

SELECT COMMITTEE ON GOOD HEALTH

Wednesday, 29th March, 2006 at 6.00 pm
in Committee Room 2, Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Burt (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Faulkner (Vice Chairman)
Councillors Ali, Mrs Aston, Harley, Islam, Ms Nicholls, Rahman and K. Turner

OFFICERS:-

The Head of Personnel and Support Services (Lead Officer to the Committee), Assistant Director Housing Strategy and Private Sector, Assistant Director Learning Disabilities and Mental Health, Assistant Director Development and Environmental Protection, Scrutiny Officer to the Committee (Good Health), Research Officer (Good Health) and Mr J Jablonski (Directorate of Law & Property).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:-

Mr M Cooke - Chief Executive - Dudley Primary Care Trusts
Mr R Checketts – Head of Communications – Dudley Primary Care Trusts
Mr S Thompson – Head of Mental Health and Social Care Services
Mr G Barker – Dudley South Patient and Public Involvement Forum

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Boys and Musk.

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DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Ali declared a personal interest, in accordance with the Member's Code of Conduct, in respect of agenda item number 10 – Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services – Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2006/07 – relating to those references in the Plan referring to Dudley Racial Equality Council as he is an executive member of that body.

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26th January, 2006, be approved as a correct record and signed.

PUBLIC FORUM

Consideration was given to a reference from a recent meeting of Select Committee Chairmen as to whether the Committee wished to include a standard item on future agendas so as to facilitate members of the public asking questions on any matter falling within the terms of reference of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the proposal to include a standard item on future agendas of the Committee so as to facilitate members of the public asking questions on any matter falling within the terms of reference of the Committee be endorsed and that the Lead Officer to the Committee, in consultation with the Chairman and other officers as appropriate, be requested to consider the arrangements for this matter including the duration of time to be allowed for persons to speak at meetings and issues regarding the advertisement of this facility including a public advertisement, advertising in the Health Link newspaper and other branches of the media so as to give the widest possible coverage to this facility.

OUR HEALTH, OUR CARE, OUR SAY: A NEW DIRECTION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES – THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE WHITE PAPER

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Chief Executive of Dudley Primary Care Trusts was submitted on some of the key features of the Health and Social Care White Paper entitled 'Our health, Our Care, Our Say: A New Direction for Community Services', issued on 31st January, 2006. Attached as an Appendix to the report submitted was a policy briefing document on this matter produced by the Democratic Health Network.

Mark Cooke, Chief Executive, Dudley Primary Care Trusts gave a briefing on the white paper commenting on the aspects of why change was needed, the drivers for change, the new direction for health, what people had said they required, the main features of the white paper; as set out in the documentation submitted underpinning reforms including the proposal in respect of Local Area Agreements between the National Health Service and Social Care and an indication of some of the successes that had been achieved so far. The overall conclusion was that Dudley was well placed to take forward the proposals contained within the white paper. It was also noted that the Health and Social Care Strategy was being developed.

Arising from the briefing given Members asked a number of questions and raised queries with particular reference to the role of this Committee in commenting on and scrutinising aspects such as the Health and Equality Strategy, the proposed Local Area Agreements and the role of Dudley Community Partnership in such matters. Regarding Dudley Community Partnership it was noted that a major presentation would be held on Tuesday 4th April, 2006 at which the Strategy would be developed and consideration given to the content of the Local Area Agreement. It was considered that once developed these documents would be referred to this Committee for consideration. Regarding the Local Area Agreement it was noted that no decision had yet been made on this matter and the methods by which it would be considered by the Community. It was further noted that an all day event would be held on 10th April, 2006 to which stakeholders had been invited on the content of the white paper. In this regard Mr Cooke was asked that arrangements be made for suggestion forms to be produced so that members of the community could communicate their comments by this method in addition to any other methods envisaged. Consideration was also given to the financial situation of Primary Care Trusts and other Health Authorities given the issue of patient choice and other developments regarding budgets. Mr Cooke responded to the questions asked and referred to the arrangements involving the use of surpluses and the use of growth monies for the forthcoming financial year.

At the conclusion of questions and queries Mr Cooke was thanked for the briefing given.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, the Appendix to the report, submitted and as now reported at the meeting, on the content and aspirations of the Health and Social Care White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: a New Direction for Community Services', be noted together with the continued need to scrutinise further work in the local health and social care community in the light of the information reported on.

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BLACK COUNTRY REVIEW OF HEALTH SERVICES - CONSULTATION

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on proposals contained in the public consultation document on the Black Country Review of Health Services. A copy of the consultation document had previously been circulated to Members.

Arising from the initial consideration given to this matter it was considered that the content of the document was positive for Dudley and that the proposed changes would lead to service developments including that of bone marrow transplant services at Russells Hall Hospital.

It was noted that the consultation period had commenced on 21st February, 2006 and would conclude on 19th May, 2006.

RESOLVED

That, in order to give Members of the Committee further opportunity to comment on the content of the consultation document in respect of the Black Country Review of Health Services, the consultation document be recirculated to all Members of the Committee and members asked to forward any comments they would wish to make to the Scrutiny Officer to the Committee by 19th May, 2006.

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THE INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE IN DUDLEY

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the first year of operation of the integrated Mental Health Service in Dudley.

Simon Thompson, the Head of Mental Health and Social Care Services, commented on the content of the report emphasising in particular the good work that had been achieved and the award of 3 star status in spring, 2005.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on the first year of operation of the integrated mental health service in Dudley, be noted.

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FUTURE CONFIGURATION ON MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN THE BLACK COUNTRY

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on recent discussions with the Local National Health Service on the future of Mental Health Services in the Black Country.

Richard Carter, Assistant Director, Learning Disabilities and Mental Health, commented on the content of the report, which was also being submitted to National Health Service Boards and elected members in the three other Black Country Boroughs in March-April 2006.

It was noted that this was the preconsultation period and options for the future configuration of Mental Health Services would be subject to formal public consultation from July to October, 2006.

Arising from the discussions held, as indicated in the report submitted, senior officers in the Local Authorities and the National Health Service from the borough areas of Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall had agreed to explore, as the preferred option, a single mental health Trust providing specialised mental health services to all three borough areas to be established from the recommended date of April, 2007. The position with regard to Wolverhampton Borough, who, at this time did not wish to join the proposed new Trust, was also referred to in the report submitted.

Arising from the presentation given a number of Members expressed concerns at the preferred option proposed of a single mental health Trust for the Black Country Boroughs given, in particular, the successful arrangements in Dudley indicated in the previous report considered.

RESOLVED

That, in view of the concerns of Members to the expressed preferred option of a single mental health Trust for the Black Country Boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall, the information contained in the report submitted, on recent discussions with the Local National Health Service on the future of Mental Health Services in the Black Country, be noted and that a further report on this matter be submitted to the first meeting of the Committee in the new municipal year as part of the public consultation exercise to take place on the future configuration of Mental Health Services.

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THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DUDLEY GROUP OF HOSPITALS NHS TRUST – ‘CONSULTING OUR PUBLIC – SEEKING YOUR VIEWS ON OUR APPLICATION FOR NHS FOUNDATION TRUST STATUS’

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on the consultation document from the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust in respect of its application for Foundation Hospital Status.

A copy of the consultation document had previously been circulated to Members together with proposed responses to the seventeen questions contained in that document to which responses were required by the end of the consultation period, 21st May, 2006. Members were asked to consider the responses as proposed given that the next meeting of the Committee in the new municipal year would be after the end of the consultation period.

RESOLVED

That the content of the proposed responses to the questions contained in the consultation document 'Consulting our Public – Seeking your views on our application for NHS Foundation Trust Status' in respect of the future development of the Dudley Group of Hospitals NHS Trust, be endorsed together with any other comments Members wished to make by the end of the consultation period, including those made by Councillor Islam at the meeting, for submission to the Scrutiny Officer to the Committee by the end of the consultation period, 21st May, 2006.

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DIRECTORATE OF ADULT, COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES
– ANNUAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2006/07

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2006/07.

Dr Sims, Assistant Director, Housing Strategy and Private Sector, in his presentation of the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted referred Members to the fact that the information submitted related to the whole of the Directorate.

Arising from the presentation given Members commented in particular on, and made queries, relating to :-

- (a) The role of the Dudley Racial Equality Council and of its successor body, The Centre for Equality and Diversity, from 1st April, 2006, in addressing inequalities including the reference made to the fact that a target had only been set last year in respect of the make up of the Directorates Housing workforce and its reflection of the Dudley Borough Community. In response it was considered that the Council would still wish the new body to be involved in such work.
- (b) The ways in which the target, to be achieved over 3 years, could be met although it was recognised that the meeting of this target would be challenging.
- (c) That Mr Cooke, Chief Executive – Dudley Primary Care Trust would welcome the opportunity to set up a partnership arrangement with officers of the Council to work together in promoting the make up of his workforce so as to reflect as closely as possible the make up of the Dudley Borough Community. Dr Sims undertook to take this matter further with Mr Cooke.
- (d) That the detailed action/target in respect of the development of culturally competent day care objective set out in appendix A to the report submitted be clarified so as to make it clear that the groups indicated were not the total number of groups involved.

- (e) That in respect of the detailed action/target relating to the appropriate provision of Halal and vegetarian meals relating to the culturally sensitive service provision directorate priority it was agreed that arrangements would be made to indicate that Halal meals prepared had been certified as such.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and the Appendices to the report, submitted on the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services Annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2006/07, be noted and that the content of the Action Plan be endorsed.

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WHEELCHAIR SERVICES REVIEW - DRAFT REPORT

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on the first draft report of the Wheelchair Services Review a copy of which was attached as an Appendix to the report submitted.

During the initial consideration given to this matter the Chairman thanked all the Members and Officers who had been involved in producing the first draft of the report. It was also noted that the comments made in the draft report under the heading 'Collection of evidence' regarding the Local Research Ethics Committee would be communicated widely to other interested parties and that the content of figure 4.28 regarding approaches made to the Council for wheelchair related services or adaptations would be the subject of further consultations between the Scrutiny Officer and Dr Sims.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and Appendix to the report, submitted on the first draft report of the Wheelchair Services Review, be noted and that Members contact the Scrutiny Officer should they wish to make any detailed comments on the content of the draft report.

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UPDATES ON OTHER REVIEWS

The Scrutiny Officer to the Committee referred to the current position on the Maternity Services Review in that tracking of recommendations and the action plan from Dudley Group of Hospitals was in hand. An invitation had also been extended to meet the Maternity Services Liaison Committee in May, 2006.

It was further noted that West Midlands Ambulance Service had accepted all the recommendations relevant to that service and that whilst Dudley Primary Care Trusts would respond in April they already had an Improving Maternity Group which was aware of the Review's recommendations and was working with them.

Regarding the Quality and Perceptions of Quality Review it was noted that Councillors Mrs Faulkner and Harley had indicated that they wished to be part of the Project Board and that two Focus Groups had been arranged for April, one with Quality Outcomes Framework Assessors and General Practitioners and the other with patients/users of services.

RESOLVED

That the information reported at the meeting on the current position regarding the reviews indicated, be noted.

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COMMENTS BY CHAIRMAN

As this was the last scheduled meeting of the Committee in the current municipal year the Chairman thanked Members for their help and assistance at meetings of the Committee. In response the Chairman was thanked for the manner in which he had conducted meetings of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 9.05pm

CHAIRMAN