

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Thursday, 28th January, 2010, at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

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

Officers

Assistant Director Policy, Performance and Resources (Lead Officer to the Committee), Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services, Scrutiny Officer (all Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Assistant Director Culture and Leisure (Directorate of the Urban Environment), Interim Assistant Director of Finance (Financial Services and Corporate Finance), (Directorate of Finance, ICT and Procurement), Assistant Director Human Resources and Citizenship and Mrs M Johal (Directorate of Law, Property and Human Resources)

Also in Attendance

Primary Care Trust

Ms Kimara Sharpe – Director of Community Engagement and Primary Care
Ms Caroline Chapman – Dentist
Ms Liz Fisher – Practice Based Commissioning Manager

Dudley Group of Hospitals

Ms Paula Clark – Chief Executive
Mr Andy Rigby – Facility Services Manager

West Midlands Ambulance Service

Mr Peter Murtagh – Commissioning Director
Mr Steve Perry – Divisional Manager
Ms Kate Cullen – Project Manager

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mrs Aston declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 (West Midlands Ambulance Service Review), as her son worked as a paramedic for the West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Councillor K Turner declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 11 (Update on Dudley's Healthy Town Programme) in view of him being the Director/Treasurer of Groundwork Black Country.

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19th November, 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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QUARTERLY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

A report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted on performance in relation to the second quarter of 2009/10, for the period July to September, 2009, for the services under the terms of reference of this Committee.

Arising from the presentation of the report the following queries were raised:-

- With regard to Caring Matters Key Performance Indicator NI146, that stated a total of twelve clients were in paid employment, it was pointed out that both quarter one and quarter two year to date actual, of 1.4%, had remained the same and it was queried how the matter was being addressed.
- Reference was made to Caring Matters Priority CM3, C3.1e, relating to the reconfiguration of care homes and the position with regard to Tiled House was queried.
- As inequality was an item on the national agenda it was questioned what efforts were made to identify those people that wished to work and those that were capable. It was also queried whether there were role models or promotional material available.
- The slight increase in the percentage of obese children was highlighted and it was queried whether Directorates of the Council could be encouraged to offer any assistance and support to help keep the levels down.

The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services responded to the issues, as raised above, and indicated that the current economic climate caused problems in that it was difficult for people to get into employment. However, one or two day work experience placements or part-time employment positions were being created across all Directorates to alleviate the situation. Funding was also being explored to recruit a mentor to help improve the situation further.

With regard to Tiled House, the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services informed the meeting that it had been agreed that the Home would close and efforts were being made to make best use of resources available. It was confirmed that the Home would close sometime next year.

The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services reported that taster sessions and individual plans for people with learning difficulties took place but she indicated that she was not aware of any promotional role models and undertook to look into the issue. With regard to obesity it was indicated that the Obesity Strategy was in the process of being updated. The Director of Community Engagement and Primary Care undertook to speak to the Director of Public Health with regard to providing a response direct to the Member concerned in relation to child obesity.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, and copy of the extracted report circulated separately, on performance in relation to the second quarter of 2009/10, for the period July to September, 2009, for the services under the terms of reference of this Committee, be noted.

REVENUE BUDGET STRATEGY 2010/11

A joint report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Interim Director of Finance was submitted on the proposed Revenue Budget Strategy for 2010/11 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2010/11 to 2012/13.

The Interim Assistant Director of Finance (Financial Services and Corporate Finance) in presenting the report informed the meeting of amendments to the report and indicated that the figures in Appendix C relating to Children and Families Social Services and Other Children's Services should be transposed. It was also reported that the headings on the columns referred to at paragraph 22 of the report should read £'000 and not £m.

Arising from the presentation of the report a Member commented that it was difficult to assess the future impact on the budget due to estimates and assumptions made and concern was raised that sufficient provision had not been made for the future.

The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services commented that financial modelling was complex and there were significant budgetary pressures but it was not intended to reduce levels of service. With regard to home care packages there were further pressures on the budget attributing to lower turnover levels and people living longer. It was also reported that 6,000 people benefited from using Telecare to support them at home and it was intended to further extend this option. The Chairman requested that Telecare be included as a future work programme item for the Committee.

The Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services informed the Committee that a session for Councillors was to be arranged on Transforming Social Care and she undertook to provide Members with details of the event.

The Interim Assistant Director of Finance (Financial Services and Corporate Finance) referred to the contingencies built into the budget and the financial risks recognised in the report. He undertook to provide a written response to the Member concerned on the definition of a furnished property and on the transfer of staff from the Learning and Skills Council.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the information contained in the report, and Appendices to the report, submitted on the Cabinet's Revenue Budget Strategy proposals for 2010/11 and Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2010/11 – 2012/13, be noted and that the Cabinet be informed that there were no observations that this Select Committee wished to make on the proposals presented.
- (2) That "Telecare" be included as a future work programme item for this Committee.

Mr Peter Murtagh – Commissioning Director – gave a presentation on the West Midlands Ambulance Service National Health Service (NHS) Trust Efficiency Review. A copy of the slides had been circulated to Members prior to the meeting.

Arising from queries raised the Commissioning Director explained that there was a shortage of staff not ambulances. Private ambulances that came with a crew had been brought in at a cost for a short period of time. However, this was the first time that private services had been used by the West Midlands Ambulance Service and it was pointed out that other regions used private ambulances on a regular basis.

The Chairman thanked representatives of the West Midlands Ambulance Service for the informed presentation.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the presentation on the West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust Efficiency Review, be noted.

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NHS DENTAL SERVICES IN DUDLEY

A report of the Director of Community Engagement and Primary Care was submitted on dental services in Dudley and the actions being undertaken to improve dental access for this region.

Arising from the presentation of the report the Director of Community Engagement and Primary Care undertook to provide a written response to the Member concerned detailing the associated costs for sending out the birthday cards to all children turning three years of age as stated in the report. However, she indicated that the cost was met from a ring fenced dentistry budget.

A Member suggested reinstating dental check up services that used to be provided for children at school. In responding the Director of Community Engagement and Primary Care reported that work was currently being undertaken with Head Teachers to explore the possibility of extending the role of nurses at school to help promote dental services. Ms Caroline Chapman, Dentist also explained that work was currently being undertaken with Colleges to promote dental services and awareness.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report on NHS Dental Services in Dudley be noted.

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CAR PARK CHARGES AT RUSSELLS HALL HOSPITAL – RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S RESEARCH PAPER

A verbal update report was given by the Chief Executive for Dudley Group of Hospitals in respect of car park charges at Russells Hall Hospital. She explained that a response had been provided on the Trust's position regarding the availability of concessions for patients and their families. The position was that the Trust were very keen to ensure fair access to services and, as such, worked hard with Private Finance Initiative (PFI) partners to provide the best arrangements possible in relation to car park charges and related concessions. It

was reported that difficult decisions had to be made when balancing service provision with cost and affordability. The Trust had, on a number of occasions, compared themselves with other Trusts and in many cases the Trust offered equal or better value for money.

Mr Andy Rigby, Facility Services Manager further explained that the Trust currently offered a 50% reduction to oncology patients and regular visitors and that a concession card was issued. There was also a value card that was offered to visitors, which cost £12.50 per week. It was further reported that a national consultation document on NHS Car Parking was currently underway and parking charges would need to comply according to the outcome.

Members commented that a fee of £12.50 per week was still a lot of money for some people and it was stated that certain hospitals offered free parking for oncology patients. The Chief Executive for Dudley Group of Hospitals reported that there were other modes of transport for patients including a Patients Ambulance Service and that any reduction offered to patients had to be met by the Hospital. It was also indicated that Macmillan Cancer Support offered help including support to people with financial hardship.

Members suggested that efforts be made to promote the availability of concessionary tickets and that staff, particularly in vulnerable areas, such as oncology, be made aware of the reductions as, when people asked employees for advice, they could not guide them, as they were unaware of the specific details.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the verbal update report on Car Park Charges at Russells Hall Hospital, be noted.

UPDATE ON DUDLEY'S HEALTHY TOWN PROGRAMME

A joint report of the Director of Public Health and the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on progress made with the implementation of the Borough's Healthy Town Programme. A Guide to Dudley Borough's Healthy Towns Programme was also circulated at the meeting.

Arising from the presentation of the report a Member expressed concern about the lack of consultation and communication with Councillors on the matter.

The Assistant Director Culture and Leisure Services indicated that the guide, as circulated at the meeting, was a step in the right direction with a view to communicating with Members. The Assistant Director Culture and Leisure Services also undertook, as requested, to circulate to Members details of expenditure in relation to the Programme.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, on progress of the Healthy Towns Programme be noted.

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STROKE SERVICES REVIEW – RESPONSE TO MAIN FINDINGS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A report of the Directorate of Partnerships and Services Development, NHS, Dudley was submitted on activity undertaken to formalise and improve integrated stroke services.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted, on activity undertaken to formalise and improve integrated stroke services, be noted.

The meeting ended at 9:30 pm

CHAIRMAN