

**Minutes of the Adults Select Committee held at County Hall, Usk on
Tuesday 9th September 2014 at 10.00 a.m.**

PRESENT: County Councillor P.S. Farley (Chairman)

County Councillors: R.G. Harris, P. Jones, P.A. Watts.

COOPTED MEMBERS:

Mr. D. Hill
Mrs. D. Hudson.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. M. Howcroft	-	Assistant Head of Finance
Mr. T. Stokes	-	Finance Manager
Mrs. A. Evans	-	Customer Relations Manager
Mr. I. Bakewell	-	Housing and Communities Manager
Mrs. N. Perry	-	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1. Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors R. Chapman, R. Edwards, M. Hickman and A. Wintle.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. There were no interests declared by Members at the meeting.

MINUTES

3. The minutes of the Adults Select Committee meeting held on Tuesday 15th July 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

4. No members of the public present.

STROKE SERVICE REDESIGN

5. We welcomed a presentation from Michelle Graham of ABUHB Stroke Service Redesign Project Team. The presentation was designed to update the committee on the Stroke Service Redesign. The benefits of the redesign were detailed as being
 - Stroke patients would receive specialist care in a centre of excellence that would meet clinical standards.
 - Access to specialist care would be more equitable and consistent.

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- Stroke patients could go home sooner with Early Supported Discharge (ESD) which would improve outcomes and patient/carer satisfaction.

The proposed outline model was identified as follows:

- One hyper-acute stroke unit.
- Community Neuro Rehabilitation Team.
- Specialist stroke rehabilitation units.
- General rehabilitation and complex care management at local hospitals.
- Greater emphasis on primary and secondary prevention.

Agreed model:

- Royal Gwent Hospital Hyper-acute Stroke Care – first 0-3 days, and 4-7 days acute stroke care.
- Neville Hall Hospital and Ysbyty Ystrad Fawr - 4-7 days acute stroke care, and up to 6 weeks stroke rehabilitation.
- Development of Early Supported Discharge / Community Resource Teams.
- Primary care management of risk factors for primary and secondary prevention.
- Life after stroke – Stroke Association, communication support, Keep in Touch service, Stroke Survivors Groups.

The next steps were identified to be the development of a website providing links to the Stroke Association and local services. Also a Stroke Passport to be issued when a person has a stroke, being a handheld document containing essential information on local and national services available, individual risk factors identified at hospital, and goals to be achieved. We were told that the proposed commencement of the ESD via the Community Neuro Rehabilitation Service would be October 2014.

Several comments were made commending the model.

A member raised a query as to whether it was possible to use other hospitals, such as Chepstow Community. It was stressed that if that the model is focussed on specialist rehabilitation, and there would not be sufficient specialists for it to be cost effective to cover every community hospital. Also the ESD should allow patients to spend less time in rehabilitation.

A query was raised as to whether the team received enough government support. We were told that in a report issued by Welsh Government in 2008, Wales was reported as being the worst for stroke care in the UK. Funding was provided to improve care and continuing monitoring equipment was provided. In the following 5 years, Gwent had been the most improved area.

A member asked what the committee could do to help and reinforce the model. We were urged to continue to raise questions, share with the public and represent their opinions, and continue to express interest and involvement.

The Chairman concluded the item, noting that we welcomed the report as an excellent example of the Health Board in a scrutiny process. The committee would continue to support the progress of the redesign.

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.MONTH 3 REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING

6. We received a report from the Assistant Head of Finance and the Finance Manager.

The purpose of the report was to provide information on the forecast outturn position of the Authority at the end of month 3 for the 2014/15 financial year.

We were informed that Chief Officers were tasked with ensuring that services remained within the budgets and that savings targets were set for the financial year. Future monitoring reports would seek to contain the information on what is being done to manage the overspends identified and positive actions required to ensure that the budget would not be breached.

Members were asked if they regarded the forecasting approach to be reasonable, or if there were any refinements or observations to make improvements.

A question was asked regarding the £30,000 overspend in Adult Services, due to Monnow Vale partnership costs apportionments and increased residential staff hours. We were advised that the costs were a general increase in staffing costs, not connected with the Raglan project.

