

## **Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

### **Monday, 23 May 2016, County Hall, Worcester - 10.30am**

#### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Mrs J L M A Griffiths (Vice Chairman), Mr R C Adams, Mr A Fry, Mrs A T Hingley, Mr C G Holt and Mrs M A Rayner

#### **Also attended:**

Frances Howie, Interim Director of Public Health  
Karen Wright, Public Health Consultant  
Rob Morris, Market Management and Research Manager  
Mandy Barnett, Business Analyst  
Mrs S L Blagg, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care  
Elaine Carolan, Lead Commissioner for Learning Disabilities

Jodie Townsend, Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager

Jo Weston, Overview and Scrutiny Officer

#### **Available Papers**

The Members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. Presentation handouts for Item 6 (circulated at the Meeting); and
- C. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 March 2016 (previously circulated).

(Copies of documents A and B will be attached to the signed Minutes).

#### **219 Apologies and Welcome**

The Vice Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that, following the Chairman's recent accident, she would be Chairing this Scrutiny Panel until Cllr Wells' return.

The Panel was pleased to hear that Cllr Wells was progressing well and passed on their best wishes for his ongoing recovery.

Apologies had been received from Panel Members Cllr Bloore and Cllr Wells. In addition it was noted that effective 16 May 2016, the new Cabinet Member for Health and Well-Being was Cllr Smith, who was also unable to attend.

#### **220 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Griffiths declared an interest as her daughter worked in the care profession.

**221 Public Participation**

None.

**222 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 March 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**223 Council Website for Adult Social Care and Health: Your Life Your Choice**

Attending for this Item were:

Directorate of Adult Services and Health

Frances Howie, Interim Director of Public Health

Karen Wright, Public Health Consultant

Rob Morris, Market Management and Research Manager

Mandy Barnett, Business Analyst

Invited Witnesses

Phil Talbot, Chief Executive, Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Sandra Rohan Kickham, Carer Representative, Worcestershire Association of Carers

The Interim Director of Public Health talked through the implementation and development of the 'Your Life, Your Choice' website since its launch 12 months ago. Designed to be a resource for people looking to access adult social care and health information and services, the number of listed providers had increased from 25 in June 2015 to the current 207, with the number of services being provided increasing from 161 to 836 over the same period.

It was noted that although the figures were increasing, the Directorate was receiving ongoing feedback to suggest that the website was difficult to navigate and was not very user friendly.

In response, Officers were working to address the concerns and the current website could be best described as a work in progress prior to an upcoming relaunch.

Alongside the information, it was hoped that individuals would be able to complete initial assessment forms online, releasing Officer time to deal with more complex cases. It was noted that 384 forms had been completed in the last five months.

In the ensuing discussion, the following main points were

raised:

- The Panel acknowledged that no system was perfect from the outset and recognised that the website would evolve over time. It was understood that many older people, the main group of users, would need time to adjust to the use of online resources
- It was reported from numerous sources that the website was difficult to navigate and more information was likely to be available than the user found in their online session
- Pricing information was a further area which was unclear to the individual and the question of 'who will pay for the service?' remained unanswered whilst online
- Whilst in development, consultation and testing with user groups was undertaken and moving forward, further testing and training is planned. It was hoped that stakeholders would continue to provide feedback to improve the site
- The Carer Representative agreed that users found the website difficult to navigate and it was aimed at individuals who were computer literate, but added that the design of the pages suggested that the site was for older people only and many users did therefore not navigate any further than the homepage. It was suggested that making the pages more fun and interesting, alongside more education to use it, would be welcome by many users
- Monitoring is constantly undertaken and regular reports are discussed by the Senior Managers
- The Chief Executive of Age UK (H&W) was asked how they could help the Council move forward and responded with some of the initiatives already taking place across the County, including 'Computer Cafes', providing a 'Digital Co-ordinator' in each District and training opportunities in the community and through Housing Associations
- Furthermore, a scheme whereby GP's can refer patients for self-help solutions is being piloted. Patients are being referred to 'Community Wellbeing Buddies' to assist and guide them to appropriate help
- Some Members were concerned that the online approach does not suit everyone and were reassured when told that telephone support would continue to be available. It was noted that the telephone number listed was charged at a local

**224 Learning Disability Day Services**

rate, however, could be misinterpreted as a premium rate number

- The Panel concluded that the website name 'Your Life, Your Choice' was extremely positive, however, in its current form was not achieving its potential. With changes already suggested and further work with stakeholders to ensure its appropriateness, 'Your Life, Your Choice' could become a successful tool for everyone to use
- The Panel wished for a further update in twelve months.

