

Decisions of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

10 April 2014

Members Present:-

Councillor Kate Salinger (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Alison Cornelius	Councillor Kath McGuirk
Councillor Barry Evangeli	Councillor Brian Salinger
Councillor Brian Gordon	Councillor Agnes Slocombe
Councillor Anne Hutton	Councillor Julie Johnson (In place of Zakia Zubairi)

Also in attendance

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Bridget Perry	Councillor Zakia Zubairi
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1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be agreed as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bridget Perry. Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Zakia Zubairi, who was substituted for by Councillor Julie Johnson.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Member	Subject	Interest Declared
Councillor Julie Johnson	Adoption Service Annual Report 2013/14)	Non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a Member of the Adoption Panel.

4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (IF ANY)

There were none.

5. MEMBERS' ITEMS (SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 9) (IF ANY)

There were none.

6. BARNET HEALTHWATCH ENTER AND VIEW REPORTS

Selina Rodrigues, the Head of Healthwatch Barnet at CommUnity Barnet, introduced a report that contained the Enter and View visits undertaken by volunteers to the following premises in Barnet: Sonesta Nursing Home; Nightingale Hammerson House; and Grace House.

Sonesta Nursing Home:

Ms. Rodrigues advised the Committee that the volunteers had highlighted that Nightingale Hammerson was undergoing a significant programme of change, which was being highlighted by both residents and staff. The Committee noted that food had been raised as an issue at the home, but that the volunteers were aware that the home was taking action to address this.

Ms. Rodrigues advised the Committee that as a result of the change that the nursing home was undergoing, the premise was being recommended for a re-visit by the Enter and view Team.

Referring to the Sonesta Nursing Home Report, a Member questioned if two of the HealthWatch volunteers who had visited were related. Ms Rodrigues advised that they were. Ms Rodrigues advised that it would normally be the case that they would carry out the same visit, but on this occasion, these were the volunteers available on that specific date for the visit. As a point of information, Ms Rodrigues noted that the Enter and View volunteer teams are usually of four people, comprising both men and women.

A Member of the Committee expressed concerns that some corridors only had hand rails on one side. Ms. Rodrigues advised that it could be possible that the number of handrails might depend on the width of the corridor, and that she would take this matter back to Sonesta Nursing Home.

A Member expressed concern that the Enter and View Volunteers did not see any drinks being served with the meal during their visit. The Committee noted the importance of drinking water and requested that this be raised with the nursing home.

Nightingale Hammerson:

A Member of the Committee noted that food had been mentioned as an issue in the home.

Grace House:

A Member of the Committee commented that the Enter and View team had expressed concern over records and policies not being produced when required.

A Member of the committee questioned how many HealthWatch Enter and View visits had taken place within Barnet to date. Ms. Rodrigues advised that 21 visits had taken place to date, and that there was a target of 30 visits in the first year.

A Member of the Committee expressed concern over the visibility of nursing homes from the road, commenting that Grace House was reported to not have a sign displaying the home's name. The Member advised that poor visibility could be a problem for

emergency services. Ms. Rodrigues advised that she would take this matter up with Grace House.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Committee note the Enter and View Reports;**
- 2) The Committee request that HealthWatch Barnet pass their concerns about handrails to Sonesta Nursing Home;**
- 3) The Committee request that HealthWatch Barnet clarify the policy of serving drinks with meals at Sonesta Nursing Home.;**
- 4) The Committee request that HealthWatch Barnet raise the issue of visibility and signage at Grace House with the home.**

7. LOCAL ACCOUNT OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

The Cabinet Member for Adults introduced a report which provided a public statement on local adult social care services. In introducing the report, the Cabinet Member for Adults noted that the incidence of dementia is expected to increase as people live longer.

Responding to a question from a Member, the Cabinet Member for Adults advised the Committee that the Local Account of Adult Social Care would be made available in libraries across the Borough, that there were 600 copies and 100 easy-read copies available, in addition to the published version online.

Responding to a comment from a Member, the Cabinet Member for Adults advised the Committee that signposting people who are in need of assistance to the correct service was of great importance. A Member commented that often, the most vulnerable people were the hardest to reach.

Commenting on signposting, the Cabinet Member for Adults advised the Committee that the Health and Wellbeing Being Board was ensuring that GPs and the Council's partners had the correct information to signpost effectively. The Cabinet Member also noted that there was a responsibility on Councillors to signpost constituents.

A Member commented that just publishing the Local Account was not communicating widely enough, and advised that every Officer who worked in the public sector should have an understanding of signposting. A Member advised that providers beyond the health services such as schools and colleges should be used to publicise the social services available in Barnet.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the Local Account of Adult Social Care.

8. THE CARE BILL UPDATE REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Adults introduced a report that set out the main points from the forthcoming changes to social care legislation as set out in the Care Bill which includes adult safeguarding in primary legislation for the first time. The report also set out the implications upon the Local Authority and the approach being taken to prepare for the new requirements.

