
SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

04.06.15

Present:

Councillors: Annwen Daniels, E. Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Elin Walker Jones, Linda Ann Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Peter Read, Ann Williams, Eirwyn Williams and Hefin Williams.

Officers: Arwel Ellis Jones (Senior Manager Corporate Commissioning Service), Gareth James (Members' Manager – Support and Scrutiny) and Glynda O'Brien (Members' Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Also in attendance:

For Items 5, 6 and 7 below

Councillor W. Gareth Roberts, Cabinet Member for Adults and Health
Morwena Edwards, Statutory Director and Corporate Director of Social Services
Aled Davies, Interim Head of Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department
Nia Elis-Williams, Temporary Senior Executive Manager

For Item 6 below:

Olwen Ellis-Jones, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Service Manager
Iona Griffith, Children and Families Service Manager

For Item 7 below:

Meinir Williams, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
Ffion Johnstone, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board

For Item 8 below:

Councillor Gareth Thomas, Cabinet Member for Education
Gwern ap Rhisiart, Senior Manager Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion
Eleri Llewelyn Owen, Project Manager

A welcome was extended to Marc Roberts, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales and Fflur Jones, Wales Audit Office to the meeting.

Apologies: Councillors Alan Jones Evans, Dewi Owen, Mrs Rita Price (The Catholic Church), Mr Neil Foden (Teachers' Union).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Resolved: To re-elect Councillor Peter Read as Chair of this Committee for the year 2015/16.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

Resolved: To re-elect Councillor Beth Lawton as Vice-chair of this Committee for the year 2015/16.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Linda Ann Wyn Jones declared a personal interest in Item 8 – Changes in the Learning Disability Services, however, she would not withdraw from the Chamber unless there was a specific discussion regarding learning disabilities during this item.

4. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee that took place on 16 April 2015.

5. THE FUTURE VISION AND DIRECTION OF THE ADULT SERVICE

A report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health, outlining the future vision and direction of the Adult Service focusing specifically on the field of care for older people.

The Cabinet Member for Adults and Health outlined the background and stated that a huge change was in the pipeline not only in Gwynedd, but for the whole of Wales. He noted that a change of direction was vitally important and the key driver for change was the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, together with the views of older people about the type of services and provision they wish to see in their old age. It was necessary to conduct comprehensive work with users and at the same time the financial cuts could not be ignored and if they sought to safeguard the current situation this meant financial savings in other fields.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were highlighted by individual Members:

- a) Dual registration had been discussed several times in the past and concern was expressed regarding the current system with patients being discharged from hospital to residential care homes for intermediate care and staff without appropriate qualifications to safeguard patients' needs. It was further felt that this was a means for the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to get patients out of hospital sooner.
- b) Disgruntledness that persons who had worked and contributed financially throughout their lives had to pay for care whilst others received it free of charge.
- c) That older people were eager to be independent for as long as possible before their health deteriorated.
- d) The above comment was supported and it was added that the infrastructure was not correct and individuals accessed the service when they were in crisis.

- e) It was suggested that it would be beneficial for the Members of this Committee to receive a copy of the Social Services and Well-being Act together with training on the implications of the Act.
- f) The contents of the report disregarded the needs of older people and certain sections were frivolous.
- g) Whilst recognising that the principles and the vision were excellent, concern was shared on how this would be implemented at grassroots and how accountability would be ensured.
- h) Whilst agreeing that persons were eager to live independently it had to be recognised that the service had a responsibility if they were suffering and in the end this would be more costly.
- i) Concern that young doctors were not keen to work as GPs especially in rural areas.
- j) It was stated that the need for care provision was increasing for incomers who move into the countryside and need a care provision as they have no family support living nearby.
- k) The telecare service was vital to many older people.
- l) That the respite care provision in Arfon was insufficient and there was a genuine need for such a provision for carers.
- m) The importance of collaboration with the third sector and reference was made to schemes such as the "Befriending Scheme" that was a very successful provision.

The Cabinet Member for Adults and Health and the officers responded to the above observations as follows:

- (i) They sympathised with individuals who had saved throughout their lives and had to pay for the provision, however, they had to comply with the regulations of the law in this case.
- (ii) They tried not to overly protect adults which would result in deterioration and the idea was for adults to be more physically and mentally active and consequently this would reduce brain deterioration.
- (iii) The wishes of older people who were keen to remain in their own homes had to be respected.
- (iv) That the appendices to the report presented a picture of the type of information collected as examples and they tried to emphasise that cases had to be dealt with in a different way as a result of the changes and this would not only have an impact on staff but also on third sector organisations.
- (v) That the Welsh Government website stressed the importance of giving attention to the wishes of the individual and this was in compliance with the 'Ffordd Gwynedd' strategy.
- (vi) That the Act created a far reaching change and the importance of safeguarding the most vulnerable individuals was stated. It was further noted that there was a risk to safeguard those who do not require the provision and it was important to listen to individuals and provide in accordance to their needs. Individuals could not receive a statutory service before they needed it and therefore the importance of getting the equation correct by safeguarding the most vulnerable people with a series of preventative services was noted. It was stressed that it was important for everyone to play their role as elected Members and officers and to work together in order to succeed.
- (vii) In response to a query by a Member regarding the exact figure in terms of the number of beds in Residential Care Homes in Gwynedd, it was promised that the details would be sent directly to the Member together with information about the waiting list.

- (viii) That there was no specific scheme for respite care provision and they would look at how the development could contribute to this.
- (ix) The first step was to complete the 'Beginning to End' piece of work and they would then be in a situation to submit a report to this Scrutiny Committee in September.

Resolved: (a) To request that the Interim Head of Adults, Health and Well-being organises in consultation with the Training Unit for Members of this Scrutiny Committee to receive training on the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

(b) To request that the Corporate Director and Statutory Director of Social Services presents:

- (i) details regarding the plans afoot within the Strategic Plan to the preparatory meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on 28 July 2015.**
- (ii) a report on the 'Beginning to End' scheme to the next meeting of this Scrutiny Committee on 22 September 2015.**

6. CHANGES IN THE LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICE

- a) A report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health in response to a series of questions asked by the Scrutiny Committee stemming from the changes in the Learning Disabilities Service.
- b) The Cabinet Member reported that it was necessary to transform the above service in order to ensure that innovative support is offered in Gwynedd. In addition, it was necessary to introduce changes which will find savings, but more importantly, improve the outcome for the individual. Communication and promoting the changes and ensuring support and understanding of individuals and their families, staff and providers both internally and externally were key and led to effective cooperation to reach the aim and ensure better services for the needs of individuals.
- c) During the ensuing discussion the following points were noted by individual Members:
 - i. That they should press for confirmation from the Welsh Government regarding finance to extend the provision for autistic persons.
 - ii. The importance of informing parents / individuals / service users when it was necessary to re-organise meetings.
 - iii. Whilst supporting the vision to promote individuals to be independent there was concern regarding the impact at grassroots level and specifically supporting individuals with learning disabilities who go into the world of work and as a result lose benefits.
 - iv. It was asked what would Gwynedd Council do as a postholder (Autism Key Worker) had resigned, to ensure that persons with learning disabilities received a worthy service.
 - v. The report was welcomed, however, it was noted that there were lessons to be learnt and reference was made to activities previously offered to persons with learning disabilities specifically at Ysgol Botwnnog and the tree nursery at Glynllifon that gave individuals a feeling of self-worth and were also beneficial.
 - vi. Cuts to the learning disabilities service would have a detrimental impact on individuals.

- vii. Every Member should be encouraged to receive training on autism and how to deal with individuals.
- viii. There was no reference to parents / families in the report and it was felt that they were being disregarded.
- ix. A request for representatives with learning disabilities / mental health / autism to meet the Scrutiny Committee in order to hear their views and to come to understand and raise the Committee's awareness of their needs.
- x. Concern as a result of the changes between Gwynedd / Anglesey that individuals might lose out on services.

(d) The Cabinet Member for Adults and Health and the officers responded to the observations made by individual Members as follows:

- a) It was explained that the 'Key Ring' model was national and gave arm's length volunteer support to persons with learning disabilities and they were available if any emergency arose. The scheme was not in operation in Gwynedd, however, it was further noted that it was necessary to be more innovative in the schemes available but it had to be borne in mind that each one was not suitable for Gwynedd due to the County's geographical nature.
- b) It was explained that in terms of further finance to fund the post of Support and Community Monitoring, it was recognised that the situation was difficult and that a message had been sent to the Welsh Government for early information regarding this.
- c) Further to the above, it was noted that £40,000 would be transferred to Gwynedd and it was hoped to use part of this funding for a post, up to 31 March, with the remainder directed to the children's service to train staff on how to deal with children on the autistic spectrum. It was added that it would be possible to express a view regarding the financial situation as part of the Cuts Workshops that were currently proceeding.
- d) It was recognised that it was necessary to build upon strengths as well as to respect the views of individuals when developing the new models over the next three years.
- e) In terms of assessing the needs of individuals who are children and once they had grown to be adults, an assurance was given that there was a very good relationship with the Adults Service and there were systems and guidance in place that were regularly reviewed. It was the responsibility of the Children's Team to refer children when they are 14 years old to the Forums in order that the Adults Service can forward plan for them. It was confirmed that it was difficult to deal with cases with very complex needs and further consideration was required as finance was directed from different sources.
- f) That the Advocacy Service assisted vulnerable people to choose home insurance and similar matters.
- g) 243 adults with learning disabilities had used the advocacy service over the last financial year and groups met regularly across the county.
- h) The Out of Hours /Weekend Team was available for twenty four hours if individuals were in Police custody.
- i) That following consultation with the Service there would be a discussion at the next preparatory meeting of the Scrutiny Committee on the best way to engage and meet service users.
- j) Regarding staff morale, that uncertainty and concern about the future dealt more with the financial situation generally rather than the changes afoot in the service. The Head of Service noted that although he had been in post for only a brief period, the enthusiasm and understanding of the staff for change had heartened him.
- k) It was recognised that formal monitoring arrangements were not in place and attention needed to be given to this and an assurance was given that any situations

