

minutes



Meeting SOCIAL SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

Date Tuesday, 4th April 2006 (commencing at 10.30am)

Membership

Persons absent are marked with 'A'

COUNCILLORS

Steve Carroll (Chair)

A Joe Lonergan MBE (Vice Chair)

A John Allin
Steve Carr

A Jen Cole

A Jim Creamer
Keith Girling

A Rod Kempster
John Knight
Pat Lally
Philip Owen
Sheila Place

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the Select Committee held on 20th February 2006 were confirmed and signed by the Chair, subject to the inclusion of apologies for absence from Councillor Steve Carr.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Councillor John Allin

“ Jen Cole

“ John Knight

“ Joe Lonergan MBE

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Steve Carroll declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item no. 8 – Development of Children's Centres as his employer had an agreement with SureStart.

MEMBERSHIP

The appointment of Councillor Philip Owen as a Member of the Select Committee in place of Councillor Lynn Sykes was noted.

THE MEETING THE CHALLENGES SERVICES CONFERENCE 14TH DECEMBER 2005

Councillor Steve Carroll reported on the conference he had attended together with Councillors Ellie Lodziak and Lynn Sykes. He commented that he had found the presentation by Professor Ainsley-Gore, the Children's Commissioner for England inspiring.

The report was noted.

LEARNING DISABILITY DAY SERVICE MODERNISATION

Jon Wilson, Assistant Director of Social Services reported that there was a need to progress modernisation of the Learning Disability Day Service at a faster pace. There were two main areas in the proposals: to confirm the locality model and to propose changes in the staffing structure. He added that the intention was to produce a further document at the end of the first stage of the consultation process. He indicated that the staffing was currently based at day centres with staff attached to a day centre. The proposals were for them to be more flexibly based across the districts and working more flexible hours. A more flexible service would represent a more modern agenda and the service would not be seen as centre based. He indicated that there had been 30 formal responses to the consultation and two meetings with the trade unions and their formal response was expected shortly. In response to a question from Councillor Girling, Jon Wilson stated that the trade unions had major concerns about the proposals and that there was a different view between trade unions and management around modernisation. Councillor Girling stated that he did not see why extra cash would be needed to remove the free meals. Jon Wilson explained that this had been custom and practice as people were expected to work through their lunchtime and in return they were provided with a meal. He indicated that he would need to look into the tax issue raised by Councillor Girling.

In response to a question from Councillor Brandon-Bravo, Jon Wilson indicated that he anticipated that the cafeteria would be run in-house using existing kitchen staff with service users working alongside them. With regard to any food being left over, they would learn from the experiences of the cafeterias they have at the moment.

Councillor Owen asked about the consultation. Jon Wilson stated that responses were being collated and that a full report would be produced. Responses had been received from individual carers, service users in day centres, staff in day centres, and advocacy groups. Three meetings had been held with carers' groups. Councillor Owen stated that there had been outrage at the quality of the consultation and criticism of the format and delivery. There was a question over transport and the proposed location of the service. Jon Wilson stated that there was a particular issue in north Broxtowe which was separate to the Learning Disability Day Service modernisation consultation document, although there was a link. He added that locality bases had been proposed in north Broxtowe but these had been put on hold. A letter would be going out for meeting in May to meet carers to agree a way forward.

Councillor Lally commented that the Department had been running an institutional service which did need modernisation. He felt there was a need to become more

integrated into local communities. He thought that the proposed changes needed to be handled delicately. He felt there was a need to ensure that the meals service provision was robust and could withstand staff absences.

In response to a question from Councillor Steve Carroll, Jon Wilson stated that it was proposed to produce a further report at the end of April and then have a further period of consultation for six weeks with a view to implementing proposals in September/October this year. Councillor Steve Carroll thought there was a need for the day service modernisation to be kept under scrutiny. He pointed out that there had been a study group looking at this issue previously and there may need to be a need to reconstitute this group. He stated that this needed to be kept in mind as an issue to scrutinise when the scrutiny arrangements were reviewed.

LEVEL OF DEMAND FOR CARERS' SERVICES

Al Kestenbaum from the Social Services Department introduced the report. He reported that there were estimated to be 83,000 carers in Nottinghamshire and 26,000 who cared for people more than 20 hours per week.

In response to a question from Councillor Steve Carr, Al Kestenbaum stated that the Crossroads scheme was much appreciated and crucial to the provision of sitting services and would continue. In response to a question from Councillor Girling, Al Kestenbaum explained that the uptake had been lower from the black and ethnic minority community than the population would suggest. The Department had been trying to increase this so that they obtained a fair share. Councillor Lally commented about the large growth in expenditure on carers' services and he wondered whether they could be sustained in the long term. Councillor Steve Carroll referred to the carers' support workers and asked whether steps could be taken through the partnerships board for similar posts in the north of the county. Al Kestenbaum stated that when the Primary Care Trust reorganisation was completed the situation would be clearer. He added that two workers were seconded in the north to the Carers' Federation and consideration was being given to taking these posts back and using them in the north of the county.

FORWARD PLAN

This was noted.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

This was noted.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Councillor Steve Carroll, having earlier declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the remaining item left the meeting. In the absence of the Vice-Chair, Councillor Sheila Place was appointed to Chair the remainder of the meeting.

DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Dianne Tinklin from the Education Department and Alison Shield from the Social Services Department introduced the report. Alison Shield commented that the vision

for Children's Centres had come from the Climbie Report. She pointed out that children's centres were not just about buildings but could be a partnership of services. She added that there were 48 to be developed in Nottinghamshire which was the largest in the East Midlands.

Councillor Steve Carr welcomed the scheme in Beeston which was being run jointly with the City Council. Councillor Girling referred to Newark Family Centre which he felt was very impressive. He thought that all the centres should be like that. Alison Shield commented that Newark Family Centre had always operated very much as the children's centres would. In response to a question from Councillor Owen it was pointed out that by 2010 all areas of the county would be covered by children's centres.

The meeting closed at 12 noon.

CHAIR

Ref: social services/m_4april06