

Notes of Decisions Taken and Action

Community Wellbeing Board

11 March 2009

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ at 11:30 am

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 Susan Woodward (Staffordshire CC)

Members: Cllr Pat Case (Lancashire CC), Cllr James Couchman (Oxfordshire CC), Cllr Dawn Cousins (Isle of Wight UA), Cllr Richard Grant (Warwickshire CC), Cllr Brian Hood (Monmouthshire CC), Cllr Nargis Khan (Hackney), Cllr Roger Lawrence (Wolverhampton MBC) Cllr Rabi Martins (Watford BC), Cllr Zoe Patrick (Oxfordshire CC) and Cllr Shireen Ritchie (Kensington and Chelsea RB).

Substitutes: Cllr Mary Aspinall (Plymouth City)

In attendance: Mona Sehgal (IDeA)
Lucy Bonnerjea and Anne Williams (DH)
Cllr David Sprason and Helen Pearson (Leicestershire CC)

1. Valuing People Now

Anne Williams, National Director for Learning Disabilities, gave a presentation outlining the key elements of the strategy, which can be seen on the LGA website at: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelId=1673714>. Anne explained that although there has been good progress since Valuing People was published in 2001, much remains to be done. This new cross-government strategy was launched on 19 January 2009 to address these areas.

Members asked questions on the following:

- Are databases accurate enough to ensure that the annual health check is provided for all those who are eligible? Anne noted that there is further work to be done on this, but there are several examples of good practice in terms of information sharing which demonstrate that this is deliverable.
- Members were concerned that people with learning disabilities could be the first to lose out as unemployment increases. Anne responded that it will still be possible to increase the number of people with learning disabilities in employment during a recession if the commitment is there. Local authorities

and the health service need to act as exemplars themselves.

- A member felt that further support for employers is needed. Anne responded that support does exist and will be further developed as part of this strategy. However, to increase employment, raising aspirations of teachers, professionals and others is often more important.
- Learning Disability Partnerships need to be brought into the mainstream of council activity, in a similar way to CDRPs. Anne agreed and confirmed that Valuing People Now does consider links between the Partnership Board and LSPs. It is also crucial that senior decision-makers are engaged.
- Anne agreed with members' comments about the need for public education to increase awareness of learning disability and stop abuse.
- Members asked what added value the proposed regional structure would bring. Anne explained that this is to improve intelligence about performance in local areas. It will also work to ensure the engagement of SHAs and the Government Offices.
- A member commented that there have been problems around charging and benefits for some people who have transferred from health service to local authority accommodation.
- In response to a member's question, Anne explained that no decision has yet been made about the allocation of funding after 2011 and work on this is ongoing.
- A member stressed the importance of improving arrangements for the transition from children's to adult services. Anne agreed and highlighted the need for more joint-commissioning of services for young people between the ages of 14 - 21 to support this.

2. Safeguarding Adults

Lucy Bonnerjea (DH), gave a presentation on the review of the 'No Secrets' guidance, available on our website at:

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelid=1673714> She highlighted the key issues of Leadership – including the role of members; Empowerment - starting with the assumption that adults want to be in control of their protection plans and so this work has to be approached differently from children's safeguarding; and Prevention – particularly in the context of both demographic change and personalisation.

Cllr David Sprason and Helen Pearson then gave a short presentation setting out their approach to adult safeguarding in Leicestershire. This presentation is also available on the website as above.

<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pagelid=1673714>. They stressed that safeguarding is 'everybody's business' and so has to be addressed across service areas and agencies. Cllr Sprason added that he had recently participated in an IDeA peer review for Northamptonshire.

23 4

During the discussion, members commented as follows:

- There was concern about the lack of engagement of GPs with Safeguarding Partnership Boards and also on the very limited training they receive on safeguarding. Helen Pearson added that Leicestershire is currently developing an awareness course for GPs on both adult safeguarding and mental capacity issues. They also have a GP champion to improve engagement.
- A member asked whether there would be any benefits in establishing a joint children's and adults' safeguarding board. Cllr Sprason felt that there should be local flexibility on this, to allow authorities to take whichever approach works best for them. Lucy Bonnerjea agreed, but stressed that a joint board must not reduce the focus on adults and that adult safeguarding needs to be approached differently.
- Members noted that much of the work on adult safeguarding relies on providers of outsourced services. Lucy informed members that DH is reviewing the guidance for external providers and looking at models for improving links with the local authority, including establishing safeguarding coordinators within providers. Cllr Sprason added that Leicestershire care home providers currently appoint dignity champions.
- Members considered the advantages and disadvantages of introducing a statutory duty for adult safeguarding. Possible disadvantages include increased bureaucracy which could hinder good practice and also the possibility that by placing legal responsibility with the Lead Member and Director, others feel absolved of responsibility in this area.

Mona Sehgal updated members on IDeA's planned work on adult safeguarding. IDeA have recently received additional funding to develop their support programme in this area and are now looking at rolling out peer review, developing specific training for members as well as incorporating this into existing offers, refreshing the 'must knows' and developing targeted support for certain councils.

Decision/Action

The Board agreed for a lead member summit on adult safeguarding to be held in July.

3. Adult Social Care: the Government's Green Paper and the LGA Fair Care Campaign

Members were very positive about the outline for the third 'think piece' and agreed with the proposed five key areas to be covered. Members also welcomed the proposal to develop key lobbying messages, but stressed that these should be provided to all elected members, to encourage them to lobby their MPs – building on the successful approach of the LGA's campaign against elected police authorities.

Decision

The Board agreed that the final think piece should be published immediately after the local elections in June 2009.

4. Other Business Report

Personal Health Budgets

Officers informed members that the pilots have not yet been announced, but details will be circulated to members as soon as they are.

Financial Implications of an Ageing Population

Anne McDonald confirmed that the Audit Commission has not yet started fieldwork with councils.

Update from the IDeA

Mona Sehgal added that IDeA is looking to develop work on outcomes based accountability across their work programme next year.

The Chair encouraged members to participate in the National Councillor Network which will be happen online for the first time.

5. Cllr David Beechey

As Bridgnorth District Council is soon to be replaced by a unitary Shropshire council, the Chair thanked Cllr Beechey for the work he had done on behalf of the Board and wished him luck for the unitary elections. Cllr Natalie Warriner will take over as the Independent Group Deputy Chair for the remainder of the year.

6. Note of the meeting held on 14 January 2009

The Board agreed the note of the last meeting.

Note of the meeting held between members of the LGA Community Wellbeing Board, Rosie Winterton MP and Baroness Andrews.

Wednesday 9 March at 2 pm

Also in attendance: Charlie Massey and Holly Riley (DWP)
Anne McDonald, Alyson Morley, Paul Ogden and Sarah
Feltham-Cheshire (LGA)

Rosie Winterton MP gave a short introduction, highlighting the cross-departmental approach, which reflects the need to look beyond health and social care in the development of the ageing strategy. The Minister also stressed the importance of engagement with older people and drew members' attention to the government's response to the Elbourne Review. She asked for LGA support for Older People's Day and Democracy Week as vehicles for promoting the role of older people as active citizens.

Baroness Andrews added that further work needs to be done to change perceptions of older people and recognise their active role within society. She emphasised the need for all government policies to reflect the demands of an ageing society.

The Chair asked when the revised strategy was likely to be published, and in what format. Charlie Massey explained that it would be published in the next few months. As it is unlikely to require any new legislation, it will probably not take the form of a green or white paper.

The Chair also confirmed that LGA had supported Older People's Day last year and agreed to discuss this, and local democracy week, with the LGA Chairman.

Board members then raised the following issues:

Learning from Good Practice

There are already networks of good practice within the local government sector and this knowledge must feed upwards to central government to inform this strategy. In particular, there is now a significant body of evidence and learning from the Pilots for Older Peoples Partnerships (POPPs) and Link Age Plus.

The Elbourne Review

Members questioned whether additional posts in the Government Offices (GOs) for the Regions will be the most effective way of stimulating local action to empower

23 4

older people. There is already a sector-led regional improvement structure supported by CLG and the LGA. The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) works with this regional structure, which has proved effective in improving practice and performance in councils. Local authorities are more likely to be receptive to sector-led improvement strategies than those imposed by the GOs.

Rosie Winterton noted the suggestion about working with the IDeA, but felt that the regional structure will still be needed to coordinate the work of councils. She added that several key policy areas are dealt with at regional level, including aspects of housing and planning, therefore it is important to ensure older people have an input at that level.

Economic support

Members stressed the need for this strategy to be considered in the context of the current economic situation. In addition to this, there is a need to plan for an older population that will need and want to be economically active, including those whose pensions are less than they expected for one reason or another. Government must ensure that these people are not financially penalised for working.

Carers

The ageing strategy must acknowledge the vital contribution of carers, without which care and support for older people would be unsustainable. It must also address the growing trend that carers themselves are increasingly older people and may have complex needs and aspirations of their own.

Intergenerational projects and social cohesion

The ageing strategy must aim to improve social cohesion between generations and should focus on mutual concerns such as access to safe public spaces, education and training, employment and economic prosperity, housing, transport, etc. There is much valuable intergenerational work at local level and this must be shared.

CAA Framework

The CAA framework should reflect the fact that all service areas will need to be responding to the challenge of an ageing population and should also take a broader view of services for older people.