would be identified if there were concerns via the networks of the Management Teams within individual services.

Resolved: (a) To accept and note the contents of the report.

(b) To request that the Service provides a draft plan on engagement arrangements with users to hear their views for discussion at this Scrutiny Committee's preparatory meeting.

7. SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION – FROM HOSPITAL TO THE HOME PART 2

a) The Vice-chair chaired the above item in order that the Chair, Cllr Peter Read, could present the above report and Meinir Williams and Ffion Johnstone from the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board were welcomed to the meeting to respond to the queries / observations of the Scrutiny Committee.

b) The final draft report was presented by Cllr. Peter Read, Chair of the Scrutiny Investigation 'From Hospital to the Home', that focused on the arrangements for discharging and transferring patients home from hospital. The Chair thanked Health Board staff for their excellent cooperation together with the officers of various Council Departments who added value to the Investigation's results and recommendations.

c) The Members' Support and Scrutiny Manager stated that the draft report before them contained the fruits of the Scrutiny Investigation's labour that was commissioned by this Scrutiny Committee and attention was drawn to the following points:

- The nature of the report was different to the usual, mainly due to two reports regarding defective provision and scrutiny work that became evident in England. Guidance was received to trial different ways of conducting scrutiny investigations to try and maximise the voice of the people within the Service and from the report it could be seen that there was more analysis and interpretation of data leading to the main recommendations to be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health and the Health Board.
- An apology was given for leaving out a reference in the report to a visit made by two members of the Investigation to the Ageing Well Centre at Cricieth.

(d) Any observations from the Scrutiny Committee on the main findings outlined in the report would be welcomed and the following points were noted:

1. Whilst accepting that Gwynedd performed well on the whole in terms of national comparison on the measure of transferring patients in a timely manner from hospital to the community, it was noted that problems were manifested during the weekends.

In response, a representative from the Health Board explained that the weekends proved difficult in the transfer of patients during the summer due to the lack of Social Workers at the hospital over the weekend but this had worked well over the winter. It was further noted that work was on-going on the above, however, the Health Board had more challenges regarding homes unable to receive patients back over the weekend due to staffing levels as well as the transfer of patients to community hospitals.

2. A representative of the Health Board recognised that drafting a **care plan** was her priority this year.

3. The need to collaborate with the **Third Sector** especially in the areas of Dwyfor and Meirionnydd.
4. It was agreed that there was room for improvement in terms of **discharging patients on the weekends**.
5. That there was a need to reconcile the arrangements and have a plan to discharge patients, with packs for them to take home from Bronglais Hospital for residents from the south of Gwynedd.
6. Regarding the **shortage of general practitioners and nurses** it was stated:
 - There was discontent that there was no compliance by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board with the written policies and was happening at grassroots level. It was found that there was a new protocol where a patient is discharged from hospital and if the patient requires nursing care then the carers are required to find a nursing care home for the patient within five days with at least one empty bed in one of the homes, although the home might not be the patient's first choice.
 - What were the criteria and the qualifications of nursing staff in terms of intermediate care in residential homes?
 - Concern that hospital staff were not aware of the discharging policy.
 - Concern that nurses did not attend residential homes in some areas and doctors were not available either and were dependent on a locum who did not know the patients.
 - Is the Health Board working with the Colleges for the recruitment of general practitioners / nurses?
 - That the authority had supported the call to have a Doctors Training Unit at the University, however, the funding earmarked by the Welsh Government had been diverted.
 - The importance of the Welsh Language in order that a patient can choose the language he/she is confident to speak.