Attending for this Item were:

Sheila Blagg, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care  
Elaine Carolan, Lead Commissioner for Learning Disabilities

Invited Witnesses

Jenny Hewitt, Worcestershire Association of Carers  
Sandra Rohan Kickham, Carer Representative

By way of presentation, the Lead Commissioner reminded the Panel of the background to the changes in Learning Disability Day Services, from the original decision being taken in July 2011 to pilot a new approach, to the decision in November 2012 to implement it across the County. As a result of the changes, the consultation on the use of appropriate buildings was undertaken in two stages during 2013 and 2014 with the completion of the whole programme expected to be in October 2016.

The Model was based on three pathways:

- RESOURCE CENTRES – providing support for people with profound and multiple disabilities and complex needs in specialist centres
- GOLD – specialist support for those people 'growing older' including those with dementia
- CONNECT – community based support with drop in services and improved access to employment and training opportunities

It was explained that the expectations of people with learning disabilities and their carers was changing and individuals wished to be more independent, access mainstream opportunities and be part of their communities. An increasing number of people with learning disabilities were living in supported housing, a subject which the Members have considered in the past.

In 2013, 298 individuals were accessing day services. This figure dropped to 270 in 2014 and now the figure is around 244 Service Users.

Extensive consultation was undertaken with Service Users, Carers and Staff using various methods of engagement, which resulted in a number of themes being highlighted, mainly:

- Concerns about not being able to maintain and sustain friendships
- The distances individuals with more complex needs would have to travel to the Resource Centres
- Family Carers were concerned that the changes would impact on their work or home life
- The cumulative effect of the changes would have.

When determining which buildings would be utilised a number of factors were taken into consideration, including affordability, location, needs, safety, internal space and transport. These discussions resulted in the following changes:

#### Wyre Forest

Connect – Blackwell Street, Kidderminster  
Resource Centre / GOLD – Orchard Street,  
Kidderminster  
Decommissioned – Offmore Community Centre

#### Redditch

Connect – Halcyon Centre  
Decommissioned – Matchborough Community Centre

#### Bromsgrove

Connect / Resource Centre / GOLD – Wendron Centre

#### Malvern

Connect – The Cube  
Decommissioned – Malvern SEC

#### Worcester City

Connect – Fish Street  
Resource Centre / GOLD – Cherry Orchard

#### Pershore

Resource Centre – Three Springs

#### Evesham

Connect – Evesham Library  
Decommissioned – Evesham Day Centre

## Droitwich

Connect – Droitwich Library

Decommissioned – Kingfields

In the ensuing discussion, the following key points were made:

- The Carer Representative spoke positively about the transition process, despite huge concerns when the changes were announced. Praise for the Staff involved was high and consultation was wide ranging and inclusive
- There was a series of specific issues in relation to certain buildings and Officers reported that these were being addressed. It was unfortunate that modifications were not completed in a timely manner, however, health and safety was always prioritised
- The Cabinet Member stressed that the look and feel of a building was as important as the activities provided
- One Member agreed that the feedback they had received echoed the positive message already shared by the Carer Representative. However, they asked the Cabinet Member for a strategic view for the future of day centres. In response, the Cabinet Member stated there was no set way forward
- Day opportunities were now less supported and on occasion, staff may outnumber Service Users. It was encouraging that external providers, such as Mencap, were looking to provide opportunities to widen experiences
- Members acknowledged that demand will change over time with the transition from children to adult services and the increase in the take up of direct payments. Looking forward there was potential for increased support for employment or volunteering opportunities
- One Member asked whether there was any concern about transport, given that localities had changed. In response, it was stated that further training and been given to those Service Users who had the potential to travel independently. In addition, training and support had been offered to bus companies and especially drivers
- In relation to the monitoring of the revised model, a number of key stakeholders were involved, including GP Practices, to ensure that individuals were not living in isolation. In addition, the Transitions Team had a role to play
- In conclusion, the Panel was encouraged with the

**225 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17**

work undertaken to date and was pleased that as a society, we were far more accommodating than in times gone by.

The Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager reminded the Panel that the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board agreed a suggested 2016/17 work programme which was subsequently approved by Council on 12 May 2016.

Members were supportive of the topics agreed, however, following the issues discussed at this meeting, wished to add updates on:

- Supported Living
- 'Your Life Your Choice' website
- Employment/Apprentice opportunities.

Cllr Griffiths thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The meeting ended at 12.45 pm

Chairman .....