

Notes of Decisions Taken and Actions Required

Community Wellbeing Board

16 July 2008

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1

Chair: Cllr David Rogers OBE (East Sussex CC/Lewes DC)
Vice-Chair: Cllr Gareth Barnard (Bracknell Forest)
Deputy Chair: Cllr David Beechey (Bridgnorth DC) and Cllr Richard Grant (Warwickshire CC).

Members: Cllr Mary Aspinall (Plymouth City), Cllr James Couchman (Oxfordshire CC), Cllr Dawn Cousins (Isle of Wight UA), Cllr Keith Glazier (East Sussex CC), Cllr Brian Hood (Monmouthshire CC), Cllr Roger Lawrence (Wolverhampton MBC), Cllr Rabi Martins (Watford BC) and Cllr Susan Woodward (Staffordshire CC).

Substitutes: Cllr Patricia Banks (Hampshire CC), Cllr Kathy Newbound (Windsor and Maidenhead RB) and Cllr Sue Whitaker (Norfolk CC).

Apologies: Cllr Zoe Patrick (Oxfordshire CC) and Cllr Shireen Ritchie (Kensington and Chelsea RB).

In attendance: Pete Fahy and Kim Dowsing (Coventry City Council)
John Dixon (ADASS)
Martin Samuels (NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement)
Andrew Black and John Tilley (DH)
Andrew Cozens (IDeA) and Wendy Martin (LACORS)

Action by

1. Case Study: Coventry - Older People's Housing Strategy

Pete Fahy, Service Manager (Commissioning and Provision) at Coventry City Council, gave a presentation on their Older People's Housing Strategy. He explained that while the formal strategy was launched in 2006, it had built upon existing achievements. He highlighted a few key elements of the strategy:

- It is a non-political policy with cross-party support – this has enabled Coventry's housing policy to continue across different administrations, providing consistency and building confidence among developers and other stakeholders. This is particularly important in terms of housing, where decisions can take 4/5 years to have an effect.
- There is a very close working relationship between the housing policy

and adults services teams, under a single director, which provides a successful joined-up approach to meeting social care needs.

- Extensive consultation has been carried out among older people and has shown that most people wish to continue living within their local area. As a result, new housing schemes have been built in existing communities.
- There is a real focus on making improvements to the existing housing stock, as well as new builds. For example, the small-scale adaptations that the council provides through housing associations have been very successful in allowing people to remain in their homes.
- To further improve services, the council is now looking at closer working with neighbouring authorities.
- Despite the council's success in meeting social care needs through housing policy, neither government nor developers have the same focus.

Members commented as follows:

- Members were interested in how they were providing specialist schemes in local areas and also asked whether any schemes provided for a mixed age-range. Kim Dowsing gave the example of a unique scheme that is currently being developed to provide a range of housing for older people and for younger adults with learning disabilities and physical disabilities, with specialist health and therapy facilities on site.
- The possibilities of equity release schemes were discussed. Kim stated that Coventry City Council had established its own scheme but it had had limited take-up so far. She highlighted the problem of variable rates between mortgage lenders.
- A member asked whether adapted housing needed to be converted back after its occupants had left. Kim explained that the council operates a choice-based letting scheme where specific criteria are set for each property to match properties to need. She highlighted the close working between housing and social care staff to manage the scheme.
- The problems of encouraging developers to provide the specialist housing to meet local needs were discussed. The board was keen for action to be taken on this point.

Actions:

- Coventry's presentation to be circulated to board members. SFC
- The LGA will consider what action could be taken centrally around AM
dealing with developers.

2. ADASS - Presentation by John Dixon

John Dixon, ADASS President, updated members on recent work undertaken by ADASS and set out their priorities for the year ahead. He stressed the need to change the understanding of the social care role of local authorities – so that it is seen as responsible for the care received by all residents, including self-funders. In response to the Concordat, he is working to reshape ADASS so that it leads on implementation, as well as lobbying government. He set out the objectives in ADASS' Business Plan:

- Encourage locally based services that promote recovery, independence, health and well-being.
- Leadership for development of personalised care services that will promote choice and control....
- Work towards a fair and transparent system for allocation of care services
- Work with government, the NHS and providers to promote quality and safety in care services
- Evidence the need for adequate funding for social care –and support members to deliver effective and efficient services.

John Dixon felt that while provision has to be driven by local decision-making based on local priorities, there is some scope for greater transparency and portability of care provided between areas. Members stressed that this needed to be based upon an adequate funding settlement from central government.

Action:

John's presentation will be circulated to all members, including to new members in August as part of the papers for the 'Away Day'. SFC

3. World Class Commissioning

Martin Samuels, from the NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement, updated members on the World Class Commissioning Programme. He set out the role of the Institute and also the vision and methodology of the programme. It sets out a challenging framework for assessing PCTs and will also assess potential for improvement. He highlighted the importance of more effective partnership working in health, particularly with local government.

Members commented as follows:

- Will this new programme disrupt existing good work in joint-commissioning? Martin commented that World Class Commissioning will be a key focus of PCT Boards over the next few months but should help them to focus on improvement. Lessons will be learnt from current good-practice and the NHS Institute is looking to disseminate examples.
- Members were concerned that a new set of targets for the NHS would undermine current work towards shared target-setting through LAAs. Martin agreed that there are some tensions between health targets and LAAs, but felt that this programme is a step in the right direction, as it will enable PCTs to choose their targets based on local priorities.
- The Board felt that there was a real need for the NHS to review its approach to provision for children.
- The issue of the democratic deficit and lack of accountability of health bodies was discussed. Members stressed the importance of engagement with officers and lead members as well as Overview and Scrutiny Committees in local authorities. Martin added that Lord Darzi has suggested rebranding PCTs as, for example, "NHS Oxfordshire" which may help to improve public awareness

Action:

It was agreed to circulate Martin's presentation and his contact details to SFC

all members.

4. Smoke Free One Year on and the Consultation on the future of tobacco control.

Andrew Black and John Tilley (DH) joined the meeting to update members on progress made since the introduction of the Smoke Free legislation last year. They highlighted the important role that environmental health teams in local authorities have played in education and implementation. However, they stressed that smoking still represents the biggest public health challenge and is also the biggest single cause of health inequality.

Members highlighted the following issues:

- The availability of illicit tobacco remains a significant problem. Andrew Black added that while HMRC has so far focused on borders and points of entry, DH are encouraging them to also consider what more can be done once the tobacco is inside the country.
- Several members were concerned about the implications of the smoke free legislation for pubs and working men's clubs which are closing at a rapid rate. John Tilley commented that, from discussions with landlord's organisations, it seems that other structural factors are driving for these closures: including cultural changes, rising costs and the availability of cheap supermarket alcohol. He added that the impact of the legislation will be fully reviewed after three years.
- While help to quit programmes had been very successful overall, they had failed to have any real impact in many deprived areas. John agreed and added that a recent Audit Commission/DH report had found evidence that this can be successfully tackled when specific areas are targeted. DH's media and education campaigns are carefully targeted and new officials have been appointed to share examples of good practice.

Decision:

The Board agreed to endorse the high level messages set out in the joint LGA/LACORS report which will form the basis for a joint response to the consultation on the future of tobacco control.

5. Other Business Report

Members received an update on other Board Business not reported elsewhere on the Agenda.

Transforming Community Equipment and Wheelchair Services

The Board agreed to the approach set out in the report.

Meetings Attended by Members since the last meeting

- Cllr Gareth Barnard informed the Board that Skills for Care are now actively seeking a new Chair.
- Several members commented that the last meeting of IDeA's National Network had been a success.
- Cllr David Rogers had attended an LGA-organised lunch at the House of Lords to promote the Fair Care Campaign, attended by parliamentarians, Directors of Adults' Services and voluntary sector organisations. Further events to discuss specific elements of the green paper will be arranged over the coming months.
- Cllr Roger Lawrence informed the group that following recent meetings with the Home Office and DCSF, the issue of outstanding funding for councils for their work with unaccompanied asylum-seeking children is close to resolution.

6. Notes of meeting held on 14 May 2008

The notes were agreed, subject to an amendment to the attendance list.

7. Date of Next Meeting: 'Away Day' on Monday 8 September 2008