

Public Document Pack

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE INDIVIDUALS OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE Town Hall, Main Road, Romford 8 October 2013 (7.00 - 8.45 pm)

Present:

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

Ian Buckmaster from HealthWatch Havering was also present at the meeting.

6 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2013 were then agreed, subject to one minor change to the attendees (Hamad Patel from HealthWatch Havering was also present). The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

7 CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE

The Committee noted the revised membership, and welcomed Councillor Denis O'Flynn to the meeting.

8 LEARNING DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT

The Committee received an interesting presentation on Learning Disability Employment from the Community Learning Disability Team Manager. The national and local factors about disabled people in employment were explained. In England only 6.4% of people with moderate to severe learning disabilities know to adult social services are in paid employment, this is far lower than the employment rate for all working age disabled people (46.3%) and the working age population in England (76.4%).

Officers informed the Committee that the term "Learning Disability" can vary in meaning, depending on the source.

A Community Care Magazine "A life like any other" campaign in May 2007 showed that of those people with a learning disability 22% had a paid job and 66% would like a paid job. The Committee were informed that the position had not changed significantly in the last 6 years.

The reasons for engaging people with learning disabilities in employment were explained, they included:

- Social inclusion
- Improved financial situations
- Opening up another source of friends and social contacts
- Increase in self-esteem
- Integration
- It is what people with learning disabilities want.

The Committee was informed that there were a number of barriers and challenges in getting people with learning difficulties into employment, the largest being parental attitude and the education of employers. However there was a good business case for employing people with learning disabilities since they were a valuable resource, reliable, committed and highly motivated to get a job done.

Nationally, the Office for Disability Issues was working with various government departments on a number of projects which attempted to address getting people with learning disabilities into employment. These included:

- Project Search, which helped people with learning disabilities secure and keep permanent jobs through a series of work rotations with a host employer
- “Getting a Life”, which aimed to identify and tackle the issues young people with learning disabilities face when they left education so they could get a job and enjoy a full life.
- Jobs First, a one year project with six demonstration sites in England (this was still in the development stages).

Locally, the Council had recruited 29 people with learning disabilities into paid positions in various departments across the council. An employment champion was identified in Human Resources so that activity could be coordinated. The Council also worked closely with the local Supported Employment services i.e. ROSE Programme. Often “job-carving” was needed, so that specific tasks of jobs could be set out specifically for the employee. This included re-writing some of the job descriptions as well as ensuring that they were accessible and easy to apply for.

Officers shared successful case studies of people whom, through various support and organisations that the Council work with, have moved into paid employment.

A member asked if there was sufficient preparation in education establishments for young people with learning disabilities about entering employment. Officers explained that generally all pupils were treated the same in mainstream education. Offers of alternative avenues included the continuation of education or a day provision. It was found that the

mainstream curriculum did not always fit with the needs of those with learning difficulties, and that Education 4 Employment was a project which assisted people with learning difficulties to make the transition.

Officers explained that voluntary work has a role to play on the pathway to employment, as it was often a good place to start. This built on the self-esteem and confidence of the individual before they start in paid employment.

A member mentioned “The Depot” at Dycorts School. This centre assisted in the building of skills needed for work for students with learning disabilities. These included hairdressing, bicycle repairs and beauty. The staff at the centre were very committed to getting successful outcomes for the students, however this was a very low funded project, but one which could possible help others.

A member asked if the larger supermarket chains provided employment for people with learning disabilities. Officers stated that they do, however they often register with a certain agency i.e. Shaw Trust, who then provide the employee. This means that people on the ROSE programme for example could not access the vacancies.

Officers stated that they were trying to broaden the jobs available to people with learning disabilities and not just gardening, cleaning, catering etc. The Committee also noted that feedback from the ROSE project stated that employees were more in favour of part time position, due to tolerance, concentration and the welfare system. If they worked more than 16 hours, this would affect their benefits, which often assisted them to live independently.

The Committee raised concerns about how parental attitude could be tackled. Officers stated that they were visiting some of the special schools about the flexibility and choice available upon leaving education, and ensuring that there is a support system in place. Within the education establishments, expectations were not built in early enough, and therefore the transition was not as easy. Officers felt that intervention and preparation needed to start at around 10 years old so that the transition can be smoother, however there was still some children with a very high level of need, who may not be able to enter paid employment.

9 WINTERBOURNE VIEW HOSPITAL

The Committee received a presentation from the Community Learning Disability Services Manager on the Winterbourne View Hospital. The Hospital was exposed on a BBC Panorama programme in May 2011, where a catalogue of bad practice and abuse was exposed. This included:

- Douching patients with water whilst fully clothed
- Poking patients in the eye
- Water from flower vase being poured over a patients head
- Mouthwash poured over patients
- Hitting and slapping of patients
- Pulling patients across the floor
- Patients being held down and pinned under a chair.

The Committee agreed with this happening in 2011, it was understandable why there was so much parental resilience to the previous item, given the abuse highlighted at Winterbourne View.

Following the Panorama Programme a number of safeguarding boards were established together with reviews of the hospital. Criminal proceedings were taken against the care workers in the hospital. 6 out of 11 care workers admitted a total of 38 charges of neglect or abuse of patients had been jailed. 5 others were given suspended sentences.

