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LONDON BOROUGH

INDIVIDUALS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

7.00 pm	**Tuesday 6 November 2012**	**Town Hall, Main Road, Romford**

Members 6: Quorum 3

COUNCILLORS:

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

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AGENDA ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) – received.

2 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any pecuniary interest in any items on the agenda at this point in the meeting.

Members may still disclose any pecuniary interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

4 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 October 2012 and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5 LEARNING DISABILITIES DAY SERVICES UPDATE

The Committee will receive a presentation giving an update on the Learning Disabilities Day Services.

6 DIAL A RIDE

The Committee will receive a statement of the current position in relation to Dial a Ride.

7 IMPACT OF SERVICES ON THE ELDERLY TOPIC GROUP

The Committee are asked to approve the Terms of Reference for the Impact of Services on the Elderly Topic Group. *(to follow)*

8 FUTURE AGENDAS

Committee Members are invited to indicate to the Chairman, items within this Committee's terms of reference they would like to see discussed at a future meeting. Note: it is not considered appropriate for issues relating to individuals to be discussed under this provision.

9 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other items in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the minutes, that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

Ian Buckmaster
Committee Administration &
Member Support Manager

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
INDIVIDUALS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
9 October 2012 (7.00 - 8.50 pm)

Present:

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jeffrey Brace

12 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 3 July 2012 and the Special Committees held on 2 August 2012 and 6 September 2012 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

13 **AGEING WELL THEMES**

The Committee discussed the briefing note which had been prepared by Committee Administration on the topics that other Overview and Scrutiny Committees would be scrutinising as part of their work programme following the successful Ageing Well Event.

The Committee agreed that they would wish to form a topic group to scrutinise the Impact of Services on the Elderly. Thought would be given to the basis of the topic group, and dates would be circulated for the first meeting.

It was agreed that there would be a number of issues that could be scrutinised including elderly people who live alone and who do not have any family to support/ assist them with everyday tasks e.g. cleaning.

14 **ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE AND ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee received the Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure and Annual Report. There had been some procedural changes to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) duty, as the LGO powers had been extended to investigate self-funder complaints in domiciliary care agencies and residential/nursing homes.

Officers explained that sometimes safeguarding and complaints overlapped, and therefore a draft protocol had been produced but required input from both Health and the Police. Once finalised the protocol would be included as an appendix to the procedures.

The Committee noted that when enquiries were passed to the Ombudsman they were generally referred back to the Local Authority where possible so that the issues could be resolved locally. Of three cases that had not been completed not premature, two had been discontinued where the Ombudsman had found that the local authority had acted appropriately and the other found no maladministration after investigation. The outcome of the ongoing investigation was recently received where injustice was remedied with a settlement of £1,500.

The Committee noted that the total number of complaints had gone down over the last 4 years; however there were more informal complaints, which were resolved much quicker. Concerns were raised about the number of complaints received for Reablement. This was partly a result of the recent changes and challenges that the service had been subject to. Due to a restructuring, this had had an impact on staff, which in turn had a detrimental affect on the service.

A member raised concerns that the Learning Disabilities Team had a 50% increase in complaints. Officers explained that there had been a change in provision, and people do not like change this resulted in a number of complaints. Members asked if this was an impact of the closure of one of the day opportunities that the Committee had scrutinised. Officers explained that this was not the case.

Officers explained complaints about residential nursing homes, involving respite placements which may lead to a safeguarding investigation. It may be concluded that there should be reimbursement. In one case the home were asked to pay back the cost to the client as the respite care was not up to standard. The majority of complaints in this and domiciliary care were due to quality of service and the attitude of staff. It was however found that this was in terms of the expectations of the family as to the actual provision of care. Staff had been advised to make clear exactly what is in the care plan so there is a clear expectation of what service would be provided.

Members asked if cleaning was included in a care plan. Officers stated that this was not normally included, however there was some flexibility in how direct payments could be used, and therefore the client could use this to pay a member of their family to clean for them. Officers explained that in particular circumstances, due to neglect, a cleaning agency could be sent in.

The Committee discussed the response times and noted that the response within 10 days and 10 to 20 days figures had dropped from last year. There had however been an increase in responses over 20+ days. These did however related to more complex complaints.

Members noted how complainants were contacting the service. There was an increase in letters and a decrease in email; this was attributed to the age profile of the borough. They also noted that there had been 56 compliments made, which equated to about half of the complaints figure.

