

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Thursday, 22nd March, 2007, at 6.00 p.m.
in Committee Room 2 at the Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Mrs Ridley (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Faulkner (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Mrs Aston, Mrs Cowell, Harley, Islam, Ms Nicholls and K
Turner

Officers

Head of Personnel and Support Services (Lead Officer to the
Committee), Assistant Directors (Strategy and Private Sector, Learning
Disability and Mental Health and Policy, Performance and Resources),
Head of Equality and Diversity, (Directorate of Adult, Community and
Housing Services), Scrutiny Officer (Good Health) and Ms K Smith
(Directorate of Law and Property)

Also in Attendance

Mr A Harrison, Ms S Dugan and Ms M Ingram (Dudley Primary Care
Trust), Mr G Barker (Dudley Primary Care Trust, Patient and Public
Involvement Forum).

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APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of
Councillors Burt, Mrs Jordan and Simms.

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No member made a declaration of interest in accordance with the
Members' Code of Conduct, in respect of any agenda item to be
discussed at the meeting.

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MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18th
January 2007, be approved as a correct record and signed.

PUBLIC FORUM

The Lead Officer updated the Committee on the Public Forum protocol, as there had previously been discussion as to how this agenda item should be dealt with. Members agreed that there should be a set time for issues to be discussed under the Public Forum and that further publicity should be undertaken to promote this agenda item. It was also suggested that a means of reporting "actions" back to the Committee should be considered.

RESOLVED

That the Lead Officer to the Committee reviews the protocol for the Public Forum item and that the member's comments above be noted in this connection.

AUDIOLOGY

A presentation was made on behalf of the Dudley Primary Care Trust on the Audiology service provision and reduced waiting times since approval of an additional £500,000 investment for the 2006/07 initiative proposed. This presentation also referred to the proposed strategies for this service for 2007/08.

The Director of Patient Experience and Service Improvement, Commissioning Directorate, outlined the strategy. This included a maximum wait of thirteen weeks for all patients including those "switching over" from analogue to digital hearing aids, a maximum of six weeks for all patient cohorts by 31st March 2008, the appointment of three Audiologists to fill current vacancies and a maximum wait for all patients of eighteen weeks from GP referral to treatment by December 2008.

Progress against targets in 2006/07, the manner in which these were advised of the benefits attained were summarised in the presentation together with the background to the service provision in 2007/08 and the local delivery plan in connection therewith.

Members noted that home visits were not usually undertaken as the testing involved needed to be undertaken in soundproof rooms. In response to members' queries it was also confirmed that to date no data was available on whether there had been an increase in young people requiring treatment for hearing problems, due to modern technology such as "I Pods" being used extensively.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the presentation be noted.

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EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan for 2007/08, and set out proposed actions for the promotion of equality and diversity

The action plan and annual report covered achievements against the previous year's action plan targets and were attached as appendices to the report.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report submitted be noted.

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RIDGEHILL RESETTLEMENT

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on the completion of the resettlement project at Ridge Hill Hospital.

The resettlement of thirty-four residents from the Ridge Hill hospital had arisen from the White Paper "Valuing People", in 2001, which had announced the closure of all long stay hospitals for people with a learning disability. Members noted that the resettlement had been highly successful and that residents had settled into their new homes and were engaged in domestic activities and involved with the local community.

In response to Members queries it was confirmed that these residents would be continued to be monitored on their progress and future financial packages reviewed.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the report on the Ridge Hill Resettlement be noted, and that a report on the progress of the re-housed residents and the financial packages that would be put into place, be submitted to a meeting of the Committee in twelve months time.

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FUTURE CONFIGURATION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN DUDLEY AND WALSALL

A report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services was submitted on recent discussions on the future of Mental Health Services in Dudley and Walsall.

A Project Board had been established in January 2007 and consisted of Directors of Mental Health, Medical Directors and Assistant Directors of Adult Services from Dudley and Walsall. As part of the formal consultation process the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in each Council would be consulted and approval by Cabinet, for Social Care Services to become part of the new Partnership Trust and arrangements for the secondment or transfer of staff, would be required.

RESOLVED

1. That the information contained in the report submitted on the future configuration of mental health services in Dudley and Walsall and the work undertaken to date be noted.
2. That the Select Committee agrees to receive a further report, as part of the consultation process, in July 2007.

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THE HEALTH CARE COMMISSIONS ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

As part of the Committee's overview of the Health Care Commission's Annual Health Check, a report of the Lead Officer to the Committee was submitted seeking consideration commentaries of the committee on the relevant performance of National Health Service bodies for 2006/07. These included the West Midlands Ambulance Service, Dudley PCT and the Dudley Group of Hospitals, attached as appendices to the report.

In the background to the report, Lead Officer reminded the Committee of the machinery for various performance as set out in the care standards in the agenda.

Members raised concerns, under the Dudley Group of Hospitals item on the agenda, with regard to the charges and inadequate parking facilities at the Russell Hall Hospital. It was requested that these concerns; the apparent high car parking charges, lack of provision for staff parking, lack of provision of extended parking hours for long term patients visitors and the inconvenience caused to local residents be brought to the attention of the Russell Hall Hospital Board.

RESOLVED

1. That the information contained in the report on the Health Care Commission's Annual Health Check and Members comments be noted.
2. That the committee endorse the evidence based commentaries of the Primary Care Trust, West Midlands Ambulance Service and Dudley Group of Hospitals on the "Health Check" domains that have converged with the work of the committee 2006/07.
3. That the committee employ the Commission's standards and domains to inform the 2007/08-work programme using the methods in 2.16, as outlined in the report submitted, in order to broaden overview and scrutiny committee's commentaries in 2008.
4. That the Scrutiny Officer writes to the Russell Hall Hospital Board informing them of Members concerns over the issues raised with regard to car parking.

The meeting ended at 8:10 pm

CHAIRMAN