

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY WELLBEING & OLDER PEOPLE POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD ON 8 JULY 2010

Membership

* W J C Dick (Chairman)	* R A Pearson
* L Barton	* Mrs J Reeves (Vice-Chairman)
J Dornan	* C Riley
* M Garnett	* Mrs E Webster
* Griffiths	Mrs M J Webster
* S Hillier	* Mrs J H Whitehouse (Vice-Chairman)
	* B Wood
* L Mead	

* Present

Councillors A Naylor (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing) and A Brown (Deputy to Cabinet Member) were in attendance.

Also in attendance was Ms M Montgomery, Deputy Co-chair Essex AHCW Older People's Planning Group.

51. Attendance, Apologies and Substitute Notices

The Committee Officer reported no apologies had been received. [Subsequent to the meeting apologies were received from Councillor Mavis Webster]. It had been agreed by the Chairman that the Essex AHCW Older People's Planning Group should have a representative in attendance at future meetings of the Committee. The Chairman welcomed Ms Montgomery to her first meeting.

52. Declarations of Interest

In view of the item on Goldlay Library, Councillor Janet Whitehouse advised of a personal interest as she was a member of Echo choir in Epping. No other declarations of interest were reported.

53. Minutes of last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community Wellbeing & Older People Policy and Scrutiny Committee held on 10 June 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the attendance record being amended to reflect that Councillor Griffiths was in attendance.

54. Order of business

It was agreed that the order of business on the published agenda for the meeting be changed so that consideration of Agenda Item 4 on the CQC Inspection Feedback would be removed from the formal agenda of the meeting. Instead members would join staff and managers of Adults Health & Community Wellbeing directorate in the Council Chamber later that morning after the closure of the Committee meeting for a presentation from the Care Quality Commission on their recent inspection of adult social care in Essex. The order and content of the published agenda would otherwise remain unchanged.

55. Progress Report on CQC Annual Performance Assessment and Action Plan

The Committee received a report (CWOP/27/10) updating and providing further information on the CQC performance ratings for Essex Adult Social Care Services first considered by the Committee on 11 March 2010. Audrey Bancroft, Senior Operational Manager, Liz Chidgey, Deputy Executive Director, Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing, Lynne Jacobs, Service Manager Social Services, and Karen Wright, Internal Standards and Governance Director AHCW, were in attendance to present and support the item. Members had requested further information as indicated below and the following issues were discussed:

- (i) Carers Assessments –The Council had exceeded the target of completing assessments for 28% of carers with a final outturn of 29.98%; the target set by the LAA for 2010/11 was 30%. It was confirmed that the figure represented the percentage of eligible carers for assessment over a twelve month period running April to March each year. A certain number of carers would not want to complete an assessment and the statistics source population would include those that had refused so it was unlikely that the assessment exercise could ever get close to 100% as a result. Ms Chidgey agreed to consider revising the presentation of the statistics to include an indication of the number of those carers refusing to participate in the assessment. Members suggested and discussed different ways of informally consulting and getting feedback from carers without actually undertaking a formal assessment. It was anticipated that the Essex performance benchmarked against comparator County Councils would be above the average once all data for all the Councils was received and analysed.
- (ii) Intermediate care – a summary breakdown of both ECC and NHS provision of intermediate care beds was outlined with an indication as to whether they were for admission avoidance or to support timely discharge. The information provided needed to be viewed in the context of a Health and Social Care joint commissioning project currently being undertaken with the five Essex based PCTs and Tricordant, a project management consulting group. The study would look at urgent care pathways for older people particularly covering services around admission avoidance, reablement, intermediate care and end of life care. It would look at more integrated ways for delivering urgent care pathways which at present were being done separately and look at the balance of beds and who was most appropriate to commission these types of facilities in future. The study was aiming to respond to local initiatives whilst also looking at the best way to provide a County wide service. The project would look at buying the right balance of resources whilst acknowledging varying needs and pressures in different parts of the County. It was **Agreed** that Jenny Owen provide a briefing paper on the study into changes to commissioning of urgent care services for the next meeting of the Committee.

Members discussed various initiatives in Essex to reduce admissions to A&E. In particular, facilities in North Essex and at Braintree were highlighted where people were encouraged back to community services and other walk-in units. In West Essex a Rapid Assessment Centre based in Epping and Saffron Walden aimed to clinically assess some patients who otherwise would have been referred to A&E and then return patients

to the care of the GP. Some initial data had suggested that the model in West Essex had been successful. GPs would be further encouraged to divert patients to these alternative treatment units rather than referral to A&E but it was acknowledged that greater GP awareness of these services was required. It was noted that these alternative treatment units could have initial extra up front resource costs. However, it was acknowledged that within urgent care pathways there always would be very specific health related matters that would still require attention at A&E. Members suggested that if any of these alternative treatment centres proved to be effective and successful that they as a Committee should support them and recommend that they be extended to other areas as deemed appropriate.

In discussing the commissioning and availability of intermediate beds at various localities it was stressed to Members that such beds were for interim placements which were not necessarily health related nor for acute needs but still enabled a longer assessment of patients. There was a comprehensive planning process in place which assessed projected needs and purchasing patterns in each geographical area. A combination of block and spot purchase of intermediate care beds was essential to deal with fluctuating demand and so as to minimise the number of beds under block purchase contracts being left unused at times when demand was lower. The philosophy was to support more people at home where possible. It was suggested that the Committee could benefit from a further presentation on commissioning outlining needs, delivery plans, pricing and choice and it was **Agreed** that such a presentation be placed on the Forward Look for the Committee for a suitable time in the future.