In introducing the report, the Cabinet Member for Adults noted that people are living longer, particularly in Barnet. The Cabinet Member for Adults noted that many people wished to live independently in their own homes for as long as they could and that the Local Authority encouraged that.

A Member questioned how funding concerns within adult social care could be addressed. The Cabinet Member for Adults informed the Committee that he accepted that there was a funding challenges for both younger and older adults and advised that a focus on an individual's well-being was essential.

A Member of the Committee questioned where responsibility lay in terms of advising members of the public who were affected by the change to social care legislation. The Cabinet Member for Adults advised that he believed the Local Authority had a legal responsibility to advise affected people, and stressed the need to monitor this.

A Member of the Committee requested that a further report be considered by the successor in the following Municipal year.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Committee request that an item on The Care Bill / Act be considered by the successor Committee in the 2014/15 Municipal year;**
- 2) The Committee note the report.**

9. APPLICATION OF MENTAL CAPACITY ACT 2005 AND DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY SAFEGUARDS

The Cabinet Member for Adults introduced a report that highlighted the work of the Safeguarding Adults Team and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Teams (DoLS) Team in relation to adherence to the Mental Capacity Act and the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

Karen Jackson, the Assistant Director for Adult Social Care advised the Committee that the Mental Capacity Act was at the heart of the Safeguarding Adults Strategy. Ms. Jackson advised that the strategy sought to protect the rights of vulnerable people, and that it should be used to support decision making in Barnet. Ms. Jackson stressed the importance of those with Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards having their voice heard.

A Member of the Committee asked what the Voiceability Service was. Ms. Jackson informed the Committee that Voiceability was an independent advocacy service to ensure that the voice of individuals were heard. A Member noted that legislation surrounding DoLS had changed a year ago, and questioned if there were any statistics how many people had been affected by the changes. Ms. Jackson advised that there were approximately 50 requests last year.

A Member commented that the report noted that there were 105 care homes registered with the CQC within the Borough, 19 of which were registered nursing homes, and 85 of which were residential. The Member questioned which home was missing from the total 105. Ms. Jackson advised that she would inform the Committee outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) **The Committee request to be advised of the remaining care home as set out in the minutes;**
- 2) **The Committee note the report.**

10. CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY PANEL ANNUAL REPORT

The Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families requested that Agenda Item 10, the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel, be considered alongside Agenda Item 11 (Adoption Service Annual Report 2013/14) and Agenda Item 12 (Fostering Service Annual Report) The Vice-Chairman agreed to this request.

In introducing the reports, the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families advised that he was pleased with the reduction of the number of children in care within Barnet.

Referring to the Fostering Service Annual Report, the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families advised that there was a high retention rate of foster parents within the Borough but noted that recruitment of foster carers was expected to be an on-going challenge within Barnet.

A Member advised that she was a Member of the Adoption Panel, and expressed concerned with a Government push towards Special Guardianship. Ms. Francis advised the Committee that a Special Guardianship Order was a way of appointing a person to be a child's 'special guardian', and noted that it is intended for children who cannot live with their birth parents and who would benefit from a legally secure placement, but for them adoption was not considered to be appropriate.

Responding to a question from a Member, Ms. Francis advised that the Children's Act requires every local authority to have appropriate arrangements to champion the education of children in the authority's care. The Committee noted that the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee would be receiving a detailed presentation on the details of the Education Champions scheme at a forthcoming meeting.

11. ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

As set out in Agenda Item 10.

12. FOSTERING ANNUAL REPORT

As set out in Agenda Item 10.

13. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ACT

The Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families introduced a report which set out the main requirements of the Children and Families Act that will impact upon services in Barnet, and set out the actions being taken in order to meet the requirements of the new legislation. In introducing the reports, the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families highlighted a provision of the Act which saw the replacement of the current

system of statements and learning difficulty assessments, with a single 0-25 Education Health and Care Plan, which retains all the protections of statements.

The Committee noted that the Children and Families Bill (Act) project was on-going and that three work-streams had been established:

- Local Offer
- Education, Health and Care Plans
- Personal Budgets.

The Committee noted that the project was designed to ensure that the key requirements of the legislation are met in line with the statutory timetable, with provisions coming into effect from September 2014.

Referring to a question from a Member, Ms. Francis advised that that the Education and Skills Director would lead on the Virtual School Heads and Special Educational Needs (SEN) aspects of the project.

A Member noted that the provisions of the Act for children and young people, including those with disabilities, will extend the SEN system from birth to 25, and expressed concerned that children with disabilities might not be recognised.

14. SAFEGUARDING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the work programme as set out in the report.

The Committee moved a vote of thanks to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for their Chairmanship over the municipal year.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the work programme of the 2013/14 municipal year.

15. ANY OTHER ITEMS THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

16. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

17. MEMBER'S VISITS

RESOLVED that the Committee note the exempt information.

18. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

The meeting finished at 9.20 pm