The representative from the Health Board responded to the above by explaining:

- That the discharge policy was national and the Health Board had a difficult time to ensure that the patient received correct care once he/she was out of hospital. It was noted that beds in residential and nursing homes across North Wales were closing every week and the situation was critical. The policy stated that if the patient was anxious to go to a nursing home for a long term then it was necessary for them to go to a community hospital. It was recognised that it was not easy to respond to this situation, however, the wish was for every patient to receive the provision of their choice.
- That an assessment of the patient would be undertaken in terms of nursing needs or residential care. In some cases where not as much nursing care was required, community nurses could assist but certainly a plan was required to meet the patient's care needs.
- That the Health Board had met with Dwyfor/Meirionnydd doctors and had resolved to use some of the money for recruitment in different ways to try and attract young doctors with the promise that they would be developed to specialise in different fields be that care expertise and/or working with specialist consultants. For nurses, it was trusted that they could work jointly with district

nurses and others in the family surgery. Assurance was given that the above matter was a priority to try and attract more young health workers into the area.

7. It was agreed that there was too much **bureaucracy**, however, the Health Board representative added that there was good local cooperation with Social Services and both bodies challenged each other. It was trusted that through 'Ffordd Gwynedd' bureaucracy could be disposed of and the patient would be central.

(e) Attention was drawn to the main recommendations of the Scrutiny Investigation as outlined in the report and the following additional comment was noted:

- That the recommendation regarding the lack of doctors and nurses needed to be strengthened as the situation was critical and the concern was that students tended to study medicine in England and consequently stayed there once they had qualified.

(f) The Cabinet Member for Adults and Health and the Chief Executive of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board were requested to act on the recommendations by drafting a joint Action Plan by July 2015, with an expected progress report in January 2016.

(g) In response, the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health thanked the Member for the report and noted that the best way forward was to refer this to the County Forum for attention. The Health Board representative added that it would be difficult to provide the Action Plan by July as the County Forum would not meet soon. The agreed timetable regarding the Action Plan would be discussed at the County Forum. In addition, it was confirmed that Councillor Peter Read, Chair of the Scrutiny Investigation, together with the Members' Support and Scrutiny Manager would be invited. In response to a query regarding the membership of the County Forum, it was explained that it was limited in numbers in case it got too big and was currently focusing on the transformation of the service to older people, however, assurance was given that if there were specific items regarding mental health/learning disabilities then members and experts would be invited as required.

(h) For further information, it was noted:

- By the Corporate Director and Statutory Director of Social Services that she together with the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health served on the Mid-Wales Health Board and it would be possible to respond to some of the recommendations by cooperation with that Board.
- By the Members' Support and Scrutiny Manager that arrangements were on-going to hold a special meeting of this Scrutiny Committee in July to discuss engagement and consultation with the Health Board.

The Scrutiny Investigation was thanked for its work and specifically Councillor Peter Read and the Members' Support and Scrutiny Manager and his team for leading the investigation.

Resolved: (a) **To accept and note the contents of the report.**

(b) **To approve:**

- (i) **The recommendations outlined in the Scrutiny Investigation Report From Hospital to the Home together with the comments made in (d) and (e) above.**
- (ii) **To submit the final report to the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health and the Chief Executive of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to implement the recommendations by drafting a joint Action Plan by a time schedule to be agreed by the County Forum.**

8. UPDATE – ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INCLUSION STRATEGIC REVIEW

- (a) A brief update was presented by the Cabinet Member for Education stemming from the review of the provision of additional learning needs and inclusion.
- (b) The Cabinet Member for Education explained that there had been good progress made with support to the review. Despite this he was of the view that more work needed to be achieved in terms of clarification to the workforce regarding the model. It was proposed to submit a report to the Cabinet in June but it was felt that the timetable was premature and now it was proposed to submit the report to the Cabinet in September 2015. In the meantime, it was noted that a special meeting had been arranged on 11 June 2015 with an invitation extended to the Additional Learning Needs Task Group (established by the Services Scrutiny Committee) together with Gwynedd members of the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee and some Cabinet Members. It was further noted that a date had been specified on 15 June 2015 for the Additional Learning Needs Task Group to consider any further observations they wished to discuss stemming from the meeting on 11 June.
- (c) The Senior Manager Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion added that the strategy review was timely and attention should be given to the following three elements:
 - Upskilling teachers to provide for the needs of the pupils in order to make a difference
 - Collaboration with parents to enable them to assist in some way
 - Support children in the classroom
- (d) In response to a query by a Member regarding the number who attended the information fairs, that attendance was disappointing and it was noted that there were a combination of reasons for this.
- (e) In terms of the membership of the Additional Learning Needs Task Group, it was approved for Councillor Gweno Glyn to continue to be a member following her recent departure from the Services Scrutiny Committee.

Resolved: (a) To accept and note the contents of the report.

(b) To approve that Councillor Gweno Glyn continues to be a member of the Additional Learning Needs Task Group.

The meeting commenced at 10:30 a.m. and concluded at 12:45 p.m.

CHAIR