

MINUTES of the meeting of the **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00am on Thursday 21 July 2011 at County Hall, Kingston upon Thames.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Select Committee at its meeting on 21 September 2011

Members:

- A Mr John Furey (Chairman)
- * Mr Tony Samuels (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr Victor Agarwal
- A Dr Zully Grant-Duff
- * Mr Ben Carasco
- * Mr Mel Few
- * Mrs Helyn Clack
- * Mr Ernest Mallett
- Mrs Pauline Searle
- Mr Michael Sydney
- * Mrs Fiona White
- * Mrs Angela Fraser
- * Mrs Linda Kemeny

Ex officio Members:

- Mrs Lavinia Sealy (Chairman of the Council)
- Mr David Munro (Vice-Chairman of the Council)

Substitute Members:

- * Mr Richard Walsh for Mr John Furey
- * Mr Bill Chapman for Zully Grant-Duff

In attendance:

- * Michael Gosling (Cabinet Member for Adults Social Care)

* = Present

x = Present for part of the meeting

PART 1
IN PUBLIC

38/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies for absence were received from Mr John Furey and Dr Zully Grant-Duff. Mr Richard Walsh attended as a substitute for Mr Furey, and Mr Bill Chapman attended as a substitute for Dr Grant-Duff.

39/11 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 17 May 2011 [Item 2]

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

40/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS [Item 3]

None Received

41/11 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions.

42/11 RESPONSE FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

There were no responses from the Cabinet

43/11 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER [Item 6]

Adult Social Care savings plan - A letter has been sent to the Cabinet Member. No response has been received to date.

44/11 PROGRESS WITH THE MULTI AGENCY CARERS STRATEGY [Item 7]

Declarations of Interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Sarah Mitchell, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council
John Bangs, Carers Strategy and Development Manager, Surrey County Council
Jane Thornton, CEO, Action for Carers.

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

- Members commented that the same problems, such as the SWIFT upgrade, keep coming back to committee and felt that more attention needs to be paid to ensure improvements are being made. Officers agreed and confirmed this area is a priority and resource to address the issue is being provided.
- Members supported a suggestion to create a Task-Group to help address the issues.
- Members suggested the report comes back to committee with more detail around the service budget, some concrete action points and a clear definition of the problems that need addressing.
- There was a discussion around what will happen to people who fall outside of the scope for the Mental Health Service. Officers stated that they are looking to increase mental health capacity into locality teams in order to pick up these people.
- The committee discussed recent high profile cases of abuse in care homes and a possible increase in the reluctance to go into care homes.
- One Member was concerned by the number of unknown child carers in Surrey and asked what work is being done to help those that are known. Officers agreed that this is an area of great concern and a priority, and the service is working closely with schools to identify young carers and provide support for them. There is a Young Carers Service dedicated to this.

Recommendations:

1. That there is a need to improve the rate of carer assessments and therefore this Committee should set up a working group to address this; and
2. That the Service should be congratulated on the GP carer identification scheme which has been recognised by the NHS and the Service is encouraged to continue to promote it.

Select Committee Next Steps:

None.

45/11 SURREY SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE PILOT [Item 8]

Declarations of Interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Colin Rowett, Senior Manager Commissioning, Surrey County Council
Robert Raynsford, Senior Principal Accountant, Surrey County Council

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

- Officers stated that much of the work focuses on those people who are deaf and use British Sign Language, as well as those who are hard of hearing or deafened. The team works to involve deaf people in the services in their community and encouraging social enterprise.
- Members queried how the responsibilities and legalities of the pilot would work. The Cabinet Member noted these concerns and the need for a mechanism to ensure the quality of services provided remained at a high standard. Officers confirmed there would be a process of formal monitoring.
- There was discussion around previous pilots in the Children's services in Shropshire, where a fostering social enterprise enabled the Council to save money and provide more resources for foster carers.
- There was concern that pushing this service away from the Local Authority could increase the risk of funding reductions in future, if the Council faces budget pressures.
- Members congratulated officers on being awarded the opportunity to take part in the pilot.

Recommendations:

1. That the Service be congratulated on being chosen to host one of the social work practice pilots nationally;
2. That the Committee looks at the use of social enterprise models in delivering social care services in future again in a workshop-style session – exploring in greater detail the concerns raised by Members today;
3. That the Service provides clarity on the outcomes; and
That sustainability of the pilot be a specific outcome.

Select Committee Next Steps:

None.

46/11 HOME-BASED CARE [Item 9]

Declarations of Interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Sarah Mitchell, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council
Jean Boddy, Senior Manager, Commissioning, Surrey County Council (SCC)
Jenna Crombie, Category Specialist Procurement and Commissioning, SCC
Alastair Hinde, Category Manager, Adults Procurement and Commissioning SCC

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

- There was concern around the monitoring of contracts given to other organisations. Officers explained key performance indicators exist and there will be spot checks on providers.
- The Members discussed electronic call monitoring and the fact that the Council is not yet in a position to require it. Members urged progress on this stating that we must help small providers to deliver a service. Officers agreed with the need to ensure we have provision for electronic monitoring. One Member highlighted the need to monitor quality and valuable service and not just time.
- There was discussion around working with the trading standards team to ensure best value for contracts.
- The monitoring of resources was discussed. Members felt productivity should be scrutinised and stated that the checking process is of the utmost importance.

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee recognises the concerns of stakeholders on electronic monitoring and will continue to monitor this in the tendering exercise of Home Based Care;
2. That the benchmarking information carried out within the SE7 group of local authorities be circulated to the Committee; and
That the Service involves and consults the local committees in the tendering exercise.

Select Committee Next Steps:

None.

47/11 SOCIAL CARE DEBT UPDATE [Item 10]

Declarations of Interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Caroline Shotton, Operations Manager, Change and Efficiency Directorate, SCC

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

- There was discussion around direct debit payments and what is being done to increase the number of care recipients who pay by this method. Officers explained that they do encourage direct debit payments but this is not always the preferred option and legally a choice in the method of payment has to be provided.
- The Chairman proposed a dedicated, full-time officer be allocated to address the issue of outstanding social care debt. The committee supported the proposal.

Recommendations:

- 1) That the Committee recommends to the Cabinet that a dedicated officer is employed to reduce the amount of social care debt.

Select Committee Next Steps:

None.

48/11 CABINET MEMBER PRIORITIES [Item 11]

Declarations of Interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Michael Gosling, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Surrey County Council

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

- Members asked the Cabinet Member to describe how much influence the Council is having on central government policy. The Cabinet Member stated that Surrey County Council is recognised as an efficient council at a national level. Officers stated that the Council does influence Government policy, especially on Dementia.
- The Cabinet Member offered Members a meeting to discuss all issues around Anchor and Care UK contracts. It was stated that all Members should have a thorough knowledge of the work done on these contracts.

Recommendations:

- 1) That the Committee invites the relevant Cabinet Member annually to give an account of progress against the priorities.

Select Committee Next Steps:

None.

49/11 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 12]

Declarations of Interest:

None.

Witnesses:

None.

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

- One Member highlighted possible changes to the Government benefit system and the potential impact on Adult Social Care services. It was suggested the committee look at this item in it's November meeting.
- Members suggested inviting other Members from the Children and Families Select Committee to jointly scrutinise the item Transition from Children to Adults.

50/11 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [Item 13]

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS WERE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE. HOWEVER, THE INFORMATION SET OUT BELOW IS NOT CONFIDENTIAL.

PART 2

IN PRIVATE

51/11 STRATEGIC SUPPLIER REVIEW – RECENT AND FUTURE ACTIVITY [Item 13]

Declarations of Interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Alastair Hinde, Category Manager, Adults Procurement and Commissioning SCC
Rajesh Shori, Senior Category Specialist, Procurement and Commissioning SCC
Simon Laker, Senior Manager, Commissioning, SCC

Sarah Mitchell, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care, SCC

Key Points Raised During the Discussion:

- Members congratulated officers on the work done so far and asked what the expected cost reduction is for Phase 2. Officers stated the target is another £1.8 million and that this is a conservative estimate.
- Members highlighted that this is a Local Authority and not a business and that this should not be forgotten in contract negotiations. Officers agreed and confirmed the service is always clear, honest and upfront with providers.
- There was discussion on high cost placements that are self-funded by clients. A small number of people go through the self-funded route and data on self-funders is not robust so it hasn't informed position in relation to selecting certain providers.
- There was discussion around the Council acting as agents in the insurance side and potentially increasing revenue. This idea is being shared with commissioners in the South East and they are very interested. It is also being discussed in the Public Value Review.

Recommendations:

- 1) That the Service be congratulated on the work of the Strategic Supplier Review to date; and
- 2) That the Committee endorses Phase 2.

Select Committee Next Steps:

None.

52/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 14]

Noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday 21 September 2011 at 10.00am.

[Meeting ended: 1.20pm]

Chairman