

SOCIAL AFFAIRS SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2013 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Mrs. Cook (Chairman)

Cllr. Ms. Lowe (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Ball, Bosley, Brookbank, Butler, Ms. Chetram, Eyre, Firth,
Mrs. George, Horwood, Mrs. Purves, Raikes, Searles, Miss. Thornton and
Towell

Cllr. Mrs. Bosley was also present

20. Declarations of Interest

There were no additional declarations of interests made other than already registered.

Change in order of Agenda Items

With the agreement of the Committee the Chairman brought forward consideration of Agenda Item 6 to allow the speakers to leave early due to the inclement weather.

21. A Better Start for our Children

The Head of Community Development spoke on the Community Plan priority of a better start for our children, advising Members of the various schemes and groups in the District.

The Chairman welcomed Pete Turner Chief Executive of Carers First, and Hayley Bell Manager of Spring House Family Support Service, to the meeting.

Mr. Turner reported that Carers First had begun in 1991, became a limited company in 1996 in 2009 it had become the parent charity of Medway Carers Centre so now operated in Kent and Medway. It was an independent, charitable organisation supporting and helping carers and giving them comprehensive help through access to information and resources, discussion, advocacy, one-to-one support, and groups where they could meet other carers in similar situations. They also provided young carers support groups and activities as well as a befriending service for carers and older people. They were funded by Kent Social Services, Trusts, Connexions and private donations. Since 1991 they had grown into a significant charity and, subject to the standstill period, had just won the Kent County Council (KCC) contract for West Kent and Medway area provision of Carers Support and Assessment. KCC was putting significant funding into the contract for good reason. Adult Social Care wanted a transformation programme to look at how services were delivered. A large majority of the budget was in relation to the costs involved with residential and hospital admissions. The reality was that 45% of admissions were caused by carer breakdown therefore the support of carers in order to prevent this would lead to long term savings. We were living in an aging society and as a society these issues needed to be faced and debated. Recently the Princess Royal Trust had stated that carers made a comparative saving of up to £119 billion a year than if the care was delivered through the state. There were an estimated 175,000 young carers

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working more than 50 hours a week, but this was potentially the tip of the iceberg. He invited Members to come and see the projects and work that they did.

In response to questions, Mr. Turner advised that many young carers did not come forward for fear of bullying at school. Using data from the 2001 and 2011 Census there had been a 10% increase in those answering yes to the question of being an unpaid carer. As an example Medway had 26,000 carers, 8300 worked more than 50 hours, and the centre only knew 2000 of those. Some did not want to be identified. However they needed to be identified in order to help them access services and work with them at crisis and breakdown point in order to help prevent the need for hospital or residential care. There were a variety of ways they tried to reach carers such as workers in schools and hospitals, GP Surgeries, contacts with Social Services and Care Managers. An exciting idea was working with supermarkets, for example cashiers giving out leaflets to people they notice buying two lots of shopping, or pharmacies noticing people collecting prescriptions for other people.

He advised that Carers First worked closely with Voluntary Action West Kent (VAWK) and had won the contract to support the Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) forums for West Kent in partnership with them, and were in the process of bidding for a KCC young carer Lot. They had taken a strategic decision twelve months ago and had a very strong close relationship with VAWK.

The charity was a facilitator with links and partnerships ensuring a real and strategic focus and making sure the provision of services was not duplicated. Members could help by championing the charity's work, talking about it and raising awareness. A Member mentioned the possibility of an article in 'In Shape'. It was also suggested that it could be worth speaking at the STAG's Youth Café.

The Chairman welcomed the invitation to visit and the Committee showed their thanks and appreciation.

Hayley Bell Manager of Spring House Family Support Service, reported that the original charity had been founded in 1985, and had been delivering Sure Start since 2009 funded by KCC Social Services. Operating Spring House and 'Merry Go Round' which covered more rural and isolated areas. She gave a power point presentation outlining the core purposes and desired outcomes. Early intervention and getting it right so children were school ready and could fulfil their potential. She applauded the Council's HERO (Housing Energy Retraining Options) Project as an invaluable service. Multi agency team working with the HERO Officer, Health Visitors and midwives helped to identify the most vulnerable families in a much more efficient way and maximised what could be offered without duplication of service. In response to a question she explained that LSOA stood for 'Lower Super Output Area' which was a measure of multiple deprivation relating to income deprivation, employment deprivation, health deprivation and disability, education skills and training deprivation, barriers to housing and services, living environment deprivation, and crime.