A query was raised as to whether Adult Education would still be scrutinised through the Adults Select Committee. The committee agreed they would look forward to an update from the service manager via a report.

The Chairman expressed the committees' appreciation of the efforts made by the Assistant Head of Finance in streamlining the reports. However, a member raised a concern that the report contained 54 pages of information of which only a small proportion was relevant to the committee.

A member expressed concern referring to issues that may be foreseen at month 3. It was suggested that this should be an opportunity for Chief Officers to provide information on any concerns.

The Chairman thanked the officers for presenting the report.

SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

7. The Chair welcomed the Customer Relations Manager and members were presented with the annual complaints report relevant to the Adults Select committee remit.

Members were advised that under the Social Services Complaints Procedure there were 3 stages to the complaints procedure and the annual report detailed the types of complaints and the number of complaints received.

The three stages were:

1. Local Resolution

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2. Formal Consideration
3. The Independent Panel

Members were advised that all complaints / comments were logged and it was clarified that comments were informal complaints where a formal route of procedure was not followed by the complainant, however, it was confirmed that all of these comments were looked into and responded to.

During the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014 there had been 24 complaints, 52 comments and 70 compliments. The report included examples of the type of comments that had been received.

During Members questions the following points were noted:

- Members were concerned that individual comments were not always seen as part of the bigger picture but they were informed that team managers and service users were contacted to ensure that all necessary information was relayed.
- It was suggested that it may be useful to provide statistics from previous years to easily show a comparison.
- The Customer Relations Manager confirmed that it was the decision of an individual to confirm if they wanted to make a formal complaint and if they did not wish to do so then anything they said was recorded as a comment and these points were actioned.
- We recognised that the number of compliments received was to be congratulated. We were told that the figures were relayed to the relevant teams and that compliments were always passed on, if a compliment related to a specific person, they would be presented with a certificate.
- It was noted that the under Welsh Government there must be an independent investigator, who would generally have a background in social care.

The Chair thanked the Officer for the report.

**HOUSING AND REGENERATION MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN PROJECT
MANDATE – INTEGRATED APPROACH TO HOUSING OPTIONS.**

8. We received a report from the Housing and Communities Manager which informed the committee regarding the proposal to develop an integrated approach to Housing Options delivery with Torfaen County Borough Council and establish a new joint Housing Solutions Service for Monmouthshire and Torfaen.

The Chairman noted that the committee had previously welcomed this report, and would now welcome an update.

We were informed that:

- The proposal would be implemented from November 2014.

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- The project would achieve budget savings of £55,000.
- Proposal to establish an alternative brand and identity which would be independent to both Authorities.
- A single Housing Solutions Service for both counties would provide increased resilience.
- Accountability would remain with each Authority but could include joint scrutiny.
- There will be more resilience and flexibility.
- Creation of a new Housing Solutions Manager and a new Private Sector Housing Team, made up of Monmouthshire and Torfaen staff.

During Members' questions the following points were noted:

- It was not decided as to whether there would definitely be joint scrutiny. The Housing and Communities Manager was waiting for a response from TCBC on this request.
- Both Authorities would be based at a HUB in Pontypool.
- The hierarchy would continue on the same basis as at present.
- There are no new policies regarding immigration and housing.

The Chair raised a point regarding homelessness and home provisions of victims / survivors of domestic abuse. A question was asked whether appropriate help was readily available. A telling statistic was noted to be that a significant proportion of homelessness related to domestic abuse, the Officer suggested that this area could be investigated.

It was agreed that it would be beneficial to include Hazel Ilett and TCBC Scrutiny Officers at future meetings.

The report was fully supported by the Committee.

It was noted by the Committee that there was normally a management perspective available at meeting which helpfully assisted with understanding of issues raised within reports. It was thought to be unfortunate that there was no representation at this meeting.

ADULTS SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

9i. We received the Adults Select Committee Work Programme for forthcoming meetings.

It was noted that a query should be raised with Hazel Ilett as to whether the committee need to be included with reference Community Education.

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THE CABINET FORWARD WORK PLANNER

9ii. We received the Forward Planner for Cabinet and Council business.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

10. We noted that the next Adults Select Committee Meeting would be held at County Hall, Usk on Tuesday 18th November 2014 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at 12.20pm