

**CHILDREN AND HEALTH
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Wednesday 22nd June 2011**

PRESENT – Councillors O’Keeffe, Law Riding, Desai, Entwistle, Mahmood, Patel, Riley, D.Smith, Solkar, Taylor, Wright, J.Smith, Gee, Foster.

Also Present –

Councillor M. Bateson – Executive Member Children’s Services

Councillor M. Khan – Executive Member Adult’s Services,

M. Zammit – Link Chief Officer

J. Berry – Senior Supporting Officer

G. Rhodes White – Strategic Director

S. Tingle – Assistant Director Transformation and Partnerships

B. Aspinall – Scrutiny Manager

F. Hafeji – Democratic Services

M. Mulla – Policy

G. Rich – Scrutiny Officer

RESOLUTIONS

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed those present particularly the new Councillors and introductions were done around the room. Apologies from B. Simpson Chair of Governors, F. Kershaw Blackburn Church of England Diocese, Youth Forum, Councillor John Slater and P. Harrison were recorded.

2. Minutes of Meetings held on 14th March 2011 and 16th March 2011

The Chair explained that the minutes from the previous meetings were there only to note however a suggestion was put forward that last year’s recommendations should be reviewed at a future committee meeting.

The Chair suggested to the Committee that the recommendations sent to the Executive Member for Children’s Services and the Executive Member for Health by last years respective Committees be brought back to the Committee later this year in an update report.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the final minutes of the Health & Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 14th March 2011 and the final minutes of the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 16th March 2011 be noted

- 2) That an updated report on last years recommendations be made available for the agenda setting meeting prior to the Overview & Scrutiny meeting on 28th September 2011
- 3) That the Executive Members be requested to present the updated report on last years recommendations to Committee at the meeting on 28th September 2011.

3. Declarations Of Interest in items on this Agenda

Councillor Desai – Lead Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport – Personal Interest - Agenda item 4.2
Councillor Taylor – Personal Interest – Item 4.2 – Discussion on Adult Social Care

4. Work of the Executive

4.1 New arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny

Scrutiny Manager gave a presentation to the Committee on the revised Scrutiny structure and the work and functions of the Committee and outlined how things will work. The Committee were informed of the reduction of Overview and Scrutiny Committees from six to three. It was stressed that Scrutiny now held even greater importance due to the limited resources that are now available.

Attention was drawn to the Call In dates and it was explained that they had been fixed into the calendar in case they were needed. It was stressed that should several Call Ins be received, several dates would be sought. It was further emphasised that one date per month was set for administrative purposes and that there was no attempt to stifle democracy.

It was pointed out to Members that the recommendations of the previous Committees were not in the agenda and Members were encouraged to follow these up later in the Municipal Year as per the resolution in Minute 2.

RESOLVED –

That the Scrutiny Manager’s presentation be noted.

4.2 Transformational Agenda

Children's Services:

The Executive Member for Children's Services gave a report on her portfolio and a brief outline as to what her portfolio area incorporated. The Executive Member was supported by The Strategic Director for Children's Services.

Members were provided with a copy of the current Transformational Agenda position with regards to savings in this area.

Also discussed were the challenges to the budget, these included more children being referred into Social Care via the front door as well as Foster Care placements and the financial implications of this, particularly when an agency had to be used.

It was explained that changes to guidance and regulations with regards to Independent Reviewing Officers will mean that officers will need to carry smaller workloads and this may create further financial pressures.

Members discussed Longshaw Children's Centre and the grant allocation it received. The Executive Member clarified that Longshaw Children's Centre had received the same grant as last year. The Committee noted that only statutory services were being delivered due to the budget climate. Reference was made to Review of SEN Policy on transport– 2 providers have indicated that they are willing to pay for travel costs from their budget which may happen this year.

The Executive member informed the Committee that the portfolio programme is still on target for a balanced budget at the end of the year, although she did explain that there maybe a slight risk of overspend due to the pressures of service delivery. The Committee was also informed of an additional grant that has been received in the portfolio which can be used to offset any potential overspend.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Executive Member for Children Services and the Strategic Director for Children's Services be thanked for their attendance
- 2) That the update on the budget and service reviews of the Children's Services portfolio be noted.

Adult Services:

The Executive Member for Adult Services delivered a report around his portfolio area. Members were provided with a copy of the current position with regards to savings in this area. The Executive Member was supported by the Assistant Director for Transformation and Partnerships.

Members were informed that this service is a demand led service and this may have an impact on Corporate savings. The Executive Member highlighted that to date Adult Services have saved around £4 Million in just two months. It was explained that the portfolio programme was still on target for a balanced budget at the end of the year.

Members were informed that there has been a 10% increase in those receiving Adult Services and this is making it more difficult to manage the workload, however they are looking at ways of running the service as efficiently as possible by trying to abolish things such as duplication of work.

It was also highlighted that as a result of the re-structure there had been a lot of staff movement and staff were therefore unfamiliar with their roles and as a result there would need to be some training and development.

The Executive Member also discussed the current position with regards to the TUPE contracts and the Performance Management Efficiencies Framework.

Members raised questions about the possible impact of Southern Cross ceasing to exist and if the authority would be able to cope in trying to re-accommodate their residents. Members were informed that both the residential homes in Blackburn were full and that this may make closure less likely.

Members discussed home adaptations, in terms of budget things are going well in this area but, as it is demand led, there is the possibility that things could change and more will be known by September 2011.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and the Assistant Director for Transformation and Partnerships be thanked for their attendance
- 2) That the update on the budget and service reviews of the Adult Social Care portfolio be noted.

- 3) That the Executive Member be requested to bring 'Plan B' back to Committee in September should the portfolio not perform towards budget targets.

Culture, Leisure & Sport:

The Executive Member was not present due to paternity leave and no Lead Member was deputising nor was a Chief Officer supporting. Members expressed their disappointment in this.

Councillor Desai who is a member of the Committee is the Lead Member in this particular area. The Councillor was advised that he should be mindful in what he debates or engages with on this Committee as there could be a conflict of interest and to consider his position on the Committee.

The Strategic Director provided a brief overview of the Leisure side of the portfolio.

RESOLVED – That the Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Sport be sent a further request to attend the next Committee meeting.

5. Committee's Work Programme

The Committee looked at its work programme for the year and decided that there should be three sub groups to work outside of Committee to scrutinise the topics agreed from each of the three portfolios for the next three months. Discussion then followed as to what these groups would scrutinise. It was felt that the Transformational Programme should be looked at particularly any 'amber' issues. It was suggested that a questionnaire be sent out to Members to help aid ideas.

Regional Joint Scrutiny

Joint Scrutiny on a regional level was once again put to Committee for consideration. Members were made aware that this was a Secretary of State requirement and if convened membership will be required.

Members expressed concern about the make - up of this group with Lancashire having nine representatives and Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool each having just three each with Cumbria only being involved on issues that affect them, such as the Vascular Services Review.

The Chair raised the question with regards to membership of the Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chair also

requested that the Committee should be presented with reports from the Families, Health and Well Being Committee.

The Committee were made aware that there were external groups who would like the Committee to look at their reports, however it was felt appropriate that this should only be done for those organisations that play a role within the Committee.

RESOLVED –

- 1) That Children and Health Overview and scrutiny questionnaire be sent out to Members the following day.
- 2) That the Committee should be split into three sub groups to scrutinise the three portfolio areas.
- 3) That any member of the Committee who does not volunteer themselves onto one of the three groups would be co-opted on to one by the Chair and Vice Chair.
- 4) That the Chair, Vice Chair and Councillor Foster would be Blackburn with Darwen's representatives on any Regional Joint Health Scrutiny Committee.
- 5) That the Scrutiny Manager find out legally which co-opted Members are required to sit on this Committee.
- 6) That the Chair and Chief Officers invite appropriate professionals relevant to the topic on agenda.
- 7) That at the July meeting, The NHS Blackburn with Darwen Teaching Care Plus Trust give a presentation on the reconfiguration of Mental Health Services
- 8) That future agendas and reports need to be in plain English as they are public documents, any acronyms or abbreviations used require explanation.
- 9) That all reports and agenda items to be sent with agenda or as soon as possible prior to the meeting which gives Members a chance to familiarise themselves with the agenda item.
- 10) That any outside organisation wishing to have the Committee scrutinise its reports will need to maintain an involvement with the Committee.

Signed.....
Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed
Date.....