

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2008-09

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Role of the Committee

The Adult Social Care and Health Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the Council's functions in relation to social care provision for adults. The Adult Social Care Revenue budget for 2008-09 was over £107 million in addition to a substantial Capital Programme budget. We also scrutinise the activity of the Leicestershire County and Rutland NHS Primary Care Trust, which has a budget of £800 million, and is responsible for commissioning health care services across the County and Rutland.

The full commitment of Members, officers, senior managers from partner organisations and the PCT to the Committee is fully recognised. Members have worked tirelessly to gain a thorough understanding of the issues, particularly the Spokespersons. Good working relationships have been maintained and Members continue to develop more robust, penetrating and forensic questioning techniques, while acting as critical friends to further the scrutiny process. Dutiful scrutiny has helped Leicestershire remain the only County Council in England to have retained the top Adult Social Care 3 star rating since their inception in 2002.

During the year the Committee Chairman and the Spokespersons volunteered to become Older People Champions.

Agenda setting

In order to discuss emerging issues, plan and agree the longer term strategy the Chairman, Spokespersons, officers and, as appropriate, the Cabinet Lead Member attend meetings some time before each regular Committee meeting. This provides a platform for setting the final agenda for the next Committee meeting. Agenda items are identified that the Cabinet Lead Member will be invited to so that he is available to answer any questions that Members may wish to put to him.

The Chairman, Spokespersons and officers met senior officers of the NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT in March to discuss what their emerging issues are.

Panels

A 5 member Panel was set up to look into what outcomes Practice Based Commissioning offers to County residents and how their health and wellbeing can be improved. The final report was welcomed by the full committee and the Cabinet.

NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT also welcomed the final report and stated that it added real value to their work and said the review was an outstanding example of the benefits of what the overview and scrutiny committee process brings to partners.

The Chairman of the Panel Mr A D Bailey CC has formally presenting the report with a supporting officer to the recently established Centre for Public Scrutiny Health Accountability Forum, and will soon will be presenting the report to the NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT Board.

Training and Seminars

Part of the role of the Committee is to gain an understanding of relevant subject matter. To that end, members have attended various training sessions and seminars in addition to regularly researching topics prior to meetings to better equip themselves to effectively scrutinise the issues. These have included:

- ✓ Workshops to help scrutinise the County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy, and briefings on the service and financial planning and pressures on council budgets, particularly Adult Social Care.
- ✓ A Risk Management Workshop.
- ✓ A Carers' Strategy meeting as this strategy involves an important partnership with NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland PCT.
- ✓ An Equality and Diversity Workshop.
- ✓ A Community Health Services Review briefing for Members and a presentation by the PCT.
- ✓ A training workshop to help members to be better equipped to scrutinise the Community Health Services Review.
- ✓ A training workshop on How to Effectively Scrutinise NHS Commissioning Plans.

Involvement in Inspections

One of the requirements of the Chairman this year has been to represent the Committee as part of a team to external inspectors as the council was successful in being short listed for the Council of the Year Award. In January judges visited Adult Social Care and Health stands at Loughborough University. The judges were the Chief Executive of the Audit Commission and the Director General for the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Additional Responsibilities

The Chairman of this committee is usually during the first 2 years of the electoral cycle elected as the Chairman of Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For the following 2 years this is held by Leicester City Council and the County Council holds the Vice Chairmanship. Details are shown in Appendix 1.

I attend meetings during the year of the East Midlands Health Scrutiny Network and Steering Group as I am a Member of both.

Work Undertaken

Adult Social Care Issues

This year we have considered a wide range of issues surrounding the provision of Adult Social Care in Leicestershire, which are listed in Appendix 2 to this report. Two examples are highlighted below.

At the request of the Scrutiny Commission we followed up poor take-up of Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

Many older people could receive more money by coming forward to claim the allowances and benefits they are entitled to. We looked at what more can be done to improve the take-up of these benefits. This is a LAA target shared between the 7 district councils and the county council. Progress is being very carefully monitored.

When scrutinising the draft 2009/10 County Council budget the Committee challenged two of the proposed increases and asked the Cabinet to reconsider them. One of these was the proposal to increase by a total of £115,000 the hourly and weekly charges for Home Care. The Cabinet took note of the robust reasons why these increases were opposed by the committee and agreed to remove them.

Health Issues

We have scrutinised the proposed 8 – 8 Walk in Centre in South Leicestershire. The Leicestershire and Rutland Local Medical Committee solicitor and Chief Executive attended the meeting and the Leicestershire County and Rutland NHS PCT were represented by the Professional Executive Committee Chair, the Director of Primary Care and the Interim Medical Director. The proposal was carefully considered and supported by the committee.

Because of the 'credit crunch' one of the key issues we have considered this year is the Primary Care Trust's performance against statutory and administrative financial targets. The Committee has monitored the financial position to prevent any surprises. We have been assured that there will not be any 'end of year significant overspends' as they now have a regime of strict financial controls. We welcome the high level of officer representation at our meetings and the openness and honesty of the PCT and look forward to this continuing.

Last year the Committee requested a report on the use of 0844/5 numbers by GP surgeries, in response to patient concerns. Our comments were acknowledged by the PCT and, although they are currently tied by contractual obligations, we welcome the commitment they have made to revisit this issue when the opportunity arises; however, we are still very concerned about this.

We welcomed involvement in the Community Health Services Review at an early stage, as this provided us with an opportunity to influence the development of the proposals. When the training already referred to was delivered it concluded by Members drafting a list of questions to ask the PCT.

After this the Chairman, Spokespersons and officers met to finalise this list of questions and then sent it to the PCT requesting a written response. The questions were based around Consultation, Finance, Service Provision, Quality, Access to Services, Impact on other Agencies and Implementation.

On receipt of the written response from the PCT the Chairman, Spokespersons and officers met again and agreed that several further points of clarification were necessary

as we were concerned about the potential impact on social services. Several Committee meetings were held throughout the consultation process.

Issues Followed Up

The Committee has followed up the excellent work of the Review Panel on Access to NHS Dentistry in Leicestershire. The Chairman was Mrs J A Dickinson CC. We forwarded the report and recommendations to the PCT and have received a further report from them on the progress made with implementing the recommendations. We were pleased to note that a number of changes either have been made or are planned for the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Members of the Committee and officers at all levels for their valued support over the last 12months.

Finally I would like to emphasise the fact that Members have invested a considerable amount of their time energy and thought in order to ensure this committee thoroughly scrutinises relevant issues.



Dave Houseman CC Chairman of the Leicestershire County Council Adult Social Care and Health Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

16.3.09

Appendix 1

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Vice Chairman Dave Houseman

Although not within the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report, for the sake of completeness the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been included as a footnote.

The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee comprises councillors from Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council. It overviews and scrutinises the activities of the following NHS trusts which provide services to the area served by all three Councils:-

- ❖ University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust with a budget of £620m*
- ❖ Leicestershire Partnership Trust (which provides mental health and learning disability services) with a budget of £138m*
- ❖ East Midlands Ambulance Trust with a total budget for the East Midlands of £139.6m. (for the Leicestershire and Rutland Division the budget is £20.9m)*

Key issues considered this year are as follows:-

- The Joint Committee asked Leicestershire Partnership Trust to reconsider their revised proposals for closure of The Grange Respite Care Home in the light of complaints from carers and users. They are now doing so.*
- The Joint Committee welcomed continued involvement with the East Midlands Ambulance Service regarding their Stand by Points Strategy, as well as their Estates Strategy, particularly on the proposals to close Syston Ambulance Station.*
- A major issue the Joint Committee considered this year was the UHL Trust's External Auditors Annual Audit Letter for 2007-08 as they dropped overall from 3 (performing well) to 2 (adequate performance).*
- We have also been monitoring the Leicestershire Partnership Trust's aim to ensure that all their staff has a current Personal Development Plan. This is an important issue because the Trust has declared non compliance in their Annual submission to the Healthcare Commission for the last 3 years.*

A visit this year was made to the Leicester Urgent Care Centre based at the Leicester Royal Infirmary.

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and officers visited the UHL Trust Head Office to meet the new Chief Executive. This was to ascertain how he intended to improve local healthcare and establish what initial strategic plans he had after the collapse of the Pathway Project.

A training workshop hosted by Leicester City Council was held in January to assist Members scrutinise Foundation Trust applications.

Appendix 2

Issues considered by the Leicestershire County Council Adult Social Care and Health Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- County Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2009/10 to 2012/13
- Inspection of Independence, Wellbeing and Choice – Progress Report on Implementation of Action Plan.
- Commented on the NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland Declaration against the Healthcare Commission Standards for Better Health
- Local Priorities for NHS Leicestershire County and Rutland Operating Plan – 2009-10
- Annual Performance Assessment of Adult Care Services
- Out of Hours Urgent Medical Care Provision in Hinckley and Bosworth
- Adult Social Care Resource Allocation System
- Proposed 8 – 8 Centre in South Leicestershire proposed by Leicestershire County and Rutland NHS PCT
- Community Health Services Review
- PCT Financial position update
- Practice Based Commissioning - Final Report of the Scrutiny Review Panel
- Benefit Uptake by Older People
- Use of Assistive Technology
- Update on the PCT Operating Plan 2008-9
- Update Report on the Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel on Access to NHS Dentistry in Leicestershire on the PCT Operating Plan 2008-9
- Standards for Better Health Declaration 2008/09 PCT

- Personalising Adult Social Care
- Developing Day Services for Disabled People in Charnwood
- Annual Complaints and Commendation Report 2007-08
- Community Health Services Review – Scrutiny of the PCT Public Consultation
- Community Health Services Review – Outline of the proposal for a Public Consultation given to the committee by the PCT
- Inspection of Independence, Wellbeing and Choice
- Annual Report of the Safeguarding Adult Board 2007-08
- Carers' Strategy – Outcome of Consultations
- Briefing on 03 Numbers
- Adult Social Care Service Plan 2008-09
- Community Meals Service Review
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- George Elliot Hospital NHS Trust Application for Foundation Trust Status
- The 'Darzi' Review and Review of Community Hospitals

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