identified the homes to be sold. Progress was on track.
- What was the care funding calculator in relation to learning disability and mental health? - The calculator was tool developed by the Department of Health. It included elements for hotel costs and staffing. It would enable the authority to approach a provider, look at their costs and negotiate reduced costs on the care package. £450,000 of savings had already been achieved.

- There might be benefit in members visiting Willow Wood. - Services users from Worksop had visited Willow Wood to talk to service users there. There would be meetings at every day centre to discuss proposals, and a transition process before anyone moved. Red Oaks in Mansfield also had a mixed model.
- At a recent visit to Red Oaks, a member had found that there had been no new referrals recently, and no-one had come into the critical or severe categories. - People were opting for direct payments, employing people and sorting out their own care. However, building-based services would suit some people, such as people with complex needs.
- Another member referred to positive feedback from service users when he had visited Red Oaks.
- What checks were there on the quality of external providers? - The authority monitored, had safeguarding procedures, and worked with the Care Quality Commission.
- What number of people had been identified as having moderate needs? How frequently would they be reassessed? - Ms Baria would check the numbers in this category. Any individual or their family could ask for a re-assessment if the care needs changed.
- The authority continued to place people in care homes with only one or two stars. - People could choose where they stay. The authority worked with the lowest graded homes to improve standards, and was pro-active where there were concerns.
- The reablement programme was welcomed. How flexible could it be, to recognise that people might recover at different rates or experience setbacks? - The programme could be very flexible in response to changes in need.
- How could people with dementia be protected if they were still living at home? - It was not a question of leaving people with dementia at home on their own, but of providing alternatives to residential care. This might be through an extra care setting, where there was 24 hour access to services, or assistive technology. Lark Hill in Clifton was a local example of extra care.

It was agreed to request a further report at the end of the financial year.

## **9. Programme of Work**

In relation to the forthcoming review of services at Bassetlaw Hospital, the Chairman reported a request from Bassetlaw District Council that the County Council delegate the scrutiny of the proposals to the District Council. Given the decision of the Standing Committee at its last meeting, the Chairman stated that the District Council's request would be declined.

The Chairman also indicated that Bassetlaw PCT would be invited to the Standing Committee on 5 September to explain the delays on consultation.

In relation to the two recent referrals to the Secretary of State for Health, the Chairman stated that no reply had yet been received.

Martin Gately reminded members that there would be a briefing about Myalgic Encephalomyelitis at 12.30 pm.

The programme of work was agreed.

The meeting closed at 11.35 am.

CHAIR

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