

ADULTS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 AUGUST 2009

Present – Councillors P Allen, Ayub (Substitute for Iqbal), Burrows, L Byrne, Chadwick, Clare, Greenhalgh (Chairman), Hall, Lord, Rock, R Ronson, Rushton and R Silvester.

Also in Attendance

Councillor Sherrington	-	Executive Member for Adult Services
Mr J Rutherford	-	Director of Adult and Community Services
Ms Christine Forster	-	Albert Halls Manager
Mr A Scott	-	Policy Accountant
Miss K A Bennett	-	Modern Apprentice (observing)
Mrs S Wootton	-	Senior Scrutiny Officer

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Iqbal and Morgan, Gareth Evans (Age Concern), Elizabeth Tatman (Bolton Arts Forum) and Mario Devargas.

Councillor Greenhalgh in the Chair

9. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Adults and Community Services Scrutiny Committee held on 23 June 2009 were submitted.

Resolved – That the minutes be signed as a correct record.

10. DECISION MONITORING REPORT

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report detailing the progress of decisions previously taken by this Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

11. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which puts forward a list of suggested issues which the Committee might wish to receive reports on or investigate further during the current Municipal Year.

Members were informed that this report could be updated at any time throughout the Municipal Year as it was a rolling document. Where Members had an item for the Scrutiny Committee, this would be considered and added to the Work Programme accordingly.

It was decided that as the Annual Assessment on Care report would not be ready for the October meeting, due to the assessment being put back and the Annual Complaints Report that was due to go to the December meeting of this Committee would be available for October, then it would be best to swap them to ensure the Committee would have chance to properly scrutinise both reports.

Resolved – (i) That the Work Programme as now submitted be approved, subject to the Annual Assessment on Care report changing dates with the Annual Complaints Report.

12. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE AND BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – QUARTER 4

Mr John Rutherford attended the meeting to provide the Scrutiny Committee with information relating to the performance and financial position of Adult and Community Services for the 2008/2009 financial year.

Members were informed that the report highlighted the areas of excellent performance achieved across the year it identified the ever-changing areas for improvement, against the backdrop of an uncertain economic climate.

Of the 79 performance indicators, currently, 54 were available for report and the majority of indicators that were not yet available for reporting were reliant on data from partner organisations, such as NHS Bolton, and was yet to be finalised.

The report showed that Adult and Community Services had performed well in 2008/2009 as evidenced by the following:-

- The number of social care clients in receipt of Direct Payments had increased by 73% compared to 2007/2008;
- Further improvements in the number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment, exceeded the LAA target that had been set for the year;
- The number of vulnerable people achieving independent living was well above target;

- Although the target for Carers Services had not been achieved, good improvements had been made on last year, with an overall 25% increase in the number of cares receiving information/advice or a specific service.

Members were further apprised with information regarding the overall performance, of which 69% of the Service Improvement Action Plan key tasks had been achieved during 2008/2009. For the 2008/2011 Strategic Plan, at Quarter 4, eight of the 14 milestones were achieved 57% and 4 (29%) were not achieved, with two not being updated in time for this report to Members.

There had also been good examples of engagement that was undertaken to obtain the views and opinions of the local community, for example through the Homecare Survey, BME Survey and the Place Survey. Action plans which took on board local opinions and wishes were a reflection of how Adult and Community Services were considering the Bolton Family in their service design.

The Homecare Survey showed that the majority of users (94%) felt that the homecare service had helped them maintain control of their own daily life. The BME Surveys showed that the libraries ranked as the most important service and that libraries were relatively more important to the Asian-Pakistani respondents (77%) compared to 59% of respondents in other ethnic groups.

Response times for dealing with complaints had improved and significant improvements had been made with timescales for responding to requests for access to personal records and Freedom of Information requests.

Members were also told that there had been an increase in sickness absence which had been identified at the end of the year with the percentage of working days lost due to sickness rising to 4.77% compared to 3.45% during the last quarter and a slight increase from 4.5% for 2007/2008.

