

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND SAFETY)

MINUTES of a meeting held at the Children's Centre, Llantwit Major on 4th September, 2006.

Present: Councillor Mrs. M.E.J. Birch (Chairman); Councillor R.F. Curtis (Vice-Chairman); Councillors R.J. Bertin, Ms. R.M. Birch, Mrs. J.E. Charles, P. Church, J. Clifford, S.C. Egan, C.L. Osborne, Mrs. A.J. Preston, Mrs. M. Randall, A.J. Readman, K.R. Stockdale, W.C. Vaughan, Mrs. M.R. Wilkinson and C.J. Williams.

Also present: Councillor Ms. M.E. Alexander, G.C. Kemp and J.W. Thomas.

247 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE -

These were received from Councillor Mrs. S.I. Sharpe and Mrs. Howells (Vale Housing Federation).

248 MINUTES -

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 10th July, 2006 be approved as a correct record.

249 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -

Councillor S.C. Egan declared the nature of his interest in Agenda Item Nos. 4, 7 and 8 in that he was an employee of Cardiff and the Vale NHS Trust with a dispensation granted by the Standards Committee to speak but not vote.

Councillor R.F. Curtis declared the nature of his interest in Agenda Item No. 4, 7, and 8 in that he was an employee of Cardiff and the Vale NHS Trust.

250 CORPORATE PLAN (CMT) -

The draft version of the revised Corporate Plan was presented to the Committee for Members comments. The Council had approved its Corporate Plan for 2005-2009 on 8th December 2004. On 19th July, 2006, the Cabinet had approved the draft Corporate Plan for 2006-2010 as a basis for consultation with Members and key partners and consideration by Scrutiny Committees. Any changes as a result of the consultation process would be made where appropriate and a full reappraisal of the Plan would be conducted after the Local Government elections in 2008. The Plan would be used as the framework for service plans and underpin the Council's budget. It reflected the Council's operations to continually improve the services it delivers to the local community and that it is fully integrated with the Council's forward financial planning process. Members were requested to consider

whether the main points had been covered in the Plan. In respect of the Housing Stock Assessment Strategy, Members were advised a report on Housing Options would be presented to Scrutiny Committees/Cabinet in the next few months. In respect of Supplementary Planning Guidance for Affordable Housing, Members requested further information on the criteria used. The Director agreed to forward this as soon as possible.

Members also raised concerns in relation to enforcement issues for the authority in respect of the Government's proposal to ban smoking in public places (CW22) and requested further information on this matter.

In respect of action CW10 - Reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation - The authority was looking at the possibility of leasing schemes and licensing properties in order to provide a better quality of service and Members requested that further reports be presented to Committee in due course.

RECOMMENDED -

(1) T H A T the information as requested above be presented to the Committee in due course and that further detailed information in respect of joint working arrangements be reflected in the Plan.

(2) T H A T the Plan be noted.

251 DRAFT IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2006/07 (CX) -

The draft Improvement Plan for 2006/07 was presented to the Committee and contained performance and improvement information for all Directorates and Corporate Plan priorities. The Council's previous Improvement Plan had been published as required by the Local Government Act 1999 on 30th June, 2005. The revised WAG guidance on the Wales Programme for Improvement stated that the next Improvement Plan must be published no later than 31st October, 2006. The Committee was advised that the majority of the information which was contained within the Plan was based on departmental service plans which had been discussed by Scrutiny Committees during May and June. The draft Plan contained all available performance information required by WAG and several local indicators that measured corporate priorities. The performance information would be used by the Wales Audit Office to assess the Council's ability to improve and as such was of critical importance to the reputation of the Council. It was however, noted that the Plan was continually evolving as and when information was provided by managers and was not yet fully completed. It was noted that the production of the Improvement Plan was a major annual project that had involved a considerable amount of time for Members and officers alike. The cost of producing the plan and publishing a bi-lingual summary of the Plan was met through existing budgets.

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the draft Improvement Plan be noted.

252 REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONITORING FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL, 2006 TO 31ST JULY, 2006 (DSC) -

The report presented the position in respect of revenue and capital expenditure for the period 1st April, 2006 to 31st July, 2006 regarding revenue and capital budgets.

The Committee was advised that the current forecast for the Directorate was for a balanced budget for the Housing Revenue Account and a deficit of £5,505,000 on General Fund Services. The Committee was further advised that the Director of Community Services was preparing an action plan which would detail actions to be taken to off-set the potential deficit which would be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet, the Budget Working Group and the Scrutiny Committee.

In respect of Public Sector Housing the officer reported that the current favourable variance of £24,000 was largely due to staff vacancies across the Section and rent income being higher than anticipated due to right to buy sales. It was estimated for Private Sector Housing that the Service would outturn on target and that the current favourable variance of £70,000 was mainly due to staff vacancies.

With regard to Children's Services the budget was currently showing a projected deficit of £2,287,000 being an increase of £287,000 on the previously reported figure. It was noted the increase was mainly due to the signing of the agreement for the new children's residential unit and the placement of children without a corresponding reduction in other commitments. The situation would be closely monitored and reflected in future reports.

As had been previously reported the probable outturn for Community Care and Health Services was showing a deficit of £3,068,000 which reflected the level of commitments on residential placements, nursing home placements, domiciliary care packages and social worker costs.

In respect of the Catering Service Members were advised the budget was showing a projected deficit of £150,000 due to losses incurred by the Trading Account. The deficit was due to a fall in the number of meals being supplied and it was suggested this could increase to £175,000 if from September meal numbers continued to decline. The Committee noted that changes to address the issues were to commence in September and that longer term plans had been drawn up to rectify the situation.

A seminar presentation on the Catering Service had also been arranged for Members on 16th October, 2006 on the catering service and relevant matters.

