

Minutes of: HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 28 August 2013

Present: Councillor P Bury (in the Chair)
Councillors D Bailey, L Fitzwalter, S Haroon, K Hussain,
D O'Hanlon, N Parnell, A Simpson, S Smith and R Walker

Also in attendance: Sheila Blackman, Cury Carers Centre
Heather Crozier, Adult Care Services
Tracey Minshull, Adult Care Services
Councillor R Shori, Cabinet Member, Adult Care, Health and Housing.

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor A Audin and Councillor T Holt

HSC.291 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was agreed:

That the Minutes of the last meeting of the Health Scrutiny Committee held on 12 July 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

HSC.292 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D Bailey declared a personal interest as she was employed by BARDOC.

Councillor N Parnell declared a personal interest as his wife was employed by the NHS in Manchester.

Councillor A Simpson declared a personal interest as she was employed by the NHS in Salford.

HSC.293 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present at the meeting to ask questions.

HSC.294 CARERS STRATEGY FOR BURY 2013 - 2018 - CARING FOR CARERS

Councillor Rishi Shori, Cabinet Member, Adult Care, Health and Housing and Tracey Minshull presented the Committee with the Carers Strategy for Bury for 2013 to 2018.

It was explained that the number of unpaid carers is increasing steadily throughout the UK. In Bury there are 3320 known adult carers but it was acknowledged that there were many more that have not been identified and therefore receive any support to undertake their caring role.

The Carers Strategy had been written by the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group as well as using the expertise of carers and service providers.

The aims of the strategy were aligned with the four national priorities:

1. Identification and recognition;
2. Realising and realising potential;
3. A life outside caring, and;
4. Supporting carers to stay healthy.

The definition of a carer was explained as 'someone of any age who provides unpaid support to family or friends who could not manage without the help. This could be caring for a relative, partner or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or substance misuse problems'.

It was explained that the Carers Strategy 'Caring for Carers' replaces the 2008 – 2012 Strategy 'Caring Together: The Carers Strategy' and would build on the achievements already made which included:

- The funding of a Carers Services Team which provides strategic and operational support to carers, carers groups and local providers. The team also commissions services for carers to support them to maintain their caring role.
- Bury Council and the CCG continue to fund the Gaddum Centre to provide a Carers Centre on its behalf. The centre has been open since 20118 and offers information and support.
- 567 people are in receipt of a Carers Personal Budget which allows the flexibility to choose their own support services.
- All 33 GP practices have an identified lead for carers.
- Bury Council has held a range of workshops with local care providers, day centres and residential care homes to ensure closer partnership working.

Within the strategy was a breakdown of carers by ward and it was also explained how different groups were recognised to have specific needs and how these were dealt with.

The joint priorities were set out within the strategy and were categorised as;

- Identification and recognition
- Realising and releasing potential
- A life outside of caring
- Supporting carers to stay healthy

It was explained that the strategy sets out to ensure that the existing funding was used efficiently and effectively to support carers and details of how the Council and the CCG spent its carers budget for 2012 – 2013 was set out within the strategy.

Members of the Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:-

- Councillor Haroon referred to the consultation carried out with different groups and stated that the strategy only mentioned the Asian Womens' Centre. Councillor Haroon asked what more was being done to engage with ethnic communities.

Councillor Shori stated that other ways of reaching different groups should be considered and visiting more community centres and religious buildings should be carried out more.

- Councillor Fitzwalter stated that GPs records should be as up to date as possible and they should be the first point of contact.

Councillor Shori explained that GPs were included in the strategy and had been involved in its production. All practices had identified a lead for carers. It was also explained that the CCG had someone in post that would be overseeing the strategy.

- Councillor Simpson stated that some people may not be aware that they are carers and if asked may not confirm this. Councillor Simpson explained that the way a person was asked about their responsibilities may change how they answer.

Tracey Minshull explained that a number of initiatives had been rolled out to promote recognition and identify as many carers as possible. Stalls had been set out in libraries and supermarkets as well as town centres.

- Councillor Simpson also suggested utilising GPs mailshots to include leaflets and information to promote services available for carers.

Tracey explained that all GPs had been consulted and new initiatives discussed and trialled where possible.

- Councillor O'Hanlon referred to the ease in which the report read and congratulated those that had produced it as he felt it was a good, worthwhile document.
- Councillor O'Hanlon also asked that other links be considered in public venues such as pubs, clubs and places of worship and the possibility of working jointly with neighbouring authorities is considered.
- Councillor Parnell asked whether the service had seen any impact since the changes to benefits particularly moving people off DLA and onto PIPs.

Tracey explained that as much information as possible was available to the different groups and that many different organisations and partners were involved in the carers strategy including Job Centre Plus, the Carers Centre

and Citizens Advice Bureau. It was also explained that the Carers Centre will be working in communities to try to reach more people.

- Councillor Walker asked about the work of the Carers Centre and how many staff were employed.

Sheila Blackman, Manager at the Carers Centre explained that there were five members of staff at the Carers Centre:– a manager and two support workers and two part time receptionists. It was also explained that the Centre was based in Silver Street and was managed by Gaddam. The centre had over 3000 carers registered and offered support, advice and respite and also provided outreach work at both Fairfield General Hospital and NMGH. It was also explained that the Centre received referrals from libraries, GPs and others.

- Councillor Walker referred to respite care and how this was vital for carers. Councillor Walker asked whether any conversations had taken place with Bury Hospice about the possibility of offering respite care to residents.

Stuart North explained that the Clinical Commissioning Group had met with Bury Hospice and invited their input into the integrated care development work.

Councillor Shori explained that the upgraded services at Elmhurst would provide respite facilities and it was hoped that when the service was opened in the near future it would be the premier respite centre in the North West.

- Councillor Walker asked what the take-up was of personal budgets.

It was explained that personal budgets were recognised as not being suitable for everybody but those that were on them had stated, in a recent questionnaire that they were happier with their personal budgets now that they were previously.

It was agreed:

1. That the Health Scrutiny Committee support the implementation of the Carers Strategy.
2. That a progress update report be brought to the Health Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in September 2014.

HSC.295 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

Heather Crozier, Head of Customer Services in Adult Social Care Services attended the meeting to present Members with the Annual Complaints Report.

The report covers the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

It was explained that a complaint is generally defined as an 'expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about the actions, decisions or apparent failings of a local authority's adult social services provision which requires a response'.

Complaints principally concern service issues, including the perceived standard of services and their delivery by service providers.

Heather explained that it was not easy for a lot of customers to make a complaint therefore the process was designed to ensure that all complaints are treated seriously, in confidence, investigated and given due attention.

The procedure is not designed to deal with allegations of serious misconduct by staff as this is covered under separate disciplinary procedures of the Council.

The total number of complaints received during 2012/2013 was 84 which was a reduction of 5 from the previous year.

The Assessment and Re-integration Team had received 21 (reduced from 32), Vulnerable Adults received 19, Commissioning and Procurement Team received 10. The number of complaints against other teams were relatively small.

77% of complaints were responded to within 30 working days of receipt.

The number of concerns raised by MPs and local Councillors had reduced by 50% but the number of Ombudsman enquiries had increased by 5 or 50%.

It was explained that the total number of complaints equated to 1.3% of customers as the Department provided services to 6,200 individuals.

It was also reported that the Department had received 473 compliments about the work carried out.

Members of the Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:-

- Councillor Simpson asked what the timescales were when receiving a complaint.

Heather explained that there were no official timescales that they had to adhere to but the department worked to a twenty working days timescale.

- Councillor Simpson also asked whether verbal complaints were recorded.

Heather reported that all types of complaints and compliments were recorded and had been included within the report statistics.

- Councillor O'Hanlon referred to the fact that there were 6200 Adult Care Services customers and asked what percentage of these had been contacted.

Heather explained that all of the customers were active.

- Councillor Walker asked whether it would be beneficial to set up a sub group to review the types of complaints.
- Councillor Smith asked whether complaints to private providers that were employed through Adult Care Services were also recorded.

Heather explained that all agencies that provided services to customers through Adult Care were required to undertake training regarding complaints. It was also explained that the procurement team would work closely with the agencies when agreeing contracts and what was required in terms of the contracts.

It was agreed:

That the contents of the report be noted.

COUNCILLOR P BURY
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.25 pm)