

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Thursday, 19th November, 2009, at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs Ridney (Chairman)
Councillor K. Turner (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Mrs. Aston, Mrs. Cowell, J. D. Davies, K. Finch,
Mrs D. Harley, Islam, Tyler and Mr D Orme.

Officers

Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services; Assistant Director (Housing Strategy and Private Sector) acting as Lead Officer to the Committee for this meeting; Scrutiny Officer (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services); Interim Assistant Director of Finance (Financial Services and Corporate Finance); Head of Policy (Chief Executive's Directorate) and the Democratic Services Manager (Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources) together with Officers representing The Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Dudley Primary Care Trust, Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust and Dudley Local Involvement Network.

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence from the meeting were received.

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DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs Aston declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of Agenda Item No. 9 (Annual Performance Assessment of NHS Trusts for 2009/10) in view of her son being employed by West Midlands Ambulance Service.

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 17th September, 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed.

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PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised under this item and no members of the public were in attendance.

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JOINT SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS WITH WALSALL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – DUDLEY WALSALL MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP TRUST

The Committee considered a report of the Lead Officer on the establishment of a discretionary Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee to oversee the progress of the Dudley Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust.

The Committee discussed the proposed membership of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee and in particular the requirement to apply political proportionality to the nominations from the respective Councils. In the light of advice received, the Committee considered that the nominations from Dudley MBC should initially be on the basis of three Conservative and two Labour Members. Further discussions would take place with Walsall MBC on the possibility of waiving proportionality to enable the appointment of a Liberal Democrat Member from Dudley MBC.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the arrangements for the establishment of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee, together with the terms of reference set out in paragraphs 11 - 15 and Appendix 1 to the report now submitted, be approved.
 - (2) That the nominations from Dudley MBC to serve on the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee be the Chairman and Vice-Chairman (Councillors Mrs. Ridley and K. Turner) together with Councillors J. D. Davies, Mrs. D Harley and Islam.
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UPDATE OF THE COUNCIL'S CAPITAL STRATEGY

The Select Committee considered a report of the Interim Director of Finance on the Update of the Council's Capital Strategy 2010 - 2015.

In receiving the report, Members of the Committee commented on the following issues:-

In connection with public transport services:-

- A Member referred to the lack of direct bus links from the western edge of the Borough to Russells Hall Hospital. This deprived people in that and surrounding areas of a vital service. Members considered that representations should be made to CENTRO to the effect that a bus service should be provided in the interest of integrated transport services for elderly people, those with pushchairs, visitors and other affected groups.
- A Member noted that bus passes came into operation at 9.30am and this disadvantaged many people who were required to attend early hospital appointments. It was considered that pressure should be applied to CENTRO to allow the use of passes at an earlier time.
- In the context of Local Transport Policies, the Vice-Chairman expressed the view that he would support congestion charging if the proceeds were invested in developing public transport services.

The Acting Lead Officer indicated that progress was being made on some of the issues raised by the Committee. Representations would have to be made to CENTRO concerning bus and public transport issues and similar matters had been raised previously.

- With reference to matters previously discussed at the Halesowen Area Committee and the Select Committee on Regeneration, Culture and Adult Education, the Vice-Chairman referred to the provision of a Local Improvement Finance Trust (LIFT) facility in Colley Gate. He endorsed any action to take this forward and requested that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration consider the inclusion of a LIFT project in Colley Gate as part of wider regeneration plans for the area.
- A Member referred to health and safety issues associated with trees and particular problems for elderly and partially sighted people. He requested that this issue be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet.
- The Chairman requested that the Capital Strategy, in general terms, should consider the ageing population in Dudley with a view to meeting the changing pattern of demands on services in the future.
- A Member referred to the need to review the policy of letting adapted properties to able-bodied tenants. The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services indicated that work was in progress in this regard to improve the matching of supply with demand.
- Members referred to the lack of sports facilities in Central Dudley and the closure of facilities that had previously helped to improve the health of the community.

The Interim Assistant Director of Finance noted the comments of the Committee and would communicate relevant issues to the Director of the Urban Environment.

RESOLVED

That the draft Capital Strategy be noted, and that it be recommended to Cabinet and Council that the Strategy be amended to recognise the ageing population in Dudley and its impact on the pattern of demands on services in the future.

REVIEW OF THE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Select Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive on the review of the Community Strategy. The Committee was invited to express views on matters to which the Council should have regard in approving the new strategy and how the strategy might help the future determination of the scrutiny programme over the following three years from April 2010.

In receiving the report, Members of the Committee commented on the following issues:-

- In commending the overall benefits of the Healthy Towns project, reference was made to the need to ensure that the hubs could be accessed effectively and that further work in this regard should be undertaken with relevant partners and stakeholders. Further, it was suggested that the healthy hub buildings should be developed with the capacity to be adapted to facilitate green energy production, thus creating the opportunity to engage more widely with the public in promoting energy efficiency.
- The Committee welcomed the comments in the strategy concerning libraries and the promotion of physical activity. The Committee emphasised the promotion of physical well-being and the need to provide community facilities for appropriate activities such as swimming. In this regard the Chairman expressed concerns regarding the closure of Coseley Baths, which was contrary to the aspirations in the strategy.
- Reference was made to the need to ensure equality of access to the Options Leisure Scheme to enable anyone over the age of 60 to become more involved in sporting and physical activity.
- The Committee emphasised its previous comments regarding the need to develop a Community Strategy that supported the needs of Dudley's ageing population and was developed with due regard to the needs of the forecasted rise in demand for social care services.

