

ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 24 April 2012 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.30 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Don Seale – in the Chair

Councillor Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor (Deputy Chairman)

Councillor Jenny Hannaby

Councillor Ian Hudspeth

Councillor Larry Sanders

Councillor Dr Peter Skolar

Councillor Richard Stevens

Councillor Alan Thompson

Councillor David Wilmshurst

Councillor Patrick Greene

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor (for Agenda Item)

By Invitation:

Officers:

Whole of meeting

Part of meeting

Agenda Item Officer Attending

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting [, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

206/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 1)

Councillor Patrick Green attended as a substitute for Councillor Peter Jones.

207/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE

(Agenda No. 2)

None

208/12 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meeting of March 6th were signed and approved.

209/12 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE

(Agenda No. 4)

In anticipation of possible changes to the cabinet, Councillor Arash Fatemian, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, thanked the committee for its valuable challenge during his time as Cabinet Member for Adult Services.

210/12 DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

(Agenda No. 5)

John Jackson, Director of Social and Community Services, updated the committee on local and national issues in Adult Services. The key points and actions arising are summarised below.

National Items

Adult Social Care White Paper

There are lots of stories in the media about what this will include (in particular whether it will address the recommendations from the Dilnot Commission). There are also reports (such as in this week's Observer) that it will not be issued this month. From my perspective I have no intelligence about when it will be published except that it will not be published in April (due to the local elections in early May). If it does not address Dilnot then this will be an opportunity missed in my opinion.

Local Items

Oxfordshire Care Partnership

I promised the Committee that I would update you on developments. However, at this stage I have nothing to report other than that the negotiating team are discussing a series of very detailed issues with the Orders of St. John and Bedford Pilgrims Housing Association. We are still working to the approach agreed by the Cabinet. Nick Graham has responded to some questions raised by Cllr Stevens. Members of this Committee have been copied into that correspondence. Cllr Stevens came back with some further questions yesterday. Nick Graham will respond to those questions as soon as possible.

It was **AGREED** that future correspondence between Cllr Stevens and the Monitoring Officer will continue to be shared with committee members.

Four Seasons Healthcare

Members have understandably shown a key interest in what is happening to the homes that Four Seasons Healthcare took over in Oxfordshire that were currently previously run by Southern Cross. Southern Cross ran 6 homes in Oxfordshire, 5 of which were transferred to Four Seasons Healthcare, bringing the total number of Four Seasons Healthcare homes in Oxfordshire to 6. We have carried out quality monitoring visits to all the former Southern Cross homes in Oxfordshire including those that transferred to Four Seasons Healthcare. Staff who carried out the monitoring visits noted an improvement in quality at all of them. There is a notable improvement in staff morale coupled with significant investment (reported by Four Seasons to be in the region of £200,000) in the buildings and equipment. All the homes have new managers and staff training for all staff is being refreshed. New care documentation from Four Seasons Healthcare will be launched next month and we believe this will lead to further improvements.

The Crown, Harwell

That said I do need to report that Four Seasons Healthcare announced last Friday that one of the homes transferred from Southern Cross will close – The Crown in Harwell. This is a very small home (only 16 places) with a proportionately high number of vacancies (there are only 7 residents currently – 4 funded by the County Council and 3 funded privately). Significant financial investment would be required to improve the home and Four Seasons Healthcare has received no applicants for the post of Home Manager, which is currently vacant. The home was transferred to Four Seasons Healthcare under a management agreement; the landlord has now decided to sell the building. Whilst its closure is not necessarily a surprise, the 7 residents and their families are concerned and worried about their future. We were present when they residents and relatives were informed and we shall be providing all the necessary support to make sure that they are transferred to an alternative care home that meets their needs. The local member, Cllr Lilly has been informed and is keen to be kept briefed on what is happening.

Care Home Fees

Members will be aware that in some areas care home fee reviews have received national media attention and in a small number of cases have been challenged by providers. In Oxfordshire we have had initial exploratory discussions with Oxfordshire Care Homes Association about how we might approach the market to discuss the same. Our view is that we need to engage with a broad range of care home providers about the cost of care in Oxfordshire and to this end we are about to begin a consultation process to help support this work. The outcome of this consultation will be reflected in a report to the Cabinet in due course and this will help to inform proposals for future care home fees reviews. I will of course keep Members informed of progress as we move through this exercise.

Adult Social Care Crisis Response Service

The Crisis Response Service is a new service being trialled (started January 2012) countywide in Oxfordshire for older people or adults with a disability, who are genuinely in crisis, at risk of admission to hospital or a care home, and need an

immediate (within 4 hours) social care response. The service is available 24/7 and can be up to a maximum of 72 hours, 24/7. As the Service is a pilot, it hasn't been advertised to the general public but anyone can refer via the Council's Social and Health Care Team via Customer Services during working hours or during out-of hours via the Emergency Duty Team, to the Provider, Community Voice. Community Voice are working towards full strength in terms of numbers of staff, which means that during the initial period of operation – to end March 2012 – we may not be able to respond in all cases that would otherwise be eligible. So far we have received 73 enquiries from people who meet the eligibility criteria and have been able to provide a service to 57 of them. 81% of those service users were still in their own home after receiving the Service.

It was **AGREED** that a report covering the range of services aimed at preventing unnecessary admission and accelerating discharge will be brought to the September meeting of the committee.

It was **AGREED** that a further report should come to the next meeting of the committee covering developments in integrating community services teams at the locality level.

Ridgeway Trust

This Learning Disability Trust decided that they had to look to a larger partner since they were judged too small to become a Foundation Trust. There has been a lengthy merger and acquisitions process which has been overseen by the Strategic Health Authority. Ann Nursey has provided input into the process on behalf of both the Primary Care Trust and the County Council. Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust has been selected as the preferred acquisition partner. This news has been communicated to employees of the Trust, employees of the County Council who work closely with them and also with service users and carers.

Joint Commissioning Service

The Joint Commissioning Service is undergoing a restructure to centralise commissioning and contracting activity for adults and children. The cross cutting support service – Strategy & Performance and Public Engagement is largely in place. The proposals for Commissioning and Contracting are out to staff consultation. This includes strengthening our contract management function, bringing procurement support into the team and improving our communication with external providers. We have beefed up the website sourceoxfordshire.com to include information on the joint commissioning team and posted up all our most recent commissioning strategies – to help providers.

211/12 IMPROVING THE REABLEMENT SERVICE

(Agenda No. 6)

Alan Sinclair, Lead Commissioner for Older People, and David Bradley, Chief Operating Officer at Oxford Health, introduced the committee to recent changes to

the reablement service contract with Oxford Health. Discussion covered the reasons for the underperformance of the service in recent years and the benchmarks against which future success will be judged.

The contract changes mean that future payment will be based on the number of episodes completed with further bonus payments being made for meeting targets. In addition the Director will meet regularly with the Chief Executive of Oxford Health to ensure that operational objectives are aligned with those of the wider care system. The changes have led to an improvement in performance during the past quarter.

Members queried whether the system of provider led monitoring reports would be sufficiently reliable and requested further detail on the monitoring process.

Alan Sinclair assured the committee that Oxford Health uses the same system as the Council to log episodes and **AGREED** to send further detail on the monitoring process outside of the meeting.

The committee **AGREED** that Oxford Health should be present at the September meeting for the item covering the range of services aimed at preventing unnecessary admissions and accelerating discharge.

212/12 EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION REPORT ON HOME CARE FOR OLDER PEOPLE 'CLOSE TO HOME' (Agenda No. 7)

Councillor Stevens introduced the item on the Close to Home report, stating that at the local level the findings may be of particular relevance to the externalisation of Home Support Provision. Three key questions were identified:

- 1) Should there be a target for the reduction of 15 minute visits?
- 2) Should the council be doing more to monitor the pay and conditions of external home support staff?
- 3) Do we need a clearer route for complaints?

On the issue of 15 minute visits, Sara Livadeas, Deputy Director for Joint Commissioning, stated that this was possible but would have a resource implication to the council.

It was **AGREED** that a report outlining the resource implications would be discussed at a future meeting of the Quality Assurance Workgroup.

John Jackson responded to the issue of pay and conditions, stating that the council currently pays a relatively high price for an hour of care at around £19. This is moving towards the £15 target set for the resource allocation system but will remain above the level of a number of other authorities (£12) The rates of pay for external home support workers are equivalent to those received through the internal service although this excludes pension contributions.

Regarding the question of a clearer route for escalating complaints, Cllr Fatemian highlighted the ongoing work to ensure that people feel comfortable raising concerns. Key to this is creating an environment where people feel comfortable . This issue will continue to be discussed at length by the Quality Assurance Workgroup.

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Members applauded the quality of the discussion paper, stating that it offered an excellent template for future scrutiny papers.

It was **AGREED** that the paper and the content of discussions would be considered by the Quality Assurance Workgroup.

213/12 LINK UPDATE

(Agenda No. 8)

Adrian Chant, LINK Host Manager, updated the committee on the recent activity of the Local Involvement Network.

The LINK are working closely with the Contracts Team and the Workgroup in their program of visits to care homes. A full report will be shared with the committee following the completion of the program of visits.

The recent Hearsay event picked up issues on how relatives can raise concerns. Through attendance at the meetings of the Quality Assurance Workgroup, the LINK will input these findings into wider discussions about the escalation of concerns.

It was **AGREED** that a report on the Hearsay event will be shared with the committee at a future date.

Further discussions covered the timetable for the procurement of Healthwatch and the establishment of new links with the Military.

214/12 CLOSE OF MEETING

(Agenda No. 9)

The Meeting closed at 12:30.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing