
CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, 13.03.12

Present: Councillor Margaret Griffith (Vice-chair)

Councillors: Huw Edwards, Louise Hughes, John Gwilym Jones, Linda Wyn Jones, Keith Greenly-Jones, Jean Forsyth, Sylvia Humphreys, R. Len Jones, Evie Morgan Jones, P.G. Larsen, Tudor Owen, Eryl Jones-Williams and Ann Williams.

Councillor Robert J. Wright was present for item 7 on the agenda.

Councillors: Eric M. Jones and R. H. Wyn Williams (Portfolio Leaders).

Also present: Dafydd Lewis (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Legal Service Manager, for items 1 – 5 on the agenda), Eiliw Llŷr (Housing Strategy Policy Manager), Ann Lloyd Jones (Senior Manager – Adults Services), Einir Roberts (Partners in Care Delivery Manager), Arwel Wyn Owen (Housing Service Manager), Gareth James (Scrutiny Manager) and Ioan Hughes (Committee Officer).

Apologies: Councillors: Peter Read (Chairman) Trevor Edwards, Roy Owen and Councillor Caerwyn Roberts (invited for item 7 on the agenda).

Apologies had also been given by the Head of Housing and Social Services Department.

Attendance: A member expressed concern as meetings of the Care Scrutiny Committee and Preparatory Meetings were being held on the same date as meetings of the Fostering Panel time after time.

She noted that she represented the Care Scrutiny Committee on the Fostering Panel and that the situation was unacceptable.

It was noted that procedures were in place for checking dates of meetings, such as the Fostering Panel, and it was accepted that specific attention could be given to the matter.

Absences: In relation to the apologies, a member noted that not one of the co-opted members was present. He added that this happened on a regular basis and that the situation was a cause for concern.

The Scrutiny Manager noted that nominating people for the Scrutiny Committee in a different way to the working groups was a valid matter to be addressed under the new procedures from May onwards following the elections.

1. Declaration of Personal Interest: The following members declared a personal interest in the following items for the reasons noted:

Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams in item 6 on the agenda (To receive information on the exceptions in accordance with the Offer Document made since Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd was established) as he was a Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd tenant and his wife received home care.

Councillor Margaret Griffith in item 8 on the agenda (Partners in Care – Update) as she was a member of the Mantell Gwynedd Board, which was part of this project.

Councillor Linda Ann Wyn Jones in item 7 on the agenda (Report on the progress of the Pant yr Eithin and Tan y Marian Sites Development Working Group) as she was the Chief Executive of Cwmni Seren and a person referred to in the report attended the company's Day Services.

Councillor Linda Ann Wyn Jones in Item 9 on the agenda (Establishment of a Shadow Regional Collaborative Committee for Supporting People Services) as she was the Chief Executive of Cwmni Seren which received Supporting People funding.

Members did not believe that they were prejudicial interests and they did not withdraw from the chamber during the discussion although they did not take part in the discussion or vote on the matters.

2. Minutes: The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 7 February, 2012 as a true record.

TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON THE PROGRESS MADE ON THE HOUSING STRATEGY AND THE DECISION TAKEN NOT TO FOLLOW THE ORIGINAL TIMETABLE

3. a) Submitted – the report of the Housing Strategy Policy Manager providing an update on the Gwynedd Housing Strategy 2015-16.
- b) She elaborated upon the work undertaken in recent months and noted that it was intended to submit the Strategy as an item in June/July following a consultation period.
- c) Officers responded appropriately to comments made by members and the following main points were noted:
- That the Partnership included representatives of housing associations, estate agents and private landlords;
 - That Gwynedd councillors were also within the Partnership as the Housing Portfolio Leader and the Senior Care Portfolio Leader were members;
 - That a change in the timetable would mean a slippage from April this year to a little later in the year;
 - The Strategy would include all matters involving housing from the Gwynedd perspective, including affordable housing and empty houses, and there would be an opportunity for members of this Scrutiny Committee to suggest any additions.
- d) Dissatisfaction was expressed by members who were of the opinion that this Scrutiny Committee did not receive the full information regarding some matters.

In response, it was noted that matters were submitted before the Scrutiny Committee as and when needed similar to the Housing Strategy Programme.

It was confirmed that the new structure, following the elections in May, would address the matter of communicating information from Partnerships to the Council.

RESOLVED to accept the report and note the information.

4. TO RECEIVE INFORMATION ON THE EXCEPTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OFFER DOCUMENT MADE SINCE CARTREFI CYMUNEDOL GWYNEDD WAS ESTABLISHED.

a) Submitted – the report of the Housing Strategy Policy Manager.

b) She referred to quarterly meetings held with representatives of Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd. She added that there were no exceptions, in terms of progress on the Offer Document, to present in a half year report. An annual report would be presented by Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd in June/July.

c) Members were given an opportunity to make observations and ask questions and attention was drawn to the following main points:

- That promises made regarding the work programme were being broken by Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd;
- That work was being undertaken on some houses within estates and other houses were being ignored;
- That the aforementioned situation caused uneasiness amongst tenants and was completely unacceptable;
- That promises regarding the timetable of the improvements were slipping significantly;
- That a close link needed to be established between councillors and Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd;
- That Gwynedd councillors who were members of the Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd Board needed to submit regular information to the Scrutiny Committee.

Furthermore, a member requested that concerns expressed in relation to hazards involving asbestos dust in relation to the renovation of Glan Cadnant homes in Caernarfon needed to be addressed.

In response to the comments, it was explained that Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd had made one formal request to change the priorities within the work programme. The intention with this was to obtain the right to complete all the work in some houses during one visit and the Council approved the request.

It was emphasised that quarterly monitoring meetings were being held with Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd. Prior to these meetings, the Housing Strategy Policy Manager would contact every Gwynedd councillor to allow them to draw attention to any problems. It was noted that very little response was given to these regular opportunities.

RESOLVED to accept the report and that a request be made for information to be received regarding the 18 promises which remain on the Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd work programme that do not show any progress.

*It was noted that Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams had not participated in the discussion on the above matter.

5. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE PANT YR EITHIN AND TAN Y MARIAN SITES DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

a) Submitted – the report of the Head of Housing and Social Services Department.

b) Members were asked to scrutinise the progress of the work of decommissioning Pant yr Eithin Residential Home, Harlech and developing the site and developments in Tan y Marian, Pwllheli.

c) The member for Pwllheli (south) was given an opportunity to make observations and he drew attention to the following main points:

- That information regarding staff redundancies was a cause for concern;
- That he was under the impression that it was intended to transfer staff from Pant yr Eithin to Tan y Marian in order to make the residents feel more comfortable in their new home;
- That the attempts to support and stabilise the situations of individuals in Tan y Marian needed to be permanent rather than temporary;
- That every effort needed to be made in order to ensure that one resident of Tan y Marian, who had furnished her flat, could stay there;
- He asked for confirmation that the residents of Pant yr Eithin could return there when the improvements had been completed;
- That the representative of Pwllheli (South) Ward needed to be a member of any working group discussing the future of Tan y Marian following the elections in May.

d) The Social Services Portfolio Leader referred to an exhibition of the plans for Pant yr Eithin which was to be held in Harlech later that week. He noted that members would benefit from seeing the exhibition and that there would be an opportunity for them to voice their opinions and ask questions.

e) The Senior Manager – Adults Services noted that plans were being made for every individual in terms of their needs and the support that they needed when moving from Pant yr Eithin to Tan y Marian. Staff from Tan y Marian had already visited Pant yr Eithin and steps had been taken to introduce the individuals to Tan y Marian.

At the end of this period, the situation of every individual and how they had coped with the change would need to be considered and, subsequently, the Provider Department would have to make decisions regarding the number of staff needed in Tan y Marian. This would be done in discussions with the CSSIW as they monitored the situation in order to ensure that the staffing levels at a home were adequate.

f) In relation to the situation of the individual referred to by the local member, the officer confirmed that discussions were being held with the CSSIW regarding increasing the registration of Tan y Marian to enable the individual to remain there.

g) The Senior Manager – Adults Services explained that the situation of every individual would be considered when it was possible for residents to return to Pant yr Eithin. She added that this would not happen for 18 months and the circumstances and needs of individuals could change in the meantime. Consequently, consideration would need to be given to who would want to take advantage of the facilities in Pant yr Eithin and who would want to leave

h) Confirmation was received that the local member would be invited to a meeting of the Working Group in April and this procedure would be expected to continue following the elections in May.

i) Officers responded appropriately to observations made by the members and information regarding the arrangements made for the residents of Pant yr Eithin was presented.

j) Members expressed concern in relation to the situation of the staff and the way in which redundancies could affect the residents being transferred from Pant yr Eithin to Tan y Marian. It was emphasised that information had not been disclosed regarding redundancies prior to this.

k) It was explained that five people resided in Tan y Marian and that it was registered for eight people. It was now hoped that nine could reside there, and the staffing level in the home was around what was needed to cope with this. The need for any addition would be confirmed to the Provider Department by the CSSIW.

l) In response to further observations, the Provider Portfolio Leader said that what was noted was that Pant yr Eithin staff would be protected and he had not received any further information following that.

m) The Corporate Director, Dafydd Lewis, elaborated and noted that the situation derived from the need to act within the decision regarding the future of Pant yr Eithin, in principle. This could mean considering every option in relation to staffing and offering jobs before reaching a situation where redundancies were the only option.

n) To close the discussion, the member for Pwllheli (South) noted that the situation of the staff was vague and a matter of concern. He called for the situation regarding the registration of Tan y Marian to be monitored in detail and for information to be submitted to the working group in April.

