

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Adults Select Committee held at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Tuesday, 17th May, 2016 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: County Councillor P. Farley (Chairman)
County Councillor R. Harris (Vice Chairman)
County Councillors: R. Chapman, P. Jones and A. Wintle
Co-opted Members: D. Hudson and D. Hill

Also in attendance County Councillor(s):
J. Burrows and V. Smith

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Julie Boothroyd	Head of Adult Services
Deborah Saunders	Carers Information/Support Worker
Kim Sparrey	Joint Planning and Commissioning Assistant
Ailsa MacBean	Integrated Services Manager
Ruth Iles	Carer's Assessment Worker
Hazel Ilett	Scrutiny Manager
Paula Harris	Democratic Services Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Tracey Davies	Monmouthshire Carers Project
Miranda Thomason	Community Connections Befriending Scheme
Gareth Howells	Carers Trust South East Wales
Dennis Knowles	Carer
Jane Norville	Age Cymru Gwent
Gabby Lovell	Age Cymru Gwent
Joanne Boyer	Alzheimers Society
Michelle Boyd	HAFL
Glenys Wilkes	Carer
Vivian Jones	Carer

1. Election of Chair

We elected County Councillor P. Farley as Chair.

2. Election of Vice Chair

We elected County Councillor R. Harris as Vice-Chair.

3. Apologies for absence

We received apologies from Councillors R. Edwards, M. Hickman and P. Jordan.

4. Declarations of interest

County Councillor A. Wintle declared a non-prejudicial interest as the Director of Carers Trust South East Wales.

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5. Pre-decision Scrutiny of the Carers Strategy

Context:

We received a report from the Joint Planning and Commissioning Assistant and Head of Adult Services to seek the Committee's approval of the Monmouthshire Carers Strategy 2016-2019.

Key Issues:

What is the Monmouthshire Carers Strategy?

This Strategy aims to provide and improve preventative and support services offered to carers in Monmouthshire to allow them to continue in their role as a carer; to discontinue that role if that is in their best interests; and to be supported when their role as a carer comes to an end. This will be achieved by improving and providing the services that support carers in line with their needs.

Outcomes for Carers

The Strategy focuses on achieving improved outcomes for carers, no matter which service they will receive, it also embraces the full range of support available, from the provision of information to intensive respite care.

Outcomes for Service Provision

The strategy will be used as a monitoring tool for current and future service provision. The strategy has clearly defined 8 themes, identified and agreed by carers, which offer carer focussed outcomes. This document will be used in partnership with carers, service providers (both statutory and third sector) and commissioners as a basis for Service Level Agreements, commissioning services, future ways of providing information and support for carers, and as an evaluation and service design tool. The Carers Strategy Group will use the Carers Strategy document as a self- evaluation tool.

Contributions from Witnesses attending:

After hearing from the Commissioning Support Officer who explained that this is the third strategy in Monmouthshire for carers which has been produced in collaboration & consultation with carers throughout Monmouth, partner organisations and health and social care professionals.

We heard from the Chief Executive Officer for the Carers Trust S.E. Wales told the committee that from a third sector perspective it has been good to be involved in the strategy from the start.

A Member of the Carers Strategy Group commented that he thought it was very comprehensive and detailed strategy which covered all main areas for carers. He said that as a carer, you did not serve an apprenticeship, nor go to university - you learn on the job. And that as a carer he looked for professional input from the likes of Monmouthshire Council to help him through his day. He said that everyone in the Chamber was a carer as the Council care for him, as a carer, and without the Council's professional support he would not be able to do his job and thanked Monmouthshire County Council. The Chair thanked him for his gracious words.

We heard from another carer who was expecting more of a work plan and expected to see questions such as, when are we going to it by, who are we going to do it with and where are we going to do it? She felt it needed accountability and a timescale.

She also questioned point 5 of the strategy ***Work with service providers to redesign respite care and support that is; Flexible, suitable for the person, of high quality and delivered to those in rural and remote locations.*** She would like to challenge the word redesign as she felt

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this was far too limited and would rather it read *redesign and deliver* as carers in Monmouthshire need respite care to be realistic and achievable objective of the strategic plan. Carers need to feel confident that during the next 3 years that Monmouthshire will deliver respite care in homes, day centres, residential and nursing homes throughout the County. The Chair thanked the Carer and applauded her scrutiny, commenting that this was exactly the feedback they needed.

It was commented that carers want to be able to book their respite in advance to allow them to plan for future events (holidays, etc.) and under the current scheme this was possible. But there were fears that in future this would not be possible. We were reassured by The Head of Adult Services that Mardy Park would not be losing respite beds.

Delia Hudson advised the Committee that The Head of Adult Services & team were going to speak to Action 50+ in September to clarify what services will be available in future.

A representative from Befriending Project Monmouthshire commented that carers often suffer after the death of the person they were caring for and can get isolated, lonely and struggle to reintegrate back into the community.

Delia Hudson explained to the Committee that carers were struggling financially and gave examples of carers having to pay for taxis to accompany their cared for to hospital appointments. It was commented on by the Cabinet Member that it was unacceptable that carers had to travel separately, as the carers and cared for travelling together would produce better outcomes.

A Carer commented that she was encouraged by what she'd heard and told the Committee that a friend of hers, who was a carer, neglected her own health to the point that she had passed away, leaving the person she cared for to go into a home.

We discussed how important the role of the G.P. was, and if G.P.s asked carers "Who cares for you?" Education should start with student doctors. The Chair suggested that the Committee invite the Health Board to a future meeting to discuss training.

We were told by a carer how important respite was for the quality of the carer's life, "it gives you time to gather yourself".

It was commented that we have to continue to raise awareness of carers and it was crucial that we did not allow carers to reach crisis point, we cannot be complacent and must keep building on the services we offer. And that responsive care was essential, for when people reach the end of their tether.

Member Scrutiny:

Members reassured the guests in the Chamber that although the 3 year programme seemed like a long time, the programme will be scrutinised on a regular basis via the Adult Select Committee and will not be forgotten about.

A Member asked for a press release to clarify the situation on respite at Mardy Park.

A Member commented that the feedback received during the meeting was essential and helped Members with their scrutiny as they were better placed to make the correct decisions when they were aware of the full picture.

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Committee Conclusion:

The Chair expressed his gratitude to all in the Chamber who contributed to the meeting and commented it had been the most participative meeting they held to date.

It was agreed that the report was commended to Cabinet with the appreciation that the programme was living, fluid and constantly evolving. It was felt to be important that the Committee received regular updates reporting on any progress.

Three areas stood out as requiring further attention;

Respite
Transport
Primary Care

But overall it was an excellent piece of work and the Committee thanked all the Officers involved.

The meeting ended at 11.46 am