The Head of Policy noted the comments of the Committee for incorporation in the overall consultation process.

RESOLVED

That the comments of the Committee, as set out above, be taken into account when the Strategy is considered by the Cabinet and Council.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE (NHS) TRUSTS FOR 2009/10

The Select Committee considered a report of the Lead Officer on the compliance of NHS Trusts against the applicable parts of core standards as set out in 'Standards for Better Health' and other national indicators, as part of the Care Quality Commission's (CQC's) new annual performance assessment framework for 2009/10. The Committee also considered the key findings emerging from the CQC's annual performance assessment of NHS Trusts for 2008/09, as announced in October 2009.

The Committee had requested each NHS Trust to provide a summary of its core standards declaration for 2009/10 highlighting key areas for improvement. Summaries of the core standards declarations from each Trust were circulated and considered individually by the Committee. Members noted that since these documents were based on draft declarations, some results would be subject to change and the final deadline for submission to the CQC was 7th December, 2009. Comments arising from this report would be reflected in any evidence submitted to the Commission. The Committee made detailed comments on the documents, summarised as follows:

West Midlands Ambulance Service (NHS) Trust

- The CQC periodic review 2009, as circulated, was accepted.

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust

- In receiving the report, the Select Committee noted the development of a new Mental Health Strategy, which would be reported to the Committee and the Cabinet in due course.

Dudley Primary Care Trust

- The Committee welcomed the work already undertaken with regard to health promotion and supported further activity, particularly aimed at young people, on issues such as smoking cessation, involving other partners such as pharmacies, schools, libraries and other settings.

- Concerns were expressed regarding access to primary dental services and the Committee was advised of ongoing campaigns being undertaken, or considered, by the PCT to encourage regular attendance at the dentist by children from the age of three. The Chairman asked that this area of work be the subject of a separate report to a future meeting of the Select Committee.
- The Committee referred to potential action to tackle the ongoing issues of teenage conception rates and Chlamydia screening. It was considered that both targets were particularly challenging. Work was ongoing in respect of both areas; Chlamydia screening was a national issue and the Director of Public Health would be asked to provide an update on Teenage Conception rates applicable to Dudley.
- In connection with comments concerning Stroke Care, the Chairman requested that this be considered as an item for the Select Committee's work programme in 2010/11.

Dudley Group of Hospitals (DGOH) NHS Foundation Trust

- Members referred to delayed hospital discharges and the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services gave an update on action taken where this had been attributable to health and adult social care services. It was also noted that discussions on systems issues were ongoing between the Director and the Chief Executives of the DGOH and the PCT. Officers of the DGOH undertook to provide information concerning readmission rates in cases where it may appear that people were discharged from hospital too soon.
- Reference was made to the contingency plans in place to deal with pandemic flu and the progress of the vaccination programme.
- The Committee requested information concerning attendance at the new walk-in centre, which might have an impact of people attending Accident and Emergency at Russells Hall Hospital.
- The Committee recognised and placed on record its appreciation of the general high quality of the service provided by staff at Russells Hall Hospital, in particular Accident and Emergency, where staff were required to work with difficult circumstances and under extreme pressure at peak attendance times.
- Reference was made to issues raised with the Chief Executive of DGOH concerning catering/food provision and complaints regarding the Ambulance service.

RESOLVED

That subject to the comments of the Committee, as listed above, the report and the annual performance assessment summaries of NHS Trusts for 2009/10, as set out in the appendices to the report submitted, be received and accepted.

35 UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF DUDLEY'S LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (LINK)

The Select Committee received a progress report from the Dudley Local Improvement Network (LINK). The Chairman of the LINK gave a verbal overview of the contents of the progress report.

In receiving the report, a Member commented that in General Practitioner Surgeries currently without a female doctor, consideration should be given to appointing a female doctor as and when a vacancy occurred.

RESOLVED

That the progress report, including the update on LINK activity as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

36 MENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP IN DUDLEY

The Select Committee received a report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services providing an update on the joint partnership arrangements between Dudley MBC, Dudley Primary Care Trust and the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (D&WMHPT). The report included:

- A progress report on the first year of operation of the Mental Health Trust.
- An update on development of a new Mental Health Strategy for Dudley.
- Proposals to take forward a Mental Health Commissioning Executive.
- Information about the Clinical and Social Care Vision of the Mental Health Trust

The Select Committee received a presentation from Elaine Woodward representing Dudley Primary Care Trust. It was noted that the consultation on the Dudley Adult Mental Health Joint Commissioning Strategy 2010 – 2013 was being undertaken from 23rd November until 14th February, 2011.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the progress in the development of the Trust to date be noted.
- (2) That the comments of Members of the Select Committee be invited on the new draft Mental Health Strategy for Dudley for submission to Dudley PCT during the consultation period.
- (3) That the proposals to take forward a Mental Health Commissioning Executive be noted.
- (4) That the Select Committee note and support the overall strategic direction for commissioning developed by the Council and the PCT, as described in the draft Mental Health Strategy, and the detailed plans for development of Mental Health Services as outlined by the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust in their Clinical and Social Care Vision.

The meeting ended at 8:40 pm

CHAIRMAN