RESOLVED to accept the report and note the need for the member for Pwllheli (South) to be a member of the Pant yr Eithin and Tan y Marian Sites Development Working Group.

6. PARTNERS IN CARE

a) Before starting the formal discussion, a member referred in general to what he believed to be a failure to implement decisions taken. He noted that this happened in all fields and he called for his observations to be minuted and for a legal response to be provided.

b) Submitted – the report of the Partners in Care Delivery Manager.

c) The Manager noted that the work of Partners in Care was now coming to an end following the decision to extend the period of the scheme for a year.

d) The Manager emphasised that the extension had been worthwhile and had made an exceptional difference. Despite this, she noted that there had been some difficulties and that attention needed to be drawn to planning on a strategic level with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board.

e) She further noted that strong partnership work had been established and she thanked members for the support provided.

f) Members were asked to scrutinise the progress made and to raise any matters of concern as necessary as well as ending the programme. Attention was drawn to the following main points:

- That the Health Board tended to push responsibilities onto the Council;
- Situations where conflict could occur regarding the responsibilities of Social Services and the Health Board should be avoided;
- That significant confusion existed regarding responsibilities and that all the facts should be made clear to everyone;

- That it must be ensured that accurate information was presented to enable all authorities to be aware of all the proposals and developments;
- That Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board needed to show better co-operation and submit detailed and accurate information to the Council;

The Partners in Care Delivery Manager was thanked for her work in relation to the scheme.

RESOLVED:

i) To accept and note the content of the report and to end the Partners in Care programme

ii) To write to the Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board expressing concern and dissatisfaction regarding the possibility of an increase in the liabilities on the Council and the impact this could have on the Council at a time when it must find savings.

7. ESTABLISHMENT OF A SHADOW REGIONAL COLLABORATIVE COMMITTEE FOR SUPPORTING PEOPLE SERVICES

a) Submitted – the report of the Housing Services Manager.

b) The steps taken since the Welsh Government commissioned an independent review of the Support programme in Wales were outlined.

c) He explained that some changes had occurred since the report was published. He elaborated upon the fact that Gwynedd Council and other Authorities had expressed their objection due to a lack of clear constitution and a lack of clarity regarding financial accountability to the Regional Committee. Consequently, a decision regarding the establishment of the Regional Committees was delayed until such time when more detailed guidelines would be available.

d) In relation to funding arrangements, he noted that the North Wales local authorities were likely to lose £8 million from the Supporting People budgets over the next three years. For Gwynedd, the cuts would be approximately £1.3 million.

e) He added that the way in which the funding had been allocated was a cause of concern. Also, he noted that Gwynedd did not want every service to be regionalised. He noted that small, local organisations had provided a good service in the past, and he did not wish to lose this.

f) A member noted that attention needed to be drawn to the Language Policy in relation to administration even if it dealt with regional work. In response, officers noted that Gwynedd was the only council which was administrated through the medium of Welsh and that this principle

was under threat as collaboration with other councils and authorities increased. Furthermore, reference was made to the efforts made to ensure local flexibility when commissioning services.

RESOLVED to accept and note the content of the report.

8. CARE SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP REPORT

a) Submitted – the report of the Chair of the Working Group, Councillor Peter Read.

b) The main matters considered by members of the Working Group were outlined and the Social Services Portfolio Leader referred specifically to the successful changes undertaken in order to cope with situations when staff suffered from illness.

The Portfolio Leader also thanked the Chair and Vice-chair and all members of the Working Group for their work and the way in which consistent improvement had been secured.

RESOLVED:

i) That the Working Group considers the Report of the Head of Housing and Social Services Department on Sickness Arrangements at its meeting on 23 March and draws up recommendations to the Principal Scrutiny Committee on 29 March;

ii) That the Housing and Social Services Department monitors the seven matters below which were noted by the Inspectorate, on a monthly basis:

- 1. Complete a Statutory Review within the required timetable;**
- 2. Report on Individual plans of Children in Need;**
- 3. Suitable accommodation for users with learning disabilities**
- 4. Managing the risk of adults referrals;**
- 5. Transition from Children Services to Adults Services;**
- 6. Engaging and influencing the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board;**
- 7. Commissioning Plans.**

9. GRATITUDE: At the end of the meeting, the Vice-chair read out observations made by the Chair, who had not been able to attend the meeting.

The Chair expressed his appreciation for the support and co-operation he had been shown over the years. He especially referred to Councillor Pat Larsen and wished her well at the end of a period of half a century as a councillor.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 12.10pm.