

North Dudley Area Committee 15th June 2011

Joint Report of the Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services and the Director of Children's Services

Progress of Elected Member Visits to Adult and Children's Social Care Establishments 2010/11

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the Committee with information about the progress of visits to Adult and Children's Social Care establishments undertaken by Members during 2010/11 and to inform Committee about actions taken in response to Member comments.
2. To seek nominations from the Committee for Members to carry out visits to Social Care establishments during 2011/12.

Background

3. Each Area Committee nominates pairs of Members who are willing to undertake visits to Adult and Children's Social Care establishments. A list of residential and day care establishments for adults and children across the Borough is attached as Appendix 1.
4. The purpose of the visits is to assist Members in reviewing the residential and day care service delivery to Adults in establishments managed by the Directorate of Adult Community & Housing Services and to Children in establishments managed by the Directorate of Children's Services
5. The visits also assist Members in fulfilling their role as Corporate Parents of Looked After Children.
6. All Members participating in the rota of visits must have received training in the role and satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau clearance.
7. Training to assist the process for 2011/12 will be arranged and provided to Members.
8. The rota process and the delivery of training is managed within the Policy, Performance & Resources Unit of the Directorate of Adult, Community & Housing Services. Over a period of time Members have made suggestions to improve the process and these have been incorporated into the Protocol determining the responsibilities of Members and officers. The Protocol is attached as appendix 2.

9. Staff of the Policy, Performance & Resources Unit provide Members with
- a copy of the Protocol for Members and Officers
 - a schedule of visits to be undertaken during the period
 - a reminder of scheduled visits to establishments
 - a proforma for completion at each visit
 - background information about each establishment, in terms of purpose and staffing
 - a copy of the comments made by Members on the previous visits.
10. Members completed proformas are sent to the relevant Assistant Director for comment and response. Appendix 3 provides details of the visits carried out by Members of the North Dudley Area Committee and the response provided by the relevant Assistant Director.

11. Examples of issues arising and specific action taken in response to Members comments:- Please refer to appendix 3 for full details

There were four individual establishments for nominated Members to visit between September 2010 and April 2011; all visits were completed and we are very grateful to the members concerned for their support of this programme.

- A consistent message from all visits carried out was that of a positive relationship between service users and staff and a welcoming environment.
- Members commented positively on the care provided to residents at **New Bridge House**, but queried whether the number of staff on duty was excessive.

Members queried some elements of record keeping within the home and the appropriateness of having an unguarded stairway which vulnerable old people could access without restriction.

The Assistant director thanked Members for their positive comments concerning the atmosphere within the home. The Assistant Director clarified that the number of staff on duty was consistent with the needs of the residents and the remit of the home.

Issues of record keeping have been referred to the home manager for their action.

The Assistant Director commented that the stairway is used for assessment and practice prior to a return home consistent with the homes remit of rehabilitation.

- Members commented very positively on the quality of care, interaction between service users and staff at **Roseville Day** Centre who were prepared “to go beyond the confines of the centre to ensure the well being of the users”

Members stated that the craft room required urgent attention to bring it to the standard of the rest of the centre.

The response of the Assistant director is pending.

The Assistant Director thanked Members for their visit and positive comments acknowledging the efforts that have been made to refurbish the Centre to a high standard in recent years.

Members were advised that there is an ongoing bid for improvements to the craft room, which are being presented to the property steering group for consideration along with other requests across the Council.

- In the first of two visits to **Tipton Road** in this programme Members met with two service users who were present at the time of their visit and commented positively on the care provided to them and their response to this. Members commented that “staff seem to go the extra mile to accommodate the needs of residents” describing Tipton Road as a very well run home.

Members raised concerns about the presence of a number of overhanging trees around the building

The Assistant Director thanked Members for their visit and positive comments.

Members were advised that the trees had been pruned.

- In the second visit to **Tipton Road** Members commented positively on the quality of care provided to residents describing this as “excellent on all counts”.

Staff were described as being extremely aware of individual needs and extremely competent.

In the previous visit Members visit had identified problems with overhanging trees; Members commented that this has now been addressed.

The Members were thanked for their visit and positive

Members were informed that an application had been submitted to the Area Panel for match funding for a mini bus.

Members were thanked for their support in this matter.

Finance

12. There are no immediate financial implications from this report. The programme of Member visits can continue to be provided from within existing resource allocation.

- 13 On occasion, Member comments and recommendations will have additional cost implications. These are forwarded in the first instance to the Technical Support Services and where appropriate to the Property & Steering Capital Group for consideration.

Law

14. Members' visits to Social Care establishments assist in meeting some of the relevant requirements of the Children Act 1989 and the Care Standards Act 2000.

Equality Impact

15. The visits to establishments are intended to assist officers in ensuring that services are delivered in a fair, equitable and service user focused manner. The visits provide opportunities for Members to consult with a wide ranging group of people with varied needs, abilities, disabilities, age, gender and ethnicity.

Recommendations

16. That Members consider and comment on the information contained in this report and attachments.
17. That Members make further nominations from Committee for Members participation in the rota for the year 2011-2012.



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