Appendix 2 to the report detailed the financial progress on the capital programme as at 31st July, 2006. In 2006/07 the Welsh Assembly Government had approved a Major Repairs Allowance (MRA) of £2,700,000. The MRA was used to fund capital expenditure in the Housing Revenue

Accounts. It was therefore proposed that the schemes detailed in the table below be funded from the MRA and that the capital programme be increased accordingly. Approval had also been required for schemes to be undertaken in 2007/08 to allow flexibility across years when procuring work and thereby achieving economies of scale. The amendments were as follows:

Proposed Scheme	2006/07	2007/08
	£000	£000
Window Replacement	400	800
Electrical Testing, Smoke Alarm Testing/Replacement and rewiring in Council Dwellings	70	100
Rewire Communal Areas	80	0
Central Heating System Renewals	300	500
MRS Funding to be allocated in the Capital Programme	850	1400

Members noted the reports that were to be placed before Committees in due course and the Catering Service presentation on 16th October, 2006 and they looked forward to received the Directors Action Plan in respect of the estimated deficit in the Social Services budget.

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the Revenue and Capital Monitoring report for the period 1st April, 2006 to 31st July, 2006 be noted.

253 QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS (DCS) -

Children's Services: Members noted that the quarterly performance reports were in respect of the first quarter and as such information was fairly limited. However, in respect of Children's Services Members continued to express the need for the Council to ensure that the policy of invest to save in respect of a number of initiatives was addressed.

Community Care and Health: Members noted the performance in respect of the rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons and that a further report was on the agenda (Item 8) when this would be discussed in greater detail.

Housing and Community Safety: Members noted the progress that was being made in respect of Carbon Monoxide monitoring within the service area.

Strategy, Performance Management and Commissioning: Members accepted that limited information was available at present in respect of the first Quarter Performance Monitoring stage of the process.

RECOMMENDED - T H A T the Performance Monitoring reports be noted.

254 CHANGE AGENT TEAM (CAT) PROJECT TO SUPPORT THE REDUCTION OF DELAYED TRANSFERS OF CARE (DToC) IN CARDIFF AND THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN (DCS) -

The Chairman welcomed Mr. Hugh Ross (Chief Executive of the NHS Trust), Abigail Harris (Chief Executive of the Local Health Board) and Linda Chandler (Change Agent Team with the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Health Care).

The report before Committee sought the views of the Scrutiny Committee regarding the key recommendations from the CAT project to support the reduction of DToC in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan. The Director advised that in September 2005 the CAT had been part of the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Health Care commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to work with health and social work partners in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan to reduce the delayed transfer of care figures. As a result the five partner agencies being Cardiff Local Health Board, Vale Local Health Board, Cardiff and the Vale NHS Trust, Cardiff City and County Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Council agreed that the CAT project would look at the four following work streams

- date review and validation
- effective management of patient choice
- review of current discharge policy to incorporate Unified Assessment (UA) and Continuing Health Care (CHC)
- capacity and demand analysis to inform future commissioning.

The project also linked with existing work on delayed transfers of care that was being undertaken by all five of the partners. Members were advised of the key recommendations of the CAT project which had been prioritised as follows:

- effective management of patient choice
- implementation of the new draft Discharge Policy
- test out new ways of working using Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) Methodology
- make more effective use of data to inform intelligent commissioning
- improve partnership working
- manage care home capacity
- develop a joint strategy for commissioning across Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan
- collection and sharing of data by CSIW (Care Standards Inspectorate in Wales)
- “Pump Priming” funding for service remodelling
- taking a longer term view.

The CAT recognised that the level of DToC in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan was perhaps a symptom of the underlying partnership and commissioning issues as detailed in the report. The Director confirmed that

the report had been presented in order to encourage and co-ordinate partnership working between the various agencies. As a result of the report

Members then questioned the Director and representatives present in respect of a number of areas and considered the report:

1. Members had previously been advised that a residential care home was taking the local authority to arbitration in respect of residential care home fees and they wished to know the outcome.	No information to date. The Director advised as soon as details of the hearing were known he would advise Members accordingly.
2. When other local authorities use Vale homes do they pay different rates?	No. Any other local authority that requires a placement pays the fees of the host authority. At the moment it is only 10% of beds that are commissioned by other local authorities. There are also a number of homes within the Vale of Glamorgan that are carrying vacancies.
3. Members requested information on the total cost for a resident to be placed in residential care.	The Director was requested to provide the information as soon as possible.

Members welcomed the recommendation to improve Partnership working and considered that this had to be done effectively to ensure a reduction in delayed transfers of care. Members expressed concern about other projects that the Vale was funding, for example, OneVale when the budget situation in Social Services was in extreme difficulties. Abigail Harris advised the Committee that the Local Health Board and NHS Trust did not have reserves like local authorities.

Some Members stated that for example, in respect of the Penarth Headland Link the authority should endeavour to find other means of funding such a project i.e. with private developers in their opinion Social Services and Education should be the top priority. Members were keen to promote the Pump Priming recommendation and preventative work within the Council. They were aware of the demographic changes that were taking place which would also have future implications for the budget.

Linda Chandler from the Change Team confirmed the team had been brought in as an external pair of eyes to look at the problems that both agencies were facing in respect of Delayed Transfers of Care. In her opinion the fees and costs needed to be addressed as well as patients needs and requirements. It was noted that staff work under pressure and the budget constraints were affecting their stress levels at present.

After due consideration and discussion the Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDED -

(1) T H A T Cabinet be urged to address the shortfall in Social Services to ensure that the residents of the Vale of Glamorgan receive the care packages they had been identified for.

(2) T H A T the key recommendations contained within the report are supported by the Scrutiny Committee and forwarded to Cabinet for information / endorsement.