

SOCIAL INCLUSION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2nd November 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Hinkley (Chair); Councillors Abid, Bullock, M Hussain, Shaw and Skepelhorn

60 MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st September 2006 be taken as read, approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

61 DAY CARE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY (REF: 8.1)

The Learning Disability Service Manager reported in regard to the progress made on implementing the Modernisation of Adult Learning Disability Day Services Plan. Members were informed that the lease for the Downside Centre would cease in April 2007, as Beds County Council required the building back for other purposes. He added that the process of person-centred profiling of each individual service user at Downside was nearly completed, and the outline community timetables for individuals had been designed. He went on to say that in regard to developing new supported employment and community based opportunities for people, £80K of Transformation funding had been secured to help transition people to community activities and the development of further social enterprises.

A Member enquired whether or not jobs in catering and administration at the Chaul End Centre had enhanced opportunities for people with a disability.

The Director of Housing and Community Living replied that the Learning Disabilities Services was looking at all day opportunities, such as the multiple use community centres for people with disabilities in conjunction with the Community Development Unit.

A Member enquired if funding for such schemes was available.

The Director of Housing and Community Living replied that funding would have to come from existing resources. The Learning Disability Service Manager added that some funding might be obtained from external funding as well.

A Member commented that the Chaul End Centre had been unsuccessful, as the community it was intended for could not afford to use its facilities. He added that the Council already had people with disabilities working at the Lewsey Community Centre and felt that the Council would be in danger of reinventing the wheel.

The Chair suggested that an update report be submitted after April 2007.

Resolved: (i) That the report (REF: 8.1) be noted.

(ii) That the Learning Disability Service Manager submit a further report after April 2007 in regard to the Modernisation of Adult Learning Disability Day Services Plan.

62 SOCIAL HOUSING IN NEIGHBOURING AREAS – EVIDENCE (REF: 8.2)

The Head of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) briefed the Committee on the process and progress of providing additional affordable housing to meet the housing needs of residents of Luton in neighbouring authorities. The Committee were informed that there were three strands to providing social housing in neighbouring areas. These were:

- National Affordable Housing Programme (NAHP).
- Choice Base Lettings Scheme.
- Tenancy Nomination Agreements with Housing Associations in Neighbouring Areas.

The Head of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) informed Members that South Beds District Council (SBDC) had secured £5m funding for a new housing scheme at Sandringham Drive in Houghton Regis for the development of approximately 150 to 190 dwellings, of which up to 49% would be affordable, with some special needs provision for people with learning disabilities and mental health issues. SBDC had also agreed in principle, that some of the tenancies at the new development could be made available to Luton Housing Register applications. He added that in addition, SBDC had also secured a corporation grant of £7.5m, under 'Growth' investment scheme for a development in Leighton Buzzard for 160 units, of which other authorities including Luton would have access to some of the tenancies. He concluded that the detail of this agreement still had to be finalised.

A Member raised concern that some authorities had not followed regional guidelines on social housing. He added that property developers were swapping land in Leighton Buzzard so that all social housing would be in one location rather than spread throughout the development.

The Head of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) replied that the objective of the project in Leighton Buzzard was to build sustainable developments and to establish mixed communities.

A Member enquired how many tenancies would be made available to Luton in Sandringham Drive.

The Head of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) replied that this was the first time that SBDC had offered tenancies to Luton, therefore the number of tenancies would not be high.

The Director of Housing and Community Living commended the work carried out by the Head of Housing (Strategy and Private Sector) to secure tenancies in neighbouring areas.

Resolved: That the report (REF: 8.2) be noted.

63 REVIEW OF ASSESSMENT ON THE NEW ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR EXISTING CUSTOMERS (REF: 8.3)

The Head Of Adult Social Care gave a report on the implementation of new eligibility criteria for existing customers. The Committee were informed that on the 1st April 2006, the threshold for eligibility was raised from moderate and above to substantial and critical. She added that at present, only 85% of existing customers who received a service had been reviewed; therefore it would be inappropriate to make predictions regarding the outcomes for the remaining 15%. She suggested that a further report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee to enable the overall position in relation to impact upon current customers to be reported.

The Director of Housing and Community Living commented that so far, only a minority of existing service users had not met the criteria to receive Community Care.

Resolved: (i) That the report (REF: 8.3) be noted.

(ii) That the Head Of Adult Social Care submit a further report to the next meeting of the Committee in regard to the implementation of the new eligibility criteria for Adult Social Care.

(Note: Councillor Shaw disclosed a personal and prejudicial interest in the above item, insofar as his father-in-law was in residential care and left the room during consideration of the matter.

64 TENANTS PARTICIPATION – REVISED SCOPE AND PROJECT ACTION PLAN (REF: 8.4)

The Scrutiny Officer gave a report in regard to the revised scope and project action plan of the tenant's participation review. At its previous meeting, the Committee had requested that the scope included tenants and residents

rather than just council tenants. This had now been incorporated into the project action plan.

A Member commented that with the introduction of the Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities, the scrutiny topic (Tenants Participation) would be superseded. He added that it was an ideal time to establish a Community Engagement Working Group including the Third Sector, Councillors, Officers and members of Tenants Consultative Committees to scrutinise Tenants Participation, using the Community Developments Strategy once completed. He went on to say that if the working group was set up before the 1st April 2007, Government funding might be available.

The Chair suggested that the Area Committee Support Officer be requested to attend the next meeting of the Committee to discuss the formation of a Community Engagement Working Group. She added that attendees of Area Committees could be invited to participate in the Community Engagement Working Group.

A Member suggested that the Corporate Leaders Management Team (CLMT) could arrange support to establish a Community Engagement Working Group.

Resolved: (i) That the report (REF: 8.4) be noted.

(ii) That the Area Committee Support Officer be requested to attend the next meeting of the committee to discuss the formation of a Community Engagement Working Group.

(iii) That the Director of Housing and Community Living be instructed to submit a report to the CLMT requesting that it establish a Community Engagement Working Group.

65 PRIORITY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (REF: 8.5)

The Director of Scrutiny presented a report on Priority Performance Indicators. He reported that at its meeting held on 24th October, 2006 the Scrutiny Board had considered a report of the Policy and Performance Manager entitled "Performance and Finance Reporting".

He advised that Scrutiny Board Members had commended the new report format and the comprehensive and graphical presentation of data therein, including the use of colour but had commented that for Scrutiny Members to make use of the information it required them to access it via their computers at home. The Director of Scrutiny further advised that the provision of suitable computer facilities for Members at home to enable them to make best use of the

Council's information network and systems and, in particular the new reports on performance and finance, was being reviewed currently.

The Director of Scrutiny confirmed that although Priority Performance Indicators would not appear on future Agenda pages, any particular areas under the new report format that Members wished to consider at Committee would be placed on the Agenda.

The Director of Housing and Community Living suggested that the Committee scrutinise Performance Indicators and a schedule of PI's drawn up by the Head of Adult Social Care and Heads of Housing on a regular basis.

Resolved: (i) That the report (Ref: 8.5) be noted.

(ii) That the Committee scrutinise Performance Indicators.

(iii) That the Head of Adult Social Care and Heads of Housing draw up a schedule of Performance Indicator's and report to the Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis.

66 SOCIAL INCLUSION WORK PROGRAMME (REF: 8.6)

The Scrutiny Officer updated the Committee of the details of the latest version of its Work Programme.

Resolved: That the report be noted.

(Note: The meeting ended at 7.20 p.m.)