

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
INDIVIDUALS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford  
6 November 2012 (7.00 - 8.05 pm)**

**Present:**

Councillors Wendy Brice-Thompson (Chairman), June Alexander (Vice-Chair), Jeffrey Brace, Pam Light, Linda Van den Hende and Keith Wells

Officers present:

David Cooper, Head of Service – Adult Social Care  
Annette Froud, Service Manager – Adults with Learning Disabilities  
Bob Morgan, Service Manager – Adult Social Care

**21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no apologies for absence.

**22 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

There were no declarations of interest.

**23 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman gave details of the arrangements in case of fire or other event requiring the evacuation of the meeting room.

**24 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

It was noted that Councillor Van den Hende was not present at the meeting held on 18 October 2012 and had sent her apologies. The minutes were otherwise agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

There were no matters arising.

## 25 **LEARNING DISABILITIES DAY SERVICES UPDATE**

The Committee's topic group that had examined the proposed changes to day services had asked for a progress report to be given approximately one year after the changes had been implemented. Officers advised the Committee that the closure of St. Bernard's Day Centre had been very successful. The building was due to finally close on 10 December and transfers of service users to the new facilities had been very positive. Five staff had been made redundant with four officers redeployed.

Havering was now represented on the 'Dot Community' website which allowed service users to rate the day opportunities they had used. Work was also underway with partners such as Mencap and the Shaw Trust to improve the pathway into work for people with learning disabilities. Three service users were now in employment.

There was an extended education programme at the new 100 Avelon Place building and also a framework contract with other boroughs to support travel training for people with learning disabilities. Other partnership work was also available to access mainstream services such as Mencap's accessing theatre project. There were also possible employment opportunities for service users via partnership work with Hornchurch Country Park.

The former Nason Waters and Western Road services had been amalgamated at 100 Avelon Road which was due to formally open on 14 November. The project team for the building had included service users, carers and outside organisations. Officers confirmed that the Western Road site had now been sold.

An open day had been held on 4 November where very positive feedback had been received from clients concerning the new building. Toilets in the new building were a big improvement from the former site and there was also a Changing Places toilet available.

Transport arrangements to Avelon Road had been monitored over the previous four weeks and all but one issue had now been resolved. Five people had already asked to undertake travel training which would also reduce any transport difficulties. Services were now offered for longer hours – 9 am to 4 pm but service users could also attend for e.g. half a day if they wished. Officers thanked the Committee for their support of this work and confirmed that there was now positive support for the new services from both service users and carers.

Interviews had been held for the post of manager of the new centre but no appointment had been made as it was felt the applicants had not been of sufficient quality. Officers added that the current interim manager was very experienced and had a lot of interpersonal skills. There were also six support posts in areas such as cleaning and gardening that were open to service users. Job descriptions had been drawn up and these opportunities were being progressed with the Rose Project and Mencap.

Several Members reported that they knew attendees at 100 Avelon Road who, while initially reluctant, had since become very happy with the services offered and enjoyed attending the new facilities. Officers accepted that support still had to be offered to people who were more institutionalised but felt that service users should also be challenged where appropriate. Members also reported that clients at 100 Avelon Road were enthusiastic about being asked for their choice of activities etc.

The Committee **agreed** that a presentation with more details on the planned travel training should be scheduled for the Committee's meeting in spring 2013.

Officers clarified that the new centre covered the capacities of both the previous buildings but now offered more activities. Little work had been done thus far with the local community although connections had been made with the rangers in Hornchurch Country Park and also with Rainham Village. An open day or fete was planned for the summer and it was also hoped to hold three open garden weekends per year where fruit and vegetables could be sold. Officers felt that having the Changing Places toilet on site would also help support other activities in the local community.

The Committee **noted** the update.

## 26 **DIAL A RIDE**

The Committee discussed the continuing problems with the Dial a Ride service in Havering including the continuing high level of trip requests not being fulfilled as evidenced by Dial a Ride's own data. Other problems included very low incidents of multi-passenger scheduling and Dial a Ride refusing to work with the Council to seek to improve the situation.

It was noted that Dial a Ride had refused to supply information sought by the Committee, even under a Freedom of Information request. Members had also observed local Dial a Ride vehicles parked up seemingly for several hours at a time without moving. It was noted that both Council officers and the Havering Dial a Ride member representative were continually trying to get the organisation to improve its performance. A further problem was felt to be that Dial a Ride was using a sub-standard computer system for its bookings.

It was therefore **agreed** to convene an informal meeting of members of the Committee together with the relevant Council officer and the Dial a Ride member representative for Havering in order to agree a way forward. The committee officer would arrange the meeting and circulate the date in due course.

**27      IMPACT OF SERVICES ON THE ELDERLY TOPIC GROUP**

The terms of reference of the topic group were **agreed** by the Committee unanimously as follows:

*Following the Ageing Well Event, the Committee wish to understand the impact that housing services have on older people generally, older people with disabilities and vulnerable residents in Havering, together with finding out about services available for these groups and how they can be accessed.*

It was noted that officers were currently working on a schedule of visits for Members to various types of housing developments in Havering designed for elderly people.

**28      URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

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**Chairman**