A Member for Seal and Weald asked what could be done to help in her area. Mrs. Bell invited her to join their steering group to help inform their work. She reported that they did work closely with the Parish Councils, and had done the previous summer in delivering a summer play sessions. However this had been funded through a budget underspend so it was not clear whether that would be possible this summer. She explained that the catchment areas of the seven Sure Start centres in the district had

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been decided by KCC. However they did signpost families to centres they believed close or more easily accessible. For example families from Crockenhill would be signposted to the centre in Swanley.

A Member asked whether, with regards to the focusing vision of making children 'school ready', whether they got feedback from nurseries / pre schools as to where these children were in relation to their peers. She responded that there was a discussion as to the definition with the Early Years Advisor. The indicators used were a target of 78% in the six areas of learning by the end of the Reception year. They had a close relationship with some pre schools, and were now tracking with a pre school provider form and the information gained was informing the 'stay and play' sessions.

In response to a question as to whether families were anxious about the new welfare reforms and whether more HERO Officer support would be helpful, she replied that it would be a good thing and more HERO support was needed. In response to a question for any potential matched funding for further officers, she replied that it would be a priority to keep the service.

The Chairman thanked her for coming and the the Committee showed their thanks and appreciation. She encouraged Members to come and see their work and join the local steering groups.

22. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of the Social Affairs Select Committee held on 30 October 2013, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

23. Formal Response from the Cabinet following matters referred by the Committee and/or requests from the Performance and Governance Committee (please refer to the Minutes as indicated):

The response from Cabinet was noted.

24. Actions from previous meeting

The actions from the previous meeting were noted.

The Chairman understood it was not always possible for Members to attend arranged visits, but requested that when visits were arranged Members made their best endeavours to attend.

25. Future Business, the Work Plan 2012/13 and the Forward Plan

It was agreed to move the presentations by the Kenward Trust and the STAG to the meeting in June 2013. It was noted that there would be a report on Pest Control at the next meeting in March 2013. A Member queried when the 'Future of NHS in the District' would be considered. The Head of Community Development advised that, with such a wide issue as health, it would be helpful if the subject could be broken down into smaller topics. It was possible that local targets may arise from the Health Inequalities workshop on 25 January 2013.

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The Work Plan from April 2013 would need to reflect the new priorities of the new Community Plan.

26. Local Health Structures - Verbal Update

The Head of Community Development gave a [presentation](#) setting out the different groups currently covering health issues to give a better picture of what was going on. The KCC would have a Health and Wellbeing Board but, because of the large area covered, had also decided to set up Local Health and Wellbeing Boards based on Clinical Commissioning Group boundaries. There would therefore be six local Health and Wellbeing Boards in Kent and this District was covered by two. The District Council was invited to send a Member and an Officer to both boards. In answer to a question from a Member, it was noted that Locality Boards focused on a number of different areas, including health. Locality Boards selected their own priorities.. The Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Community and Planning Services clarified that the Health Action Team coordinated and delivered projects physically on the ground rather than looking at strategy and planning.

27. Community Plan 2013-2016 and 15 Year Vision - Public Consultation Draft

The Committee considered the draft Community Plan 2013-2016 and 15 Year Vision - Public Consultation document. Members discussed the document made a number of corrections / suggestions and agreed to email further thoughts and comments to the Head of Community Development. It was noted that the final document would be presented to the Committee in March 2013.

Members were concerned that the priorities relating to social housing did not focus on the distribution of social housing across the District. For example, the issue of Sevenoaks not having as much social housing as Edenbridge and less in rural than urban areas.

Action 1: That the Head of Community Development seek advice from with the Head of Housing and Communications and the Group Manager – Planning as to whether a change could be made to the draft Community Plan to reflect this.

28. Feedback from Members' Visits

The Vice Chairman reported the information received via the thread on Mumsnet, and advised that this would now be handed over to the KCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). The stories received had highlighted that there were potentially still issues that needed to be addressed, the main one possibly being empathy of staff and therefore staff training. Most of the stories had related to Pembury but it was felt this was due to the title of the thread. Members discussed whether an exit questionnaire would help hospitals identify potential failings as people seemed reluctant to complain. The Chairman and Vice Chairman hoped to attend the meeting of the County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee at which this would be discussed.

Members noted the report on the visit to the Sevenoaks Fire Station.

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29. Programme of Visitors to Future Meetings of the Committee (Including a list of Voluntary Organisations)

It was noted that in line with the amendments made to the Work Plan, the presentations by the Kenward Trust and STAG would move to the June 2013 meeting.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 9.15 pm

Chairman