



HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the meeting of the HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE held on 29th January 2003 at 7.00 p.m. at the Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

PRESENT: Councillor Eliza Mann (Chair)
Councillor Dominic Thorncroft (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Denise Capstick, Alun Hayes and Veronica Ward

ALSO PRESENT: Angela Franworth, Southwark Community Care Forum
Zoe Moniye, Community Representative
Councillor Catriona Moore, Executive Member for Health & Social Care

OFFICERS: Romi Bowen, Social Services Department
Margaret Campbell, Legal Services
Susan Harrison, Social Services
Ian Hughes, Corporate Strategy
Eamon Lally, Corporate Strategy
Adrian Ward, Social Services

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Alun Hayes, and Dr Abdul Rahman Olayiwola.

CONFIRMATION OF VOTING MEMBERS

The Members listed as being present were confirmed as the Voting Members

NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS AS URGENT

The Chair informed that she had received a copy of the letter that OSC had written to Chris Bull re implementation of the recommendations contained in the 'Access to Primary Care Report', and approval for the day Care visits.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests and dispensations.

RECORDING OF MEMBERS' VOTES

Council Procedure Rule 1.17(5) allows a Member to record her/his vote in respect of any motions and amendments. Such requests are detailed in the following Minutes. Should a Member's vote be recorded in respect to an amendment, a copy of the amendment may be found in the Minute File and is available for public inspection.

The Sub-Committee considered the items set out on the agenda, a copy of which has been incorporated in the Minute File. Each of the following paragraphs relates to the item bearing the same number on the agenda.

MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Open minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2003 be agreed and signed as a correct record of the proceedings.

24. **EXECUTIVE MEMBER INTERVIEW**

The Chair introduced this item. The following Minute records the initial question followed by the Executive Member's response and any supplemental questions arising.,

General

- Q. Can you give an overview of what the Executive wants to achieve in the area of Health & Social Care over the next three years?
- A. The Executive has made the area of Health & Social Care a priority. The budget has been increased by £6m.

Southwark's performance has improved significantly over the years, achieving a two star rating for services. There is the need to continue along this line, and aim to do even better.

The immediate priorities are:

- to provide high quality services that are user friendly;
- to target resources on people with the greatest needs;
- to protect vulnerable children.

- Q. What do you think are the main barriers to achieving this vision and how will you overcome them?
- A. The Executive has been able to achieve a good budget settlement. This will enable resources to be diverted to Children's Services.

One of the major issues of modernisation is to integrate services. Some services that have already been integrated include

- provision for older people;
- performance and service delivery;
- a multi agency approach to meeting children's needs.

It is proposed that an additional £2m be invested into Children's Service. In addition there will be further funding for transfer of care and delayed discharge. This is being put to Council Assembly for approval.

Modernising Day Care services

- Q. Members wanted to know why it was that an extra £6m was being put into Health Care, while at the same time plans were being made to make cuts in Day Care services.

A The Executive Member informed the meeting that initial assessment of the Day Care Services had shown that the service needed updating, and plans were to be put in place to focus on people in most need.

A preliminary review of the Day Care Service had already identified a saving of £1.5m. The review would make provision for increase in day care for those in most need.

Q As a result of the new eligibility criteria, people assessed Children to be at lower risk are going to lose services. Is there any indication as to the number of people this will affect?

A. A small number of people have lost services, but resources have been re-directed to people most in need.

A review has shown that 15% of existing users have low or no risk under the new eligibility criteria. About 200 people have lost services following the application of the new eligibility criteria, which are based on the National Standard.

Q. What is the department doing to monitor the standard of Homecare?

A. Homecare has been well monitored, which has resulted in a significant reduction in the level of complaints. The department is also in the process of re-tendering services.

Q. The Sub-committee is undertaking a short piece of work on day care to correspond with the consultation on the day care proposals.. Are there any particular issues that the Executive would like the sub-committee to consider?

A. The Executive would welcome any effort the Sub-Committee is able to contribute towards identifying examples of good practice in Day Care, including that from outside the borough.

Q. The department has identified a saving of approximately £1.5m, is there any proposal to fund small voluntary sector groups?

A. The department recognises the social value of voluntary bodies, hence funding them will be part of the review process. But there will be the need for such organisations to show the value they add to people's lives.

