

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY PANEL
02 JUNE 2009
7.30 - 10.15 PM**



Present:

Councillors Turrell (Chairman), Harrison (Vice-Chairman), Blatchford, Brossard, Browne, Mrs Fleming, Mrs Shillcock and Ms Wilson

Executive Member:

Councillor Birch

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Baily and Leake

Also Present:

Richard Beaumont, Head of Overview & Scrutiny

Andrea Carr, Policy Officer

Mark Gittins, Head of Performance

Lesley Heale, Director of Social Care & Learning

Damian James, Head of Transport Provision

Glyn Jones, Chief Officer: Adult Social Care

Katharine Simpson, Democratic Services Officer

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Turrell be elected Chairman of the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2009/10.

COUNCILLOR TURRELL IN THE CHAIR

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Harrison be appointed Vice Chairman of the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2009/10.

3. Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members

The Panel noted the attendance of the following substitute member:

Councillor Brossard for Councillor Leake.

4. Minutes and Matters Arising

The Panel noted the minutes of the former Social Care and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 25 March 2009.

5. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest relating to any items on the agenda, nor any indications that members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

6. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

7. Presentation on Adult Social Care Services

Glyn Jones, Chief Officer: Adult Social Care, gave a presentation on the work of the Council's Adult Social Care Section. The presentation covered: the role of adult social care, key areas of work, the structure of the adult social care section, priorities in adult social care, an overview of the issues affecting specific care groups, adult social care regulation and performance outcomes.

The main focus of the Adult Social Care Section was to support and enable people to retain their independence for as long as possible. The Section was, in the main, organised around the various care groups that it supported including: older people, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health needs, people who misused substances, people with long term physical disabilities and those with Autistic Spectrum disorders.

Key priorities in adult social care included: the transformation of adult social care which would change the way that the Council delivered services to its clients and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which would increasingly underpin activities across the social care spectrum.

Arising from Members questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Adult social care was a demand led service. The Council had a statutory duty to assess anyone who sought an assessment of their needs and a duty to support those who qualified.
- The transfer of Section 28A funding, from the Primary Care Trust, would enable the Council to allocate services in a more constructive way and recommission services to better meet client needs.
- Section 28A funding provision was calculated according to a combination of named client needs and service provision requirements
- A multi-disciplinary team had been put in place to ensure that the needs of people diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder were properly assessed.
- It was recognised that vulnerable adults were at risk from abuse, including financial abuse, and processes were in place for suspected abuse to be reported. All allegations of abuse were treated seriously and investigated by the Safeguarding Board accordingly.
- Council human resources policies contained guidance on the treatment of whistleblowers. Work was taking place to allay any fears, amongst staff, that services would be withdrawn if whistleblowing occurred.
- The Council currently contributed funding towards residential or nursing home placements for 230 people. A figure that equated to between 25 and 33% of the available care home beds, a more detailed breakdown would be circulated to the Panel.

- Local authorities had an overarching responsibility to ensure that self funding residents purchased services from high quality providers however, they had no power to control the prices charged by private care providers.
- If there were concerns about the quality of care provided by a private service provider then the Council would work with the Care Quality Commission, the regulatory body, to address the problem.

It was agreed that a series of visits to adult social care facilities in, and possibly outside, the Borough would be arranged for small groups of Panel members. Members would then give brief reports on their visits at meetings of the Panel. To give Members a better understanding of the services provided each visit would include an opportunity to meet the care team responsible for delivering the service. It was agreed that if a member was unable to participate in a visit they had signed up to then they would organise a substitute to attend in their place.

8. Performance Monitoring Report

The Director of Social Care and Learning presented the Performance Monitoring Report (PMR) for the fourth quarter of 2008/09 relating to the Social Care and Learning Department.

The PMR provided the final performance outturns for the year 2008/09. It was reported that data for a number of performance indicators was missing because the data was either collected once a year through an annual survey or the Council was dependant on other organisations to provide data. Technical definitions for a number of indicators had not yet been agreed by Central Government so it was not yet know what was being measured.

The PMR covered the whole Social Care and Learning Department and work was taking place to split future PMRs into two; one specific for Adult Social Care and one specific to Children's Services and Learning which would make future scrutiny more straightforward.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- Work was taking place with partner organisations to resolve issues over outstanding data.
- There were a number of indicators where performance had been strong or exceeded expectations including:
 - NI130 Social care clients receiving self directed support
 - NI135 carers receiving needs assessment or review
 - NI136 People supported to live independently
 - NI146 Adults with learning disabilities in employment
 - NI133 Timeliness of social care packages following assessment
- A number of staff vacancies had been held open as part of the work to modernise social care in order to give home care staff the opportunity to apply for employment elsewhere in the Council.
- Of the ten members of staff recorded as being on long-term sick leave, four had subsequently left the Council's employment. To date only two members of staff were recorded as being on long-term sick leave.
- In many social care settings the Council had to adhere to minimum staffing levels, consequently staff sickness had minimal impact on service delivery as staff were brought in from other areas to provide cover.

- The Council had made significant investments in recruitment and retention of social care staff in the past year.
- Staff turnover had improved slightly on last year's figures. A detailed breakdown of staff turnover by section would be circulated to Members.
- Future PMRs would give more detailed information about staffing matters.
- Additional questions on the PMR were to be sent to the Director of Social Care and Learning for a response.

9. **Statutory Annual Report for Adult Social Care Complaints 2008/09**

The Panel considered the statutory annual report of the Complaints Manager Adults Social Care. The report provided information about the complaints received from during the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009 and details of key learning points for the Department that had been identified as a result of the complaints.

Over the course of the reported period, the Social Care and Learning Department had received 19 complaints and 115 expressed compliments relating to adult social care services. This demonstrated an improvement over 2007/08 when more complaints and fewer compliments had been received. Of the 19 complaints received in 2008/09:

- 16 were resolved at Stage 1
- 2 complaints remained unresolved at Stage 1
- 1 complaint was still awaiting a resolution at year end
- 3 were dealt with by the Local Government Ombudsman

Of the complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman the Council had acknowledged a problem had occurred and apologised before they had been referred.

Members were pleased to see that the majority of complaints had been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1 of the process and considered it to be a positive reflection of the quality of the services provided.

As a result of changes made by the Department of Health these reports would merge with complaints about health services becoming Adult Social Care and Health Complaints reports. The statutory adult social care complaints process would also be replaced with a process that categorised complaints as being either a complaint that is resolved/unresolved by the local authority of health services or a complaint that is being considered by the Local Government Ombudsman. Work was being carried out by the Department to ensure that this transition was smooth and the complaints process remained transparent and robust.

10. **Change of Agenda Order**

Owing to the volume of business on the agenda, the Chairman decided that agenda item 10, Adult Social Care Representative on the Panel, be considered last.

11. **Social Care and Community Transport Review**

Damian James, Head of Transport Provision, presented a report detailing the recent Social Care and Community Transport Review. The review built on the work carried

out by the Best value Review of Bracknell Forest Council Transport in 2005 and had involved detailed analysis of service information and consultation with users.

The review had found that the internal fleet within Social Care was fragmented, under utilised, poorly managed and generally not fit for purpose. The review had recommended the centralisation of transport provision, the transfer of all transport bookings (including regular taxi bookings) to the Integrated Transport Unit, the replacement of the Council fleet with more fit for purpose vehicles as leases expired and improvements to the Council's work with Keep Mobile.

Arising from Members' questions and comments the following points were noted:

- New vehicle contracts would include maintenance costs; research had found that these new contracts would cost a similar amount of money to the current contracts which did not include maintenance.
- Centralisation and integration of the transport service meant that services would be provided by specialists and service users would receive an improved level of service.
- The Learning Disabilities Transport Trial operated between the hours of 9am and 10pm seven days a week. The trial was proving to be particularly popular with an average of 120 trips a week taking place.
- The number of miles clients travelled using Keep Mobile had been found to be a third of what had been envisaged when the service level agreement had been signed.
- Social services trips booked through Keep Mobile costed considerably more than their Dial-a- Ride service because a higher rate was charged for one off trips and administrative charges were included in the fare price.
- When questioned about their experiences of Council transport provision, service users had been generally positive.
- Keep Mobile offered a very personalised service to its clients and this could have impacted on satisfaction levels amongst Keep Mobile users asked about their experience of Council transport.
- Updates would be given to the Panel as the review's recommendations were implemented.

The Panel thanked Damien James on an excellent and thorough piece of work that laid the foundations for improved service delivery in the future.

12. **'Caring About Carers' - Report of the Review of Support for Carers**

The Panel received a report providing an update on the progress made to implement the recommendations of the Caring About Carers, a report of the review of support services to carers in Bracknell Forest undertaken by a working group of the former Social Care and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

It was noted that progress had been made against all the recommendations. The panel acknowledged that General Practitioner surgeries were a crucial link in supporting carers. The Lead Member of the review advised that most practices had a patient and Practice Group and the Carers' Information Pack was an agenda item for the next meeting of her local group.

As a direct result of the review a short film highlighting the help available to carers had been produced for Community TV in the Borough and this was shown to the Panel. A significant amount of funding had been given to Bracknell Forest Voluntary

Action to provide support to carers and it had been agreed that their contact details would be included in the film rather than the Council's.

13. Services for People with Learning Disabilities

The Panel noted the responses of the Executive Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, Health and Housing and the Executive Portfolio Holder for Education and Libraries to the review of services for people with learning disabilities.

14. Overview and Scrutiny Quarterly Progress Report

The Panel considered a report outlining the activities of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels and the Commission over the past quarter and summarising significant national developments in overview and scrutiny and seeking agreement to the Panel's indicative work programme for 2009/10.

The Panel was informed that since the report's publication the Bracknell Forest Partnership Board had endorsed the proposed approach to overview and scrutiny of the Partnership. Guidance on the provisions relating to overview and scrutiny in the Police and Justice Act had now been published.

Officer feedback on the reviews carried out by working groups was generally positive, with the exception of one area where the overall satisfaction rating had reduced owing to one review where difficulties had been encountered due to rapid changes in government policy in relation to modernising social care and the adoption of the Bracknell Forest 14-19 Years Education Plan (2008-2013).

15. Work Programme for the 2009/10 Municipal Year

The Panel considered a report containing the indicative work programme for the Adult Social Care Panel for 2009/10.

The indicative work programme would be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for approval on 16 July 2009 prior to its submission to the Corporate Management Team and Executive.

The modernisation of adult social care was a complex subject, to help Members understanding of the subject copies of the Government Guidance 'Putting People First' would be circulated to all Panel Members.

Attention was drawn to the review of care homes which had featured in a previous year's work programme but been held in abeyance. It was agreed that coverage of this topic would be included in review work associated with transforming social care and safeguarding vulnerable adults.

The work programme item concerning transforming social care would be progressed initially through all-Panel workshops to familiarise Members with distinct areas of the initiative before a working group was established to undertake more in-depth review work in this regard.

The Panel agreed its 2009/10 work programme for commending to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for adoption subject to:

- i. The addition of a programme of visits to social care facilities;

- ii. The transfer of scrutiny of the Health and Social Care Partnership from the work programme of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel to the work programme of this Panel; and
- iii. The addition of overview and scrutiny coverage of care homes through a review of transforming social care and safeguarding adults.

16. Executive Forward Plan

The Panel noted the forthcoming items relating to Adult Social Care on the Executive Forward Plan and the following comments were noted:

Item I015484: Learning Disability Community Support Service

It was clarified that this item related to tendering for spot care for community support of people with learning disabilities. Individually the contracts were not considered to be particularly large however, combined over the course of a year the contracts' worth took the Council over EU procurement regulations.

Item I017051: Social Care and Learning Capital Programme

It was clarified that the 2009/10 Social Care and Learning Capital Programme predominantly dealt with education capital spend. It was noted that £23,000 had been allocated to fund improvements to the Social Care IT infrastructure.

17. Adult Social Care Representative on the Panel

The Panel considered a report on the co-option of a representative from the Adult Social Care sphere to its membership.

The Panel noted that it was not a statutory requirement to have co-opted members on the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The Panel considered that co-opted members would provide an additional viewpoint to reviews and would be an excellent way of involving non-council members in scrutiny of the Council.

It was agreed that:

- i. No formal co-options be made to the panel; and
- ii. Where appropriate, adult social care representatives with relevant expertise be co-opted to working groups undertaking policy reviews.

CHAIRMAN