

Environment and Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 8 June 2006

Present: Councillor Alan Cullens (Chair) and Councillors Peter Baker, Alan Cain, Michael Davies, Doreen Dickinson, Anthony Gee, Daniel Gee, Keith Iddon, Miss Margaret Iddon, Roy Lees and Edward Smith

06.ECS.18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors A Lowe and M Lowe.

06.ECS.19 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

No members declared any interests in relation to matters under consideration at the meeting.

06.ECS.20 MINUTES

RESOLVED - 1) That the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 15 March 2006 and the last meeting of the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 14 March 2006 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2) That the task that had been given to the Panel in the previous Municipal Year on the use of renewable energy within the Borough and the area the Council would take a lead on this issue on a cost neutral basis be progressed as soon as possible.

06.ECS.21 WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH IN LANCASHIRE - CONSULTATION ON MODERNISATION OF HOSPITAL SERVICES

The Panel received a consultation document compiled by the Lancashire Joint Primary Care Trust requesting the authority to respond to their proposals by 14 July 2006.

Ms J Faux, Chief Executive of Chorley and South Ribble Primary Care Trust attended the meeting and gave a presentation consulting and advising Members of the mental health public consultation.

In summary the changes will affect people over the age of 16 years who live in Lancashire who come into contact with mental health services.

The Primary Care Trust wanted to develop services that help and support people in their own homes and communities. The Government supports the PCT's views.

In summary the PCT wanted mental health services to:

- support people in their recovery from the effects of their mental health problems.
- provide more mental health services to people in their homes and communities.
- provide more support to help people with their own personal development and help them to have access to the same opportunities enjoyed by all citizens.
- promote positive mental health and well-being in all communities.
- provide better support to carers.

There were currently 15 specialist adult and older mental health service hospital sites across Lancashire which will be directly affected by the proposed changes. They are of various size and generally the buildings are of poor quality and inadequate.

The new community mental health services will, in the near future, reduce the need for people to go into hospital. Because of this we would need fewer hospital beds. At the moment there are 707 beds and PCT think they will need about 450 in the future. However, the final number of beds will be worked out locally. It would cost less money to build new hospital sites, than it would to improve the current units.

Having new hospital sites would allow the PCT to make huge improvements and offer hotel-like quality rooms and facilities. Also the PCT could offer more specialist hospital services like a young person unit and services for people who are disabled.

The PCT want to develop local crisis and respite houses as alternatives to going into hospital. Any money saved from hospital changes will go into these types of new community mental health services.

The PCT are seeking your views on the following proposals to:

- provide more services to local communities to support people at home or as near to home as possible.
- fewer NHS beds.
- build three new state-of-the-art mental health hospital sites, one in each of the following areas:
 - Central and West Lancashire
 - East Lancashire
 - Fylde Coast
- The 15 existing mental health hospital units provided by Lancashire Care NHS trust will no longer be needed.

The proposals were not about saving money but investing and improving the mental health service in Lancashire.

The PCT had requested the Council's views on their proposals for change to mental health services in Lancashire and opinions on the following questions, by answering either yes, no or don't know.

1. Do you agree with the general principles for improving mental health services?
2. Do you agree with our proposals to convert or close the existing mental health units, create three new mental health in-patient sites and release funding to provide improved community services such as crisis support and respite services?
3. Do you agree that the main elements of a good mental health crisis service are provided by a range of professionals from different health and social care agencies?
4. Do you have any other ideas for improving and modernising mental health services which you think that we should consider?

Members welcomed the proposals for care in the community and to increase the standard and better service for mental health and raised several issues and welcomed the fact that there would be no impact on existing Primary Care Trust arrangements.

In general the Panel supported the proposals.

06.ECS.22 BUSINESS PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT JANUARY TO MARCH 2006

The Panel received the final quarterly updates of the Business Plan for the Environmental Services, Leisure and Cultural Services, Housing Services, Development and Regeneration Directorates and the Public Space Services Unit which fall within the remit and area of responsible of the Panel.

In relation to the Business Plan for Environmental Services Members raised issues regarding the impact on staff of the recent restructuring, the number of missed recycling collections, Housing Stock transfer and the activities of the neighbourhood warden service.

**RESOLVED - 1) That the Business Plan Monitoring Statement report be noted.
2) That the Neighbourhood Wardens, including Neighbourhood Policing, be included in any scrutiny work programme for the 2006/07 Municipal Year.**

Chair