- (iii) End of Life Care – an updated report on the further development of End of Life Care (EOL Care) provision and a breakdown mapping of existing hospices was received. Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing had developed good multi agency networks in each locality with PCTs, voluntary sector partners and service user/carer representatives in relation to EOL Care and/or palliative care. Preferred Priorities of Care documentation was used across the county to enable people, to express their wishes regarding their EOL needs. Various initiatives and pilot projects for EOL and/or palliative care across Essex were outlined.
- (iv) Timeliness of Minor adaptations – Adult Social Care performed above its comparator group average and had improved further in 2009-10 through projects like the Mobile Occupational Assessment Service.
- (v) Representative on Learning Disability Partnership Board (LDPB)– an update was provided on the vacant position of a BME representative on the LDPB.

56. Goldlay Gardens Library, Chelmsford

The Committee received an update report (CWOP/28/10) from Martin Palmer, Principal Officer, Libraries, on the status of the library premises at Goldlay Gardens and, in particular, actions taken and issues arising from previous scrutiny recommendations made on the future operation of the facility by the Committee.

In particular the previous scrutiny study had listed the following concerns and the Committee sought answers to unanswered questions, more information, re-assurances and progress reports on actions as appropriate:

Members were concerned that a root and branch review of the service had not been undertaken to identify what services were needed and should be provided in a cost effectiveness manner. Mr Palmer indicated that these questions were being looked at in the context of the Library Services Transformation Programme. The Library had been looking for an alternative location that was financially viable for the current facility for many years in its entirety or in part and which had met logistical requirements but they had yet to find a site that was practical and cost effective.

Members indicated that there should be usage statistics available so that the service provided at the current site could be fully evaluated. With reading material widely available on the internet and via other information sources consideration should also be given as to whether they should be an enabler or provider for certain facilities and services. Mr Palmer indicated that they had tried to outsource certain services but had not received any financially beneficial offers. He suggested that review of a more in-depth report included as part of the Library Services Transformation Programme may give Members a wider context.

It was acknowledged that the site was not in the most suitable place for the services it provided. The stack of old and difficult to replace, but not rare, books and papers, was the only reserve collection of any significant size in the library service and consisted of material which, while no longer popular enough to be on open shelves in libraries, was still in demand. The Performing Arts service lent sets of plays and music scores and currently issued around 60,000 items per year. Charges were made for the service so that it was more cost effective but it was not provided on a profit-making basis.

Members questioned the logistical sense in delivering documents on demand via white transit vans and suggested further digitalisation of material should be pursued. Mr Palmer indicated that the Goldlay Gardens site was an information hub but that did not necessarily mean that all documents and material were actually stored there. Currently there were 700,000 requests a year for books, plays and music scores and other documents and materials for transportation around Essex and whilst outsourcing the delivery operation had been investigated it had been found not to be practical at present.

It was confirmed that the existing digitisation process for Hansard had been completed by Central Government and now a digitisation process for committee debates had begun. The disposal of hard copies would be investigated and the holdings of all official publications would be adjusted in light of the continuing digitisation process.

Automated systems were in place for the facilities provided direct to the libraries in the County. 95% of items reserved under the request service were managed automatically by the electronic ELAN library management system. The remaining 5% of items had to be sourced from libraries outside the county and had to be managed via a different computer system which was overdue for replacement. Consequently, a paper back-up system currently was in place for this service with an upgrade of the software expected in the Autumn.

Members were concerned that the original scrutiny recommendations apparently had to date not been fully addressed and after considerable discussion **Agreed** that:

- (i) Mr Palmer return for the October meeting of the Committee with further information on:
 - (a) whether there was a need for the current services and facilities provided with usage rates and a suitable Business Plan;
 - (b) if the service as a whole or in part could be provided in a cost effective manner with true running costs of operation to be provided (including staff and other overheads);
 - (c) costings on each of the services provided and on the logistics of transferring documents by van;
 - (d) evaluation of current location and viability of relocating all or part of the operation;
 - (e) re-assurances on the quality and security of the current accommodation and whether the building was fit for purpose.
- (ii) Whilst Councillors Dick and Reeves previously had attended the Goldlay Gardens site that the whole Committee should visit the site to further familiarise themselves with the site and issues.

57. Forward Look

The Committee received the Forward Look (CWOP/29/10). The following subsequent amendments to be made to it were noted: the Cabinet member for Arts and Heritage would visit the Committee in the Autumn as the Committee had been given oversight and scrutiny responsibility for that area, a further update on Goldlay Gardens Library at the October meeting and a briefing paper on the joint commissioning of care services for the September meeting.

58. Dates of Future Meetings

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 9 September 2010.

The future meeting dates were noted as follows:

- Thursday 14 October 2010
- Thursday 11 November 2010
- Thursday 9 December 2010
- Thursday 13 January 2011
- Thursday 10 February 2011
- Thursday 10 March 2011
- Thursday 14 April 2011

The meeting closed at 11.20am. Members then attended a presentation given by the Care Quality Commission to members of staff employed in the Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing directorate outlining their final Inspection Report on the standard of adult social care provided in Essex. A summary report of this presentation is attached to these minutes but does not form part of the minutes of the Committee.

Chairman