Members asked if complaints and compliments were address to the correct person, or if they were passed around. Officers explained that most are sent direct to the Head of Service which were then sent to the complaints team, however not all staff had access to CRM which was where all correspondence was logged. The Committee asked if a list of who does what in Adult Social Care could be provided to the Committee.

Officers explained that all correspondence is logged as often complainants write in themselves, but may also write to their local councillor or MP, who also contact the service on the complainant's behalf, but for the same issue.

The Committee considered the Complaints Action Plan. Officers explained the action being taken for each of the issues identified, and informed the Committee that the action plan is reviewed regularly with the operational management group.

The Committee thanked officers for a very informative report.

15 ACTIVATE HAVERING

The Committee received a report on the Activate Havering Project which was aimed at strengthening voluntary action in Havering, by maximising community assets and co-ordinating volunteering, as well as tackling social exclusion experienced by many older people.

Officers explained that the Havering Strategic Partnership had allocated a one off amount of its Performance Reward Grant funding to develop a project called "Unlocking the Potential of Local Support Networks and Volunteers in Havering". The project, known as Activate Havering, built upon the vast array of local voluntary sector support networks that existed in Havering.

Six weeks of fact finding and research were carried out to find out what people needed and wanted in Havering. This was in response to the Over 65 Outreach Project findings which identified loneliness and isolation as a key concern of older people in Havering. After carrying out the research into other projects the approach to Activate Havering included:

- A "social membership" scheme to improve older peoples social networks to prevent isolation.

- A co-ordinated approach to volunteering to enhance volunteering opportunities and provide more opportunities for local people to get involved.

- Delivery of a sustainable handyperson service to carry out minor household repairs to ensure older people can be safe at home, a key element of the "Prevention" agenda.

- A consortia solution to befriending, which involved providing trained and vetted volunteers to visit older, and other vulnerable people.

- Work with Havering's diverse faith sector to strengthen the support they are able to give to families and older people within their communities.

- Maximising the use of council and borough facilities by linking and promoting services through the new and existing structures and building upon the work of Care Point.

The Committee were informed that the Havering Circle: A "Social Membership" Scheme had been established to combat social exclusion. A Community Interest Company, called "Participle" had been commissioned to develop a Membership Scheme which promoted social activities and independence in later life. Other initiatives included a co-ordinated approach to volunteering which would include Cold Weather Befrienders and Community Clean-ups.

The Help Not Hospital project was outlined. This was a twelve month health and social care funded project, which provided support to people who did not currently meet the "Fair Access to Care Services" criteria. A contract was awarded to The British Red Cross and the project was initiated on 3 September 2012. The aim of the project was to reduce and prevent unplanned hospital admissions, admissions to residential and nursing home care, delays or elimination of the need of residential care and to increase independence skills of people within the community.

Other projects included Havering Safer Homes – this was the provision of a handyperson service. Previously this service had been free of charge however this was not financially sustainable in the current environment of reduced government funding. Charging would be introduced on a tiered basis taking into account disposable income, with those more able to pay making a greater contribution in order not to deter people from using the service. The individual financial assessment would not be intrusive with only a sample of cases being reviewed.

Befriending/ Faith Sector – It was anticipated that if befriending services across the borough were to work more closely, this would achieve potential efficiencies through economies of scale. It was also recognised that faith organisations play an important role in developing community resilience, however they were difficult to engage with and a faith outreach survey would be carried out to identify the current capacity of the faith community;

and to seek the faith sector's views on the support they may need in tackling isolation and exclusion in older age.

The Committee noted that a number of activities had been negotiated with existing partners; these included the Havering Museum developing an Activate Havering Variety Club designed to meet the needs of Havering residents who are isolated and aged 50+. Negotiations with Sports Leisure Management, the Council's leisure centre operator, had resulted in the provision of free swimming and other benefits at specified off peak times for those aged 50 years and over; Age Concern Havering had also promoted Activate Havering through their Older Peoples Day held on 1 October 2012.

Officers explained that they were still building on the project to try to make it a more holistic service, including looking at energy efficient matters. Activate Havering will be included in the Council pre-retirement course run by the borough for staff, and volunteers will explain the community activities available for people who are retiring and wish to have community integration.

The Committee thanked officers for the informative report and asked that an update be brought back to the committee in six months time.

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Chairman

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