

## minutes Rota Visits Review Group

Monday, 27 February 2012 at 2.00pm

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### Membership

- absent

#### Councillors

Ged Clarke (Chairman)

- John Clarke  
Barrie Cooper  
Jim Creamer  
Vincent Dobson
- Geoff Merry  
Mel Shepherd  
Brian Wombwell

#### Officers

Martin Gately - Scrutiny Coordinator

Paul Davies - Governance Officer

Elaine Bond - Service Manager Residential Services

Lisa Swift - Business Support Officer Adult Social Care and Health

Diane Clayton - Market Development Officer

Guy Edgar - National Management Trainee

### 1. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 4 January 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor John Clarke (other reason).

### 3. Declarations of interest

None

### 4. Review of Rota Visits

Members discussed the information which had been circulated to assist the review, including:

- rota visit pro-forma
- comparative information about rota visits in other authorities
- list of County Council run care homes
- list of independent sector residential homes
- inspections by other agencies

## **Rota visit pro-forma**

In relation to the pro-forma, members observed that

- most questions required a yes/no answer, in contrast to the previous version, which had asked more open questions.
- questions relied on information from managers. Members would not have time to seek proof of each item.
- rota visits lasted around two hours. Previously they had taken all day.

Officers responded that the form had been designed in the light of the Dignity and Care campaign, and could be revisited.

It was agreed that members would consider the pro-forma individually, and come back to the review group with any ideas.

## **Comparative information**

Information from a number of other authorities showed that it was unusual for members to visit care homes. In discussion, review group members saw value in such visits, which could complement rather than duplicate the statutory inspections, and could focus on the wellbeing of residents.

There was discussion about whether members should visit independent sector as well as council run homes. Members were informed that the current contracts may not allow members compulsory entry to independent sector homes. However, this might be negotiated with the Care Homes Association or requests could be made to individual homes. Members concluded that it was unlikely a request to visit would be refused.

The number of members who might conduct rota visits was also discussed. It was felt that this would depend on whether all homes were visited, and on the frequency of visits. Members saw value in visiting the authority's homes more frequently than the independent ones.

Members questioned whether the title "rota visit" should still be used. Alternatives suggested included "councillors' welfare visits" or "care home visits".

## **Lists of care homes**

Di Clayton explained that all homes listed met the basic Care Quality Commission standards. Homes were categorised into five bands (with Band 5 being the highest) according to their quality and environment. The fees paid by authority varied according to the banding. The authority worked more closely with Band 1 homes to help them improve.

The Chairman summarised the review group's thinking:

- rota visits to continue

- independent sector establishments to be included
- visits to independent sector establishments to be every four years
- visits to County Council establishments to be every year
- a panel of 20 members to conduct the visits (would proportionality apply?)
- consider a different name for rota visits
- consider amending the form to include more open questions

It was agreed to hold a further meeting of the review group on the afternoon of 20 March 2012 to consider the draft final report. Members were invited to contact Martin Gately with any further thoughts in the mean time.

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm.

CHAIR