
CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1/07/21

Present: Eryl Jones-Williams (Chair)
Angela Russell (Vice-Chair)

Councillors: Beca Brown, Anwen J Davies, R Medwyn Hughes, Berwyn Parry Jones, Gareth Tudor Morris Jones, Olaf Cai Larsen, Beth Lawton, Linda Morgan, Dewi Wyn Roberts

Officers present:

Bethan Adams (Scrutiny Advisor), Einir Rhian Davies (Democracy Services Officer), Llywela Haf Owain (Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor), Eirian Roberts (Democracy Services Officer), E Mererid Watt (Translator), Elin Wynne (Translator)

Present for item 7:

Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being and Link with the Health Service), Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Mari W Jones (Senior Manager Adults Services)

Present for item 8:

Councillor Dafydd Meurig (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being and Link with the Health Service), Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Alun G Williams (Senior Learning Disabilities Manager - South)

Present for item 9:

Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department) Marian P Hughes (Head of Children and Supporting Families Department), Catrin Thomas (Assistant Head Supporting Families).

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams as Chair of this Committee for 2021/22.

2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED to elect Councillor Angela Russell as Vice-chair of this Committee for 2021/22.

The former Chair, the former Vice-chair, Members of the Committee and the officers were thanked for their hard work.

3. APOLOGIES

Councillor Menna Baines, Councillor Anwen Daniels, Councillor Linda Jones, Councillor Dafydd Owen and A Morwena Edwards

4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Dewi Roberts, on item 7 as a member of his family worked in this field. The member was of the opinion that it was not a prejudicial interest, and he did not withdraw from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

Councillors O Cai Larsen and Berwyn Parry Jones as they were Board Members of Adra. The members were of the opinion that it was not a prejudicial interest, and they did not withdraw from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

5. URGENT BUSINESS

None to note.

6. MINUTES

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this Committee held on 18 March, 2021 as a true record.

7. SUPPORT TO INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH DEMENTIA IN GWYNEDD

The Cabinet Member provided an update on the support available to individuals and the dementia condition in Gwynedd, highlighting that it was an extremely busy time. It was highlighted that the number of dementia diagnoses was increasing and although Covid had been a challenging time, it was explained that the developmental work had continued.

The Senior Adults Services Manager added that the Covid period had forced the Department to revise how they offer the service to ensure that they complied with Covid regulations, along with offering the essential services to individuals. It was confirmed that the Population Needs Assessment was in the pipeline and it would give the Department greater understanding of the needs and the provision that will be needed locally for years to come.

It was confirmed that the next steps will be to revise the work plans that include the work that has been done by Dementia Actif, the support work and the work to adapt Council homes. Concerns were highlighted about core funding that would ensure that it would be possible to fund the work in future.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions, and the responses were noted as follows:

In terms of staff availability and suitability, it was confirmed that employing suitable staff with the correct skills was a challenge, but that the Council was making a substantial effort to attract suitable staff by developing an appropriate training programme. It was noted that there had been an increase in the number of staff being employed in the field, but there was a need to continue to attract staff to the field for any developments in the future.

In terms of the availability of specialist residential beds for individuals with Dementia, it was explained that most of the Council home beds were full and there were waiting lists.

Due to Covid restrictions, there had been a delay in opening a specialist dementia unit with 8 beds at one of the homes with the hope that it would be possible to open the unit gradually soon.

In discussing financial matters, it was explained that the Department was taking advantage of every possible opportunity for money from various sources. Concerns about long-term funding were highlighted as Government grants tended to be for 2- or 3-year periods.

It was noted that it was a difficult situation when individuals had to move from the area to receive service. The Senior Adults Services Manager confirmed that the Department was in the process of completing a section of work on out of county placements which highlighted where individuals were moving to receive care. This could be because there was no suitable provision available locally or down to personal choice.

In terms of Council plans to increase specialist Dementia Units in Gwynedd, it was confirmed that there were plans to expand, along with other similar schemes in the private sector. Dyffryn Nantlle Hub Scheme and the Penrhos Site were highlighted as future schemes emphasising that there was a need to address other areas also. It was explained that the Service would continue to work on progressive schemes and revise the investment programme within 12-18 months.

RESOLVED: To accept and note the report that gave an update and overview of what is in progress to support individuals living with Dementia in Gwynedd.

8. HOUSING PROVISION IN THE COMMUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Submitted - the report of the Cabinet Member who confirmed that the aim of the Service was to assist individuals with learning disabilities to live as independently as possible. It was explained that research had been undertaken which had anticipated additional demand for housing and support during the coming years. It was confirmed there was a comprehensive work programme in place which included a lot of joint working to deal with the numbers needing support.

The Senior Learning Disabilities Manager referred to the housing crisis and the challenges this posed for individuals who wished to live independently. It was explained that Covid had highlighted the need for housing provision and that the Department was looking to put steps in place to address the need. Reference was made to the system for prioritising the needs of individuals emphasising that the situation was always changing.

Members were given an opportunity to ask questions, and the responses were noted as follows:

There was reference to the prioritisation system which existed across the County identifying priorities as

'Red' - homeless or needing a house immediately, certainly in the next two years

'Amber' - living with parents/carers, or in a house, and needing a suitable house in the medium term, the next 3-5 years

'Green' - need to prepare for the time when a house will be needed in the long-term (5+ years).

It was confirmed there was good collaboration between the Council and Housing

Associations, especially Adra and Cynefin, although Gwynedd was prepared to go it alone, such as the house buying schemes that were already in the pipeline.

It was explained that further work was needed to look at the extent to which anticipating an individual's needs was considered in terms of housing options, to band individuals more fairly. It was further reported that some tracking work was being done, from 15 to 16 years old only noting the need to carry out further work with a younger age range.

In terms of the concern about the lack of bungalows in the context of the Social Grant of £9 million, it was noted that discussions had commenced, but needed developing further.

A comment was accepted that the report did not include a target date against the action steps and it was agreed that a timetable would be established.

In response to the above-mentioned points, the Head of Service reported there was a good relationship with the Housing Associations and that their input in the Strategy reflected the demand in the needs assessment.

To close, the Cabinet Member confirmed that there was good collaboration with others but that the needs of every individual was different and that the desire and the willingness was there to do what was needed. He noted the intention to turn this into an Action Plan and thanked the committee for its support in moving to the next steps.

RESOLVED: To accept and note the content of the report as well as stating support to include a programme and the next steps for the Learning Disabilities Service to ensure enough provision of suitable housing in the community for individuals with Learning Disabilities and to consider the challenges.

9. SCRUTINY DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Submitted – the draft work programme deriving from the workshop held, confirming that it was possible to amend it as time progressed.

RESOLVED: To adopt the scrutiny work programme 2021/22.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.40 pm

CHAIRMAN