Officers added that all staff employed at Winterbourne View were qualified to carry out the care of people with learning disabilities, however the hospital itself was an in-patients service for assessment and treatment, which should be a short term/ respite care facility. It was found that some patients had been living at the hospital for over 3 years. The location of Winterbourne View was in an industrial estate, families were ushered into a communal lounge when visiting, could not see their children in the privacy of their own room and often personal things went missing. Officers stated that providers should be welcoming, opening and engage with families so that there is transparency and these issues are avoided.

The Committee was informed that Havering had 27 homes for adults with learning disabilities, the largest had 34 beds, however this was due for closure as the building was not fit for purpose. All the residents were being accommodated elsewhere in the borough at suitable premises. The smallest home had 3 beds. There were 15 supported living units and 7 day providers. The client base was fairly small with around 600 people with learning disabilities. The homes were based around the borough, with a

large cluster in the north of the borough (Harold Hill) and fewer in the south of the borough (Rainham). There were 78 people living outside of the borough, as far out as Wales, Devon and Gloucestershire, however the majority lived in the borders of Essex. Most of these people living outside the borough, did so to be close to family members.

There were a number of support and monitoring systems in Havering to support adults with learning disabilities and autism. These included the Safeguarding Board, the Quality and Suspension Team, the Learning Disability Partnership Board (which reported to the Health and Wellbeing Board), the Community Learning Disability Service, a multi-disciplinary team of nurses, psychology, psychiatrist, social workers etc. There were also links with individual clients, their families and the local police. All information was shared with the Care Quality Commission. Robust safeguarding training programmes were in place, which were also shared with all voluntary and independent providers as well as council owned projects.

The Committee discussed at length the issues around abuse and bad practice, and how the service can deal with these in a respectful manner. Officers stated that the views of carers' and family members were not listened to, in the Winterbourne case, and therefore safeguarding issues were not highlighted. Havering carried out unannounced visits once a year to every establishment, as do the CQC. The officers had good relationships with the service users and were therefore able to have informal discussion with users as well as carry out observations and ensure that all paperwork is up to date.

The Committee was informed of the Whistleblowing procedure which was in place. In the event of a "whistleblower" the team would meet with the Chief Executive of the organisation, carry out spot visits, inform the CQC of any finding and raise a safeguarding alert on the premise.

The Committee discussed the issues around abuse and bad practice, and how the service could deal with these in a respectful manner. A member felt that CCTV cameras should be installed to protect the interest of both the residents and the staff. The rest of the Committee felt that this was an infringement of human rights.

10 DREYWOOD GARDENS/ EXTRA CARE UPDATE

The Committee received a report updating it on the progress of Dreywood Court, the new high quality extra care housing scheme. The scheme comprised ninety eight flats, twenty for shared ownership and seventy eight for rent. These were approximately split 50/50 between 1 and 2 bed flats. Havering already had two extra care housing scheme, where care and support is commissioned by Adult Social Care. These were Paines Brook Court in Harold Hill and St Ethelburga Court in Harold Wood. Whilst the scheme provided extra care housing, Dreywood Court also provided a shared ownership scheme.

The scheme opened and was handed over to the Council in July 2013. However East Thames Group, who built the scheme, was still the registered landlord responsible for developing the scheme in partnership with the Council. It also fulfils a number of other on-going supports, including tenancy agreements and housing management. Once all the allocations are made, they would work closely with the care and support provider, to ensure the scheme remained a vibrant and inclusive community.

Sanctuary Home Care (Ltd) was awarded the contract for the personalised care and support service for the residents of Dreywood Court. Sanctuary Home Care established their office at the scheme in advance of the first residents moving in and began assessing applicants for Dreywood Court from April 2013. Sanctuary Home Care had a presence since the day the scheme opened. The whole scheme is fully accessible and there were 8 adapted flats for wheelchair users.

The scheme had its own allocation panel, which assessed all applications. There was 100% allocation for the socially rented flats and 15 of the 20 shared ownership flats had deposits put down on them. An assurance was given that all allocations were from Havering residents who had resided in the borough for at least 2 years. The criteria for extra care housing was for people aged 55 and over, who required some care and support but who wished to retain the independence of living in their own home rather than having to move into a residential care home. Six people had transferred from Newstead House, the Learning Disability Home which was no longer fit for purpose. It was felt that even though these residents were under 55, there were exceptional circumstances, which the scheme could support.

To ensure the moving experience was not a barrier to the most vulnerable and elderly, Age Concern Havering were commissioned to support people to move. The level of support required had been tailored to people's circumstances. The support programme was well underway and regular updates were showing the value of the support given.

In addition a protocol had been developed with the Benefits Service. Each time an applicant moved into the scheme the volunteers completed the

housing benefit forms and verification document which were collected daily from the scheme. This ensured a smooth transition and reduced the burden of unnecessary delays or rent arrears.

The scheme had lots of circulation and social inclusion areas. There would be a restaurant, a hairdresser, and a small library being established. A craft group had already started and it was hoped that other small groups could also establish once further residents had moved in.

The Committee noted the update and agreed that they would wish to visit the site again now that it was completed.

11 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Committee were provided with details of the Annual Corporate Performance Indicators for 2012/13. The Committee agreed that any questions should be e-mailed to the Head of Adult Social Care.

12 FUTURE AGENDAS

The Committee did not wish to add anything further to its work programme at the present time.

13 URGENT BUSINESS

A number of members stated that they would have to give apologies for the next meeting (4th December 2013) therefore the Chairman stated that it may be necessary to re-arrange the date of the next meeting.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank