

## **PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held in Town Hall, Parade Street, Llangollen LL20 8PW on Thursday, 8 October 2015 at 9.30 am.

### **PRESENT**

Councillors Raymond Bartley (Vice-Chair), Jeanette Chamberlain-Jones (Chair), Meirick Davies, Martyn Holland, Pat Jones, Dewi Owens, Pete Prendergast and Arwel Roberts.

Councillor Rhys Hughes attended as an observer.

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Chief Executive (MM), Head of Community Support Services (PG), Strategic Planning Team Manager (LG), Commissioning and Tendering Officer (KN), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Administrative Officer (CIW).

The Chair informed Members that Councillor T.M. Parry had resigned his membership of the Committee due to work commitments.

#### **1 APOLOGIES**

Councillors W.N. Tasker, H. H. Evans, R.L. Feeley and the Corporate Director Communities.

#### **2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No Members declared any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at the meeting.

#### **3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR**

No items were raised which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

#### **4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2015 were submitted.

Matters arising:-

In response to concerns that Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB) officers seemed to be under severe time pressures at the last meeting when discussing the 'The Temporary Changes to Women's and Maternity Services in North Wales', the Scrutiny Co-ordinator explained that the Health Board had been

keen to meet all Councils in North Wales as part of the consultation on the proposed changes, and as the Special County Council meeting already scheduled with BCUHB officials on a range of matters was being held two days after the closing date for this particular consultation, Partnerships Scrutiny Committee had agreed to accommodate the business item at its meeting. It had been unfortunate that, as part of the same consultation, BCUHB officials needed to be in Dolgellau for a consultation event in the early afternoon.

The Chief Executive informed Members that he had written to BCUHB's Area Director, following the Special Council meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> October, summarising concerns raised by Members at that meeting on a range of health and social care matters. He also confirmed that he would be asking the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) to consider whether the following matters merited scrutiny's attention:-

- the proposed development of the Royal Alexandra Hospital and any potential risk to the development (i.e. the current position, proposed options and potential timescale);
- concerns regarding the future availability of primary care in the Prestatyn area from April 2016 onwards (including potential alternative provision);
- the Health and Social Care Advisory Service's (HASCAS) report into the failings of care and treatment of patients at the Tawelfan Ward at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd – to consider the report's findings from the perspective of Denbighshire residents and any potential lessons for the Council;

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised that the SCVCG was due to meet the following week and the proposals to examine the matters would be considered at that meeting.

With respect to the additional information requested from BCUHB representatives at the Committee's meeting in September the Scrutiny Co-ordinator advised that a formal request had been made for the information but do date it had not been received.

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the above, the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.*

## **5 SUPPORTING PEOPLE LOCAL COMMISSIONING PLAN**

A copy of a report by the Commissioning and Tendering Officer (CTO), which detailed the three year Commissioning Plan for the Supporting People Programme (CPSPP) in Denbighshire, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The Head of Community Support Services (HCSS) introduced the report and informed the Committee that the Council was planning towards a 10% cut in the Supporting People grant from the Welsh Government (WG) for 2016-17. As the actual amount of grant funding would not be announced until late November this year the Council also had contingencies in place in case the actual funding cut exceeded 10%. It was confirmed by the Commissioning and Tendering Officer (CTO) that the LCP would be submitted to the North Wales Supporting People

Regional Collaborative Committee in January, 2016, to inform the development of the North Wales Regional Commissioning Plan.

The report outlined the current position, cost and effect on other services, the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment completed for the LCP in 2013, details of consultations carried out and risks and steps introduced to reduce them.

The Committee considered Appendix 1 to the report, and it was agreed that the meeting move to PART II.

## **PART II**

### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

***RESOLVED*** – that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 14 and 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Responding to members' questions on the proposals under consideration for cutting SP grants to individual organisations, listed in Appendix 1 to the report, officers confirmed that:-

- the criteria for SP grant funding was very prescriptive and therefore detailed work had been undertaken to ensure that the funding provided was being used by each organisation for its intended purpose, and that it conformed with the SP criteria;
- As part of the rationalisation of grant funding processes, duplication of provision, compliance with grant conditions and whether the projects are supportive of the early intervention agenda will all been examined in detail. The contract monitoring processes administered by SP ensure that organisations are not receiving money for the same projects from different funding streams;
- other public bodies, such as the Health Board were also looking at rationalising their processes and pooling their funding streams;
- part of the tender process for applying to deliver services on the Council's behalf included strict financial checks on the organisations that applied;
- once a contract was awarded its delivery would be regularly monitored to ensure it was delivering the objectives in line with the contract specification, part of which included a value for money analysis to ensure that it delivered services that added value to Denbighshire residents' lives;
- the SP Grant was not usually an organisation's only source of funding, as SP grant funding was allocated for specific purposes;
- officers served on a number of different groups within the Council and with partner organisation i.e. Health Board and were therefore able to form collective views and decisions on funding requests;
- a single pathway referral system operated which helped the Council determine whether individuals who applied to access its services were receiving similar support from other organisations. Plans were in place to ensure that this was

fully integrated with the Community Support Services Single Point of Access (SPoA);

- Supporting People had rationalised the contracts it held with individual organisations, whereas in the past an organisation may have had multiple contracts with Supporting People for the delivery of services, it would now have one overarching contract with each individual element of the contract monitored as part of the contract monitoring process.

Members emphasised the general need for central government to simplify the grant funding system to make it easier to understand and less confusing and complex for Local Authorities (LAs) and the public in general. Such an approach would assist valuable resources to be used far more wisely and therefore maximise their impact for the taxpayer.

The Chief Executive (CE) referred to the Scottish approach where only two grants were now distributed by the Scottish Government, the remainder had been incorporated into the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) awarded to each LA. This approach assisted LAs with their financial planning as very few elements of their budgets would be dependent on the awarding of standalone grants for specific Council functions. The Welsh Local Government Association's (WLGA) Director of Resources had recently attend a Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting to discuss this approach and its benefits for LAs. The CE suggested that members may wish to discuss this aspect further at a future Budget workshop session.

Members requested that the report to Cabinet:-

- include a column in Appendix 1 highlighting whether the SP Grant monies were an organisation's only source of income;
- information on the anticipated impact on each organisation of the potential cut in their SP grant funding;
- identify those organisations which had been subject to cuts in previous years

The meeting resumed to PART I at this juncture.

## **PART I**

At the conclusion of the discussion the Committee:-

***RESOLVED*** – *that, subject to the inclusion of the above observations and amendments, the report be referred to Cabinet for consideration in due course.*

## **6 WELL-BEING PLAN**

A copy of a report by the Strategic Planning Team Manager (SPTM), which provided an update on the findings of an evaluation of the Denbighshire Top 20 project's first six months, and information on the project instigated by the Denbighshire Wellbeing Plan which had been published in December, 2014, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

The SPTM introduced the report and referred to the process followed by the County's Strategic Partnership Board (SPB) in developing Denbighshire's Wellbeing Plan, whose theme was Independence and Resilience. She advised Members that it was too early at present to give a progress report on the entire plan, nevertheless officers were keen to seek scrutiny's support for a project they were piloting as part of the Plan. Under the Denbighshire Top 20 Project Well-being Plan partners worked together to support extremely vulnerable individuals with a view to prevent them from requesting unnecessary assistance from the emergency/acute services at a later stage, in the majority of cases the call on these expensive services were inappropriate.

As part of the project the twenty most vulnerable individuals known to all partner organisations, for whom partners' day-to-day services did not seem to achieve the desired outcomes or who did not meet the criteria for the services available albeit that they were in need of support in the County, would be collectively identified. The project was also aimed at avoiding the duplication of services by working more effectively together.

The Committee agreed that during consideration of Appendix 2 "Evaluation of Denbighshire Top 20 Summary Report" the meeting move to PART II.

## **PART II**

### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

***RESOLVED*** – that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 13 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The complexities of the intervention work with these individuals was illustrated via a number of case studies, as was the effort and time required to build up a relationship with some of the individuals. A number of barriers also needed to be negotiated between partners when attempting to support these individuals, these included the:-

- reluctance to share personal data, even though it was for the benefit of the individual;
- type of information held by different partners varied considerably, with some holding information on the individuals whilst others held information on addresses and not the individuals at those addresses;

Following consideration of Appendix 2 the meeting resumed in PART I.

Officers emphasised that the long term aim of the project was to save all partners valuable financial and other resources. To do this they had to be innovative and intervene at the earliest opportunity available. In doing this partners had to look beyond their protocols and be creative, otherwise valuable resources would be drained.

Responding to Members' questions officers advised that:-

- barriers need to be broken down in order to build the high level of mutual trust needed between all partners to ensure that information was shared confidently and appropriately to facilitate early intervention;
- the objective of this project was not to create another structure but to facilitate joint and effective working for the purpose of supporting the individuals concerned, and to save unnecessary expense to the public purse in the long-term;
- the fact that North Wales Police were leading on the project helped facilitate the sharing of information and ensure that if one partner was not willing to share its information on an individual they required a valid reason for withholding it;
- the high level of mutual trust built via this project could only be of benefit to all partners in the long-run and would improve working relationships for the future;
- the project at present was only being piloted in Denbighshire, however the Chief Constable was keen to roll it out to other areas as he saw the benefits of adopting the early intervention approach; and
- the Wales Audit Office (WAO), who had recently audited the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) was thinking of including the project as a case study in its audit report on the CSP.

Prior to concluding the discussion members commented on how the 'compensation culture' and individuals being frightened of being falsely accused of wrong doing had now made people extremely hesitant of offering a helping hand to the vulnerable, or to children, as would have happened years ago. It seemed as if the whole fabric of society was disintegrating, with the concept of being neighbourly and supporting people within communities being eroded. People these days expected organisations to provide services provided within communities in the past, services which mitigate against the risk of social isolation and loneliness.

Following further discussion, it was:-

**RESOLVED** – *that, subject to the above observations, the Committee supports the work undertaken to date and the proposal to continue with this work, and recommended that the project:-*

- (i) revisits its membership and its aims to ensure there is a common understanding and commitment from all partners to try creative and new approaches, and to discuss what each agency can and cannot do etc;*
- (ii) considers the cost of inaction against the cost of remedying a situation when deciding on a course of action to take;*
- (iii) ensures there is clarity about how multi-agency intervention can be implemented to add value to a case and if it does not work, when to cease;*
- (iv) re-establishes a detailed matrix, records more descriptive actions, proactively requests nominations, provides names of nominees prior to meetings and ensure that 20 people have been identified and agreed for support;*
- (v) considers a pooled budget;*
- (vi) establishes an Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) compliant with the Wales Accord on Sharing Personal Information (WASPI) to resolve information sharing barriers and develop a consent form to use with individuals;*
- (vii) due to its high profile understands how it will manage its messages;*

- (viii) evaluates the learning from each case to date;*
- (ix) seeks all its organisations to empower their representatives to make decisions, deploy resources and deviate from traditional policy and practice;*
- (x) understands how its learning can inform services' early intervention and prevention (common themes include: loneliness and social isolation, alcohol abuse; poor community networks; high demand on evenings and weekends): and*
- (xi) governance needs to be more robust.*

## **7 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

A copy of a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (SC), which requested the Committee to review and agree its Forward Work Programme and provided an update on relevant issues, had been circulated with the papers for the meeting.

A copy of the 'Member proposal form' had been included in Appendix 2, the Cabinet Forward Work Programme had been included as Appendix 3, and a table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising on progress with their implementation, had been attached at Appendix 4.

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme for future meetings, Appendix 1, and the following amendments and additions were agreed:-

26<sup>th</sup> November, 2015:-

- Members agreed that a business item relating to the proposals for the future development of a Community Hospital, Royal Alexandra, Rhyl be included in the Committee's forward work programme for the November meeting, and that representatives from the BCUHB be invited to attend.
- The SC explained that confirmation had been received that representatives of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service, would be attending the meeting.
- The Committee agreed that the respective Lead Members be invited to attend the meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 to present their reports.

14<sup>th</sup> January, 2016:-

- The Chair had agreed a request from officers that the report on the business item pertaining to "Single Point of Access" be deferred from the current meeting until the Committee's meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> January, 2016. This would enable the inclusion of information on a recent bid relating to Primary Care Workforce. Members also agreed that, following receipt of a request from the Lead Member Councillor R.L. Feeley, it would be beneficial to hold the meeting in Rhyl and visit SPoA staff.

The SC explained that Councillor W.N. Tasker had recently resigned his position as the Committee's representative on the Corporate Equalities Group (CEG), and the Group's Terms of Reference had been included as Appendix 5. Members agreed that Councillor D. Owens be appointed to serve on the CEG as the Committee's representative, and that Councillor M.L. Holland be appointed as a substitute.

The Committee agreed that following the resignation of Councillor T.M. Parry as a member of the Committee, consideration of the appointment of representatives on the Education and Highways Service Challenge Groups be deferred pending the appointment of Members to the two vacancies on the Committee.

Members were informed that the next meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) had been scheduled for the 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2015.

Following further discussion, it was:-

***RESOLVED*** – *that, subject to the above, the Work Programme as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.*

## **8 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

No reports from Committee representatives had been received.

Meeting ended at 11.10 a.m.