Q. Why was the Consultation Paper on Modernising Day Care delayed?

A. The delay in producing the consultation paper resulted from the need to get it right, and to produce an appendix with some technical details. These details will help people to scrutinize the document. The document would go out shortly.

Q. How would closing a Day Care Centre affect people, and how many people would be affected?

A. Consultation was currently taking place on the closure of the Royal Road Day Centre. The department would be looking at providing care at alternative centres.

Delayed Discharge

Q. Looking at Social Services Performance in terms of delayed discharge, what work is being done to prevent or reduce hospitalisation?

A. Preventing admission was linked to Access to Primary Care. One single factor that affected discharge was the lack of provision of local nursing homes. The department

was looking to develop the nursing home commissioning strategy to improve local supply and quality of Care.

Q. How was the department dealing with the issue of lack of equipment, whereby patients were occupying beds because of delay in providing the necessary equipment that would facilitate their discharge?

A. The department was adopting a fast track approach whereby patients took hospital equipment home, and the department would then replace such equipment.

Q. To what extent is the Social Services assessment process contributing to delayed discharge?

A. There was no major delay from Social Services' point of view; the problem lay with hospital staff assessment.

Q. How good was the quality of monitoring for Nursing Homes?

A. The monitoring of Nursing Homes was of a good standard. The department set their expectations and standards in relation to the National Standard. It monitored the level of complaints, and was also looking into the level of fees for Nursing Homes.

PCT was in the process of establishing Nursing Teams to work with Nursing Homes. The National Care Standards Commission monitored Nursing Homes, and so far had not closed any homes.

Looked After Children

Q. With regard to Social services performance, what action was being taken to improve the educational achievements of looked after Children?

A. Social Services had commissioned a tutoring project to improve the services to children looked after. It usually starts tutoring children two years before GCSE. An analysis of the results are carried out annually after they have been issued...

By allocating resources to children's services, it was hoped that more effort would be geared towards improving the services provided to those children at risk. Extra resources would facilitate the employment of dedicated social workers.

Q. Why has the number of children at risk in Southwark increased?

A. This is because the threshold for including children in the 'at risk' register had been lowered. The department was now identifying more children with need, and this had serious resource implications.

However, the Child Protection Register was now above the national average. The biggest problem facing Social Services was the ability to employ Social Workers. A rigorous recruitment and retention package had therefore been put in place. 85 % of Social Services Staff were now permanent, which was considered to be better than some London Boroughs. The department had put packages together to attract graduates, and also employed workers from abroad

Q. Can you comment on the department's readiness to respond to the recommendations

in the Victoria Climbié report?

A

Social services is already in a strong position, as it had recognised that it was not acting fast enough to referrals. The department had anticipated many of the changes that were included in the recommendation, and put a robust system in place to protect children.

Q Access to Services by Black & Ethnic Minority People

What were the Executive Member's thoughts on 'Access to Services by black and ethnic minority people'?

A. 'Access to Services by black and ethnic Minority People' would be addressed in the anti-poverty strategy

Q. Residential Care for Adults with Learning difficulties

What was the situation with regards to payment for residential care for adults with learning difficulties?

A. Residential Care for Adults with learning disabilities is paid out of Community care Budgets.

The department was working towards Best Value through externalisation of some services, and providing other services in house. It was in the process of tendering those services, which would not be provided in house.

Q. How would the department ensure that there was a good provision of high quality service for people with special needs?

A. Resources to meet the needs of those with special or mixed needs were extremely scarce, and there was the need to take a long-term view of providing specialist care for this client group.

There was a strategy in the Borough to develop specialist care for this client group. The department would be looking into striking a balance between needs and resources.

Access to Primary Care

Q. How will the recommendations contained in the 'Access to Primary Care' report be implemented?

A. The Primary Care Trust would start the process of implementation in February. The department was looking into integration of the Primary Care Trust and Social Services.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Sub-Committee was reminded that it needed to formulate its work-programme for the following year.

The Chair informed the Sub-Committee that she would like to see an improvement in services to people in the Borough; by developing the Sub-Committee's work with the Executive. She thought that the Sub-Committee would benefit from working with expert advisers, and she had been informed that it would need to go to Overview & Scrutiny Committee to get funding for such advice.

The meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.

CHAIR:

DATE: