

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 OCTOBER 2005**

MEMBERS: Councillors *Bull (Chair) *Harris (Vice-Chair), *Bevan, *J Brown, *Davies, *Dawson, and *Winskill.

Co-optees: Mr. B. Aulsberry and *Mrs. I Shukla (REJCC non-voting Representatives) Mrs. C Bhangwandeem plus 2 Vacancies (parent governors), Ms S. Berkery-Smith and L. Haward (Church Representatives).

* Members Present

Cllr Harris took the Chair of the meeting in the absence of Cllr Bull.

SC67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for lateness received from Cllr Bevan and Cllr Bull.

SC68. MINUTES: 29 September 2005

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the 29 September 2005 be confirmed and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment:

- i) That the first resolution in minute SC50 be amended to reflect the potential for the AEN and SEN funding methodologies status quo to be looked at again should there be any pronouncements from the Secretary of State for Education on the issue.

SC69. EXECUTIVE MEMBER QUESTIONS: The Executive Member for Health & Social Services (Agenda Item 6(i))

Cllr Wynne, the Executive Member for Health & Social Services, briefed the Committee on key issues in the portfolio. The main points highlighted were:

- Key challenges – the main challenges identified for the future were adult social care, following on from recent Government publications, well-being, which is being addressed by a new theme board of the Haringey Strategic Partnership, and the pressures placed on Social Services and voluntary organisations by the increased demand for services from more older people living alone and young people with learning and physical disabilities.
- Mental Health Services – a Mental Health Strategy for the Borough will be formally adopted in December 2005 after a period of consultation. Two examples of the modernisation programme are the establishment of the

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 OCTOBER 2005

'Therapeutic Network' service and the 684 Centre in Tottenham.

- Learning Disability Services – this area of the service is bidding for Beacon Status under the Valuing People theme. It delivers care to 500 people in the Borough, and has helped to find employment for 20 users due to person-centred planning aided by NRF monies.
- Physical Disability Services – last year's Scrutiny Review of Adaptations really worked and has produced real improvements in this area. Substantial cash injections will be further considered by the Executive for the service, and the Director of Social Services has established a corporate working group to create new service delivery arrangements.
- Older People's Services – the Community Care Strategy has delivered change, specifically refurbishment works at Cranwood and Broadwater Lodge, and the rebuilding of a 32 bed respite care home to replace the soon to be demolished Osborne Grove in 2006. The housing management function of Sheltered Housing will be moved into the ALMO, with support functions retained in Social Services.
- Carer's Services – the 2001 Census identified 16,000 informal carers in the Borough, and supporting them is seen as a high priority. The Carer's Centre has now achieved charitable status, and is based temporarily at the Winkfield Centre.

The Executive Member answered a number of questions from the Committee as follows:

Q – How are you responding to the proposal to re-organise the Primary Care Trusts so they are no longer co-terminus with the London Boroughs?

A – I have written to the Secretary of State with my concerns over the potential effect this move would have on partnership working and our wish for there to be co-terminosity as at present. I will provide a copy of the letter to Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members.

Q – When will the work on Cranwood residential site be completed?

A – This should be completed in November 2005.

Q – Has there been any provision for local delivery to support

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 OCTOBER 2005**

the Carer's Centre service?

A – The idea of neighbourhood links has been explored as they can bring benefits, especially as one of the criteria that the CPA will judge the Council on is older people's services.

Q – Have there been any problems encountered in the plans to transfer the sheltered housing management function into the ALMO?

A – No problems have been encountered as yet and none are envisaged. A steady stream of information has been passed on to people in sheltered housing, and there will be a representative on the board preparing the consultation exercise from sheltered housing. The social care element is being retained by the Council.

Q – Will there be any provision for older people on the Hornsey Central Hospital site?

A – The two options faced by the Council were to either upgrade Cranwood or to do the bare minimum to the site and build a new home on the Hornsey Hospital site. The PCT did not want to commit money to the Hornsey proposal as they needed to control their spending, so I decided to upgrade Cranwood. The Hornsey Hospital site proposals can be revisited at a later date.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Committee's thanks to the Executive Member for attending be noted.
- ii) That the Executive Member's briefing and answers to questions be noted.

At this point, Cllr Bull joined the meeting and took over the Chair from Cllr Harris.

SC70. ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK: WHITTINGTON HOSPITAL TRUST (Agenda Item 9)

The Head of Nursing, Whittington Hospital Trust, gave a brief outline of the Trust's report. Each standard had been allocated to a directorate and they had decided on whether the Trust was compliant. The results were presented to the Trust board to involve non-executive directors in the process. The Trust was found to be non-compliant in one standard, C14a, responding to formal complaints, as the response rate within 20 days was 51% in April to August 2005, compared with the Department of Health

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 24 OCTOBER 2005

standard of 85%. Two other standards were found to be lacking assurance of compliance, these being C23, systematic disease prevention programmes and C2, child protection guidelines. The Trust did not believe that these standards were not being met, but it needed to gather more evidence to prove sufficient assurance. The Trust aimed to have sufficient evidence of compliance in time for the final declaration in April 2006.

The Committee discussed the report and raised a number of points. The role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee at this stage of the process was discussed, with it being commented that the Committee was having difficulty in offering input into the process at this stage. It was commented that a process of working together with the health trusts would be established to make the final declaration in April 2006 meaningful. The Committee raised issues surrounding the signage, conditions of the buildings and language provision. It was commented that some of the buildings were being renovated and this had led to some confusion over directions with diversions around the building having to be made. New signage will be put in place when the renovations are complete, and this will reflect the diversity of languages spoken by patients and visitors. The issue of complaints was raised, and it was commented that all complaints that are logged are responded to, but only 51% are currently meeting the 20 day target.

RESOLVED:

That the new arrangements for the involvement of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the monitoring of core standards be noted.

That the Whittington Hospital Trust be informed that whilst the Overview & Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to consider and comment on the Trust's draft declarations and was keen to do so, it did not feel that it was in a position to comment on the draft declarations at this stage.

The Committee wished to express its concern at the language within the draft declarations, which as a body uninitiated with health authority jargon, it found a barrier to greater understanding. The Committee requested that the bodies use "plain English" in future.

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would decide on those areas of the core standards that it wishes to focus on, for the purpose of making comments on the declarations of the respective trusts in due course. It would like to have an ongoing

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 OCTOBER 2005**

dialogue with the trusts on those areas before submitting its final comments in March 2006.

SC71. ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK – BARNET, ENFIELD & HARINGEY MENTAL HEALTH TRUST (Agenda Item 10)

The Deputy Chief Executive of the Barnet, Enfield & Haringey Mental Health Trust gave a brief outline of the Trust's report. The Trust identified two areas of insufficient assurance, these being standards C5a, NICE technology appraisal guidance, and C6, social care group co-operation. One area of potential concern was also identified, this being C21, physical environment, with the problem being that St Ann's Hospital is not fit for purpose. A business case for the redevelopment of St Ann's was being worked on, and there were a number of action plans being implemented to provide sufficient assurance of compliance for standards C5a and C6.

The Committee raised a number of issues in relation to the report. Regarding NICE technology appraisals, it was commented that NICE guidelines represent best practice so trusts have to comply with them. The Trust commented that it aimed to comply by the end of the year. The issue of St Ann's Hospital was raised, and it was commented that two separate dates would be set up for member forums to debate the issue, and all options would be looked at. Following a question from a member of the public, it was commented that any provision for allotments on the site would have to be looked at in the masterplan stage, which will be drawn up once service provision has been settled.

RESOLVED:

That the new arrangements for the involvement of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the monitoring of core standards be noted.

That the Barnet, Enfield & Haringey Mental Health Trust be informed that whilst the Overview & Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to consider and comment on the Trust's draft declarations and was keen to do so, it did not feel that it was in a position to comment on the draft declarations at this stage.

The Committee wished to express its concern at the language within the draft declarations, which as a body uninitiated with health authority jargon, it found a barrier to greater understanding. The Committee requested that the bodies use

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 OCTOBER 2005**

“plain English” in future.

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would decide on those areas of the core standards that it wishes to focus on, for the purpose of making comments on the declarations of the respective trusts in due course. It would like to have an ongoing dialogue with the trusts on those areas before submitting its final comments in March 2006.

SC72. SURE START UPDATE (Agenda Item 7)

The Children's Centres Development Manager presented the report to the Committee. All eleven recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Sure Start Local Programmes were agreed by the Executive and were being progressed. The two key aspects of the programme are multi-agency working and local parental involvement. The local planning group are overseeing the development of the first 10 Children's Centres, which will be put in place by March 2006. Unlike the Sure Start programme, Children's Centres will cover all children in the borough, as new centres would be opening in areas not covered by the Sure Start programme.

The Committee raised a number of issues in relation to the transition from Sure Start to Children's Centres. The issue of informal parental involvement was raised and it was commented that parents give feedback at fun days and speak to other parents to feedback their views to representatives. The recent negative national evaluation of the Sure Start programme was discussed, and it was commented that local evaluations have shown a better picture than the national evaluation. The issue of Red Gables was raised, and it was commented that Crouch End would receive a Children's Centre and many of the practices of Red Gables would be picked up. It was noted that a short paper would be prepared for members on this subject by the Director of Children's Service, which would also encompass how the Children's Centre project is being explained to parents.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee noted the progress made on implementing recommendations made in Scrutiny Review of local Sure Start Programmes and the progress made in the transition from the Sure Start Programmes to the Children's Centres.

SC73. EXECUTIVE MEMBER QUESTIONS: The Executive Member for Organisational Development and Performance (Agenda Item 6(i))

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 OCTOBER 2005

Cllr Sulaiman, the Executive Member for Organisational Development and Performance, briefed the Committee on key issues in the portfolio. The main points highlighted were:

- Legal issues – In the year to date to August 2005, £850,000 of debt has been collected and returned to clients. Enforcement action has resulted in fines being successfully levied, and ASBOs taken out on tenants guilty of anti-social actions.
- Improvement and Performance – progress has been made on 73% of indicators in the 'Direction of Travel' self-assessment. The pre-budget review process is being worked on for all departments to ensure value for money and a good rating for the 2006 CPA.
- Personnel – the length of time taken to recruit staff has been reduced by 25%. Occupational health are running a series of employee MOTs and offering advice on healthy living to staff.
- IT – Tech Refresh commenced as planned on September 5th, and by October 21st 1049 users were migrated to the new technical environment. The Members Tech Refresh deployment is scheduled to commence in the week commencing October 31st.

The Executive Member answered a number of questions from the Committee as follows:

Q – What was your number one target when taking on this portfolio?

A – The need to implement a strategic approach and work with other Executive Members to tackle the 'killer PIs'.

Q – In the light of recent Tech Refresh implementation problems, such as spam and multiple emails and the disabling of group lists, do we get value for money on IT spending

A – Value for money can be more accurately assessed at the end of the process when efficiency gains can be measured. The SAP system will allow employees to update their own details on the Council's records and moves towards mobile working will bring time savings. A new stronger spam system has been introduced and the benefits of this should be seen in the coming weeks. A move to web mail should see the group lists re-established as they will be protected from the spam that forced them to be disabled.

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 OCTOBER 2005**

Q – How is it decided which legal cases are pursued in the courts?

A – a case management process makes a judgement based on cases causing most public concern and those that can be won by the Council.

Q – Are there any specific issues that need to be looked at to help housing gain a two star rating?

A – A pre-inspection will look at the strengths and weaknesses of housing services and will cover all aspects, from repairs and rent collection to the process of moving management from the Council to the ALMO.

Q – Will benchmarking lead to an internal market?

A – There will be no internal market, we need to unpick levels of performance to show value for money.

There were a number of further questions that could not be answered at the time, concerning Members' Tech Refresh. Cllr Sulaiman promised to provide answers to all of these questions to Members.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Committee's thanks to the Executive Member for attending be noted.
- ii) That the Executive Member's briefing and answers to questions be noted.

SC74. SCRUTINY REVIEW OF ESTATE PARKING (Agenda Item 8)

The Chair of the Scrutiny Review, Cllr Bevan, commented on the recommendations of the Review, which covered permits, abandoned and untaxed vehicles and estate CPZs. Cllr Davies commended the report, stating that it tackled an area long in need of scrutiny. The issue of the removal of abandoned and untaxed vehicles was raised, and it was noted that the residents would be notified through area housing fora and consultation documents before any schemes were applied in their estates.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the report of the Estate Parking Scrutiny Review Panel in respect of the review of Estate Parking and the

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 OCTOBER 2005**

- conclusions and recommendations of the review be endorsed; and
- ii) That the report be referred to the Executive for its consideration

SC75. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY MEMBER REQUESTS (Agenda Item 11)

RESOLVED:

That Members' requests from the meeting of 24 October 2005 be added to the list and an update on progress be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

SC76. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS (Agenda Item 12)

There were no new items of urgent business.

Notes:

The meeting ended at 22:00HRS

Councillor Gideon Bull
Chair – Overview & Scrutiny Committee