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## ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES** of the meeting held on Tuesday, 6 March 2012 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at Time Not Specified

**Present:**

**Voting Members:**

Councillor Don Seale – Chairman

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

Councillor Jenny Hannaby

Councillor Ian Hudspeth

Councillor Larry Sanders

Councillor Richard Stevens

Councillor Alan Thompson

Councillor David Wilmshurst

Councillor Charles Shouler (as substitute for Councillor Peter Jones)

Councillor Lawrie Stratford (as substitute for Councillor Peter Skolar)

**Other Members in Attendance:**

Councillor Arash Fatemian

**By Invitation:**

**Officers:**

Whole of meeting

John Jackson  
Sara Livadeas

Part of meeting

Jonathan McWilliam  
John Dixon  
Simon Kearey  
Martin Bradshaw  
Adrian Chant  
Yvonne Cox

**Agenda Item**

**Officer Attending**

*The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.*

**194/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS**

(Agenda No. 1)

Councillor Arash Fatemian, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, sent apologies.

Councillor Lawrie Stratford substituted for Councillor Peter Skolar and Councillor Charles Shouler substituted for Councillor Peter Jones.

**195/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE**

(Agenda No. 2)

Councillor Jenny Hannaby declared an interest as Chair of the Wantage Day Centre.

**196/12 MINUTES**

(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meeting of the meeting of January 17th 2012 were signed and approved. Future correspondence between the monitoring officer and Councillor Richard Stevens regarding matters arising from the minutes, will be sent to members of the committee.

**197/12 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE**

(Agenda No. 4)

None

**198/12 DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

(Agenda No. 5)

John Jackson, Director for Social and Community Services, updated the committee on national and local developments. A summary of these are presented 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.

### **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.

Members broadly welcomed this development and agreed that the low publicity pilot approach was sensible. It was **AGREED** that the Deputy Director for Joint Commissioning, would bring a report on the outcomes of the pilot to the committee in September 2012. The report will discuss the range of services aimed preventing unnecessary entry into hospital.

### **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](http://sourceoxfordshire.com) to include information on the joint commissioning team and posted up all our most recent commissioning strategies – to help providers.

## **199/12 THE NEW AGENDA FOR "HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT"**

(Agenda No. 6)

Jonathan McWilliam, Director of Public Health, delivered a presentation on the opportunities for local government under the proposed reforms to the health system. The presentation covered the structure of the Health and Wellbeing Board and sub-committees, with particular reference to the continuing relevance of the role of scrutiny.

Members questioned whether the structure of sub-committees for Children and Adult Services risked creating an unnecessary bureaucratic burden. The Director responded that some bureaucracy was essential to ensure accountability. It was pointed out that counties without sub-committees have found that the Health and Wellbeing Board lacks the powers to implement strategy and affect change.

Responding to concerns about the difficulties inherent in increased partnership working, the Director suggested that this was a matter of relationships and leadership. It was pointed out that existing good practice at in Oxfordshire means that the county is well placed to take advantage of the changes.

The committee sought clarification on the resource implications of the transfer of Public Health into the County Council. There was some concern that this might mean extra responsibilities for the County Council without extra funding. The Director pointed out that the Public Health budget is relatively small at around £20m, and that the new arrangements would greatly increase the scope to influence the strategic direction of health and social care resulting in a more joined up ecosystem.

In terms of accountability and measuring success, the committee was informed that one of the first tasks of the Health and Wellbeing Board would be to agree a set of priority measures and outcomes which would be assessed periodically.

## **200/12 WAITING LISTS IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

(Agenda No. 7)

John Dixon, Interim Deputy Director for Adult Services, introduced the paper on Waiting Lists in Adult Social Care. Current performance on a number of timeliness indicators was discussed and the workstreams in place to improve the transition of clients at known bottlenecks in the system were highlighted.

Members received the report positively stating that problems were apparently being managed appropriately. However, it was felt that a more detailed assessment of the affect of care at home on the severely disabled might be needed. Officers acknowledged the fact that care at home is not suitable for everybody and for this

reason the council will continue to need residential and nursing care placements for people with complex needs.

## **201/12 DAY SERVICES - TIER 3 SERVICES AND TRANSPORT**

(Agenda No. 8)

Simon Kearey, Head of Strategy and Transformation, and Sara Livadeas, Deputy Director for Joint Commissioning, discussed the attached document outlining the developments in the strategy for day opportunities.

Officers drew attention to the two key changes to the strategy: the reduction in the savings target; and the continued provision of transport, funded by increased fees.

It was pointed out that the proposed increased fees (to £15) for day opportunities is driven by Self-Directed Support, which means that services must remain attractive to ensure their sustainability. It was pointed out that fee increases would only effect non-FACS eligible clients.

Whilst members were complementary of the quality of the report and the level of detail provided, an opinion was expressed that the principles of the report should not be agreed since the costs appeared to be too high, and no account had been taken of the variable levels of affluence across the client group. Officers agreed to explore the potential to introduce a waiver on transport fees for clients under difficult financial circumstances.

It was suggested that the increase in fees could be phased to align with the development of an increasingly attractive offer.

## **202/12 QUALITY ASSURANCE AND MONITORING**

(Agenda No. 9)

Sara Livadeas, Deputy Director for Joint Commissioning, and Martin Bradshaw, Strategic Lead Major Projects, introduced the paper outlining the principles on which the development of the Quality Assurance service is progressing.

The key aim, as agreed with the scrutiny workgroup, was to take an intelligent approach to contract monitoring, based on a number of factors such as the size of contract and workforce, and the level of risk.

Officers stated that there is a need to be realistic about the level of oversight and intervention the organisation can have once a contract is established and therefore a need to ensure that the right organisations are contracted in the first place.

Members welcomed the report and agreed the principles on which the programme will proceed. It was felt that a clear statement was needed about the importance of whistleblowing and the mechanisms needed to ensure its effective functioning.

On the question of the appropriate level of member involvement for care home monitoring, a range of views were expressed. Whilst it was felt that this would increase member understanding of the services and increase scrutiny of the service, the committee also felt that without extensive training there could be inconsistent application. Officers agreed that member involvement should be informal with an aim to increase the traffic in and out of homes as opposed to any official inspection capacity.

**203/12 LINK UPDATE**  
(Agenda No. 10)

Adrian Chant, LINK Locality Manager, and Yvonne Cox, delivered an update from the Local Involvement Network. They discussed focussed work being undertaken by Oxfordshire Wheel to assess what works well with regards Personal Assistants and Support services. A report will be shared with the committee at a future date.

**204/12 FORWARD PLAN**  
(Agenda No. 11)

None

**205/12 CLOSE OF MEETING**  
(Agenda No. 12)

The meeting closed at 13:20

..... in the Chair

Date of signing .....

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