Much discussion took place regarding the following:-

- Areas that were highlighted red and what could be done about them;
- Making future reports to the Committee more contextual and succinct;
- Progress and clarity on the development of services for carers and respite care. This was highlighted in the Commission for Social Care Inspection report, where a wider range of choice was required for those wishing to use this service;
- The plans for development of advocacy services to better meet the needs of the Personalisation agenda and
- Clarity on the development of a carer centre, which is better described as a carers hub based at Thicketford. This would improve partnership working across carer organisations to meet health and well-being outcomes and enable carers to have offices and a place to convene.

Resolved – (i) That the report be noted

(ii) That a more succinct and contextual report be provided for future meetings to ensure Members have adequate time to read and understand the report in advance.

13. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Mr John Rutherford attended the meeting to provide the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the way the Adult and Community Services Department ensured quality in the provision and commissioning of adult social care services.

Members found that much of the report explained the ways in which Adult and Community Services:-

- Were subject to external inspection and performance monitoring;
- Were active in managing contacts with independent providers of care;
- Had a comprehensive range of training for Council and independent providers;
- Responded to complaints; and
- Listened to what local people were saying about quality.

The report continued to deal with the above, however, they should not be seen in isolation, as they were designed to build on the departmental culture, where managing performance was part of staff's daily routine. The report did not explore this standard management practice however, the standard management practices in the department and included:-

- Regular supervision and performance reviews for all staff;
- Policies and procedures to manage capability and conduct, up to and including dismissal, which were used as needed;
- Management report on performance against key indicators provided monthly and quarterly to managers and used to identify and respond to performance trends; and
- Strong culture of performance management at departmental management team meetings with the use of quarterly performance reporting to ensure the delivery of quality of services within financial restraints.

Members noted that Bolton Council's Adult Social Care Service was of the best in the country, however, there were still pieces of work that were on-going, to ensure excellence was maintained. The complaints system was found to be

robust and useful to both the service and the voluntary sector.

Further clarification was given to electronic monitoring which allowed carers to “clock in and out” when they arrived at the home of the person being cared for. The next phase would be to consider what they were doing at the home and assess the needs of both parties. This information gathering was particularly reliant on the person being cared for relaying the information back to the service to ensure tasks were being carried out.

Resolved – (i) That the report be noted

(ii) That the Committee passes on its congratulations to the staff of the Adult Social Care Services for the good job they were doing.

14. OUTCOMES OF THE CSCI REPORT AND ITS RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr John Rutherford attended the meeting to provide the Scrutiny Committee with an overview of progress in relation to the Service Improvement Action Plan following the “Independence, Well Being and Choice Inspection” undertaken in Adult Social Care during September 2008. This report was considered by the Executive Member for Adult Services on 1 July 2009 as part of the 2008/2009 Quarter four Performance Dashboard report.

Members were informed that the Commission for Social Care (CSCI) undertook an inspection of Bolton Council’s Adult Social Care Services during September 2008. The inspection focussed on how well the Council was safeguarding adults (of all ages) whose circumstances made them vulnerable and the delivery of personalised and preventative services for older citizens.

Prior to the actual inspection CSCI reviews a range of key documents and assessed other information regarding how the Council was delivering and managing outcomes for people. During the inspection, CSCI met with older people, carers, staff, managers and Councillors from within the Council and other agencies.

CSCI formally reported the findings of the inspection and graded performance as follows:-

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults – Excellent
- Delivering Preventative Services (Older Citizens) – Excellent
- Delivering Personalised Services (Older Citizens) – Good
- Capacity to Improve – Excellent

These results were seen to be the best in the country, however, the Council would continue to work on those areas where improvement could still be made. Following the CSCI inspection, a small number of recommendations were developed into an improvement plan. The Improvement Plan was approved by the Executive Member for health and Social Care in November 2008 and was formally signed off by CSCI in December 2008. The Care Quality Commission

(CQC) replaced CSCI for 1 April 2009. CQC required an update on progress six months after the initial improvement plan. All future monitoring would be incorporated into the Annual Performance Assessment Process for Adult Social Care.

The report detailed the nine actions that had been identified for improvement and good progress had been made in relation to the actions agreed with CSCI, particularly around Direct Payments and Support to Carers. There had been a significant increase in the numbers of people accessing direct payments during 2008/2009, which equated to a 73% increase overall and 197% increase had been seen specifically for carers. The Carer's Strategy was launched in April 2009 and it was anticipated that this would have an even greater impact on the support provided to carers during the year.

Members were also informed that the CSCI result was of the best in the country, with other Local Authorities approaching Bolton Council for assistance, particularly the area surrounding safeguarding vulnerable adults.

Resolved – That the update and progress be welcomed

15. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ALBERT HALLS 2008/2009

Ms Christine Forster attended the meeting to update the Scrutiny Committee on the developments of the Albert Halls and improvements for future developments as a way to sustain business during a period of economic downturn and efficiencies as submitted to the Executive Member for Adult Services on 1 July 2009.

Members were given information within the report which detailed the operational programme for the Albert Halls including maintenance and developments which had taken place. The report covered the Entertainments and Box Office performances including the financial outcomes.

As a result of the recommendations of a Scrutiny Panel that took place in 2006, the Albert Halls and Civic Catering merged and the report to Members detailed the financial and level of business achieved since the merger.

The report detailed the achievements made by some of the Community Centres, namely, Carnegie Hall and Farnworth Town Hall, which had been brought under the management of the Albert Halls in 2007. Carnegie Hall was currently being renovated, however, once up and running, much of the marketing would allow for the promotion of weddings and celebrations. Business had increased at the Community Centres, with 9% bookings being taken in the last six months.

Members were informed that in 2010, the management of the buildings would be transferred to Corporate Property Services and it was essential that continued investment into the facilities were maintained, as a failure to invest was likely to lead to a downturn in business and loss in income, affecting the viability of the complex.

Further discussion took place regarding the following:-

- Catering;
- Entertainment at the Albert Halls; and
- Box office sales.

Resolved – (i) That the report be welcomed

(ii) That the Committee be provided with a charging policy for security at the Community Centres for a future meeting

(iii) That Members conveyed their congratulations to the Albert Halls in turning a deficit in takings to a profit over the last two years.

16. MEMBERS' BUSINESS

a) The following question was submitted by Councillor Greenhalgh in accordance with Standing Order 35:-

Can the Executive Member inform the Committee regarding the recent announcement in the press of Government money to employ more staff in Culture and Adult Social Care? How does this tie in with the Council's position of Value for Money and "leaner" management and the current proposals under consultation which will lead to considerable job losses?

Members were advised of the response from the Director of Adult and Community Services:-

The money described in the recent press article was the Future Jobs Fund which was announced as part of this year's UK budget. Nationally, it had identified £1 billion to underpin a commitment of work opportunities for all young people who wanted them. Since full bidding guidance had been published in mid May, Bolton Council were working locally and with partners at a Greater Manchester level to develop the content of a Greater Manchester bid as endorsed by the Association of Greater Manchester (AGMA).

The Future Jobs Funding programme had a Government requirement to offer the following:-

- A minimum of a six month job, paid at the National Minimum Wage and working for a minimum of 25 hours per week;
- Clients recruited from the 18-24 year old age group who had been out of work for nine months (two thirds total programme) plus clients from unemployment hot spots (a third of the total programme);
- Jobs created must be additional (not replacing existing roles and not existing without the Funding Jobs Fund grant) and be of benefit to the community; and

- Funding was up to a maximum of £6,500 per individual.

Work was progressing on the various options to possibly include apprenticeships and work placements. Apprenticeships would be for one year, leading to obtaining an NVQ level 2 accreditation, with adult social care and culture expressing an interest in providing such opportunities or the other possible option would be a six month traineeship within the Council, either within the Council or with independent sector care partners.

The Government initiative was specifically targeted at offering work opportunities for young people and did not impact of any Value for Money plans, including the proposals for home support, which was still subject to formal consultation until 31 August 2009 and therefore final decisions on future models were still to be made by the Executive.

Resolved – That the question and response be noted.

- b) The Committee received the extract of minutes of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:-

a)	Executive Member for Health and Adult Social Care held on 1 July 2009 and 29 July 2009.
b)	Adult and Community Services Policy Development Group held on 17 June 2009 and 7 July 2009.

Resolved – That the minutes of various meetings be noted.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and ended 7.35pm)