
HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES COMMITTEE 07.05.04

Present:- Councillor Michael Clishem (Chairman)

Councillors William Arthur Evans, Peter Gaffey, Keith Greenly-Jones, Pat Larsen, Dafydd Owen, Ieuan Roberts, Jean Roscoe and R.H. Wyn Williams.

Also present:- Dafydd Lewis (Strategic Director – Care), Glyn Hughes (Head of Social Services), Dilys Phillips (Head of Administrative and Public Protection Services), Ffrancon Williams (Head of the Housing Service), Emyr Vaughan Evans (Senior Policy and Performance Manager - Care), Emyr Searell Jones (Senior Manager - Public Protection), Gareth Jones (Senior Manager - Administrative and Legal Service), Richard Jones (Scrutiny Officer), Dafydd Williams (Assistant General Manager – Provider Services), Shân Williams (Health, Social Care and Well-being Officer) and Llywela Haf Owain (Committee Clerk).

Apologies:- Councillors Tony Eccles, Seimon Glyn, Henry Jones, R. L. Jones, W. Roy Owen and Idris Jones (Gwynedd and Môn Age Concern).

1. DIRECTORATE AND UNITS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLANS

i. Introduction

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report of the Head of Policy Services which sets out the context of the improvement plans.

It was reported that as a result of the restructuring, the planning procedure for the improvement plans had changed. It was noted that the improvement plans reflect the new structure and are brief and easy to read and monitor. It was explained that every directorate has a plan which will set out the vision and summarise details regarding its duties, its resources and priorities as well as the key indicators of the directorate. To elaborate on this it was explained that every service within the directorates has a service business plan which includes details of how objectives, priorities and targets are intended to be achieved. It was also noted that they include statement of purpose, core work targets, specific improvements and detailed action plans and reference was made to the fact that staff at every level had provided input.

ii. Care Directorate Improvement Plan

The Strategic Director – Care presented a report on the above.

It was reported:

- i) that the directorate vision is to provide high quality care services to all Gwynedd residents as the need arises and aiming to improve the quality of life for individuals and families

- ii) that the plans identify the main issues that need to be addressed over the next year across the directorate, those issues which have a high element of risk for the Council if they do not tackle the matter. It was noted that the 12 plans are intended to be included in the Council's improvement plan.

The members expressed the following comments on the plans:

- the proposed plans were praised.
- concern was expressed by Councillor William Arthur Evans that there were too many objectives to be achieved within the stated timescale and that there aren't enough staff and financial resources available. He added that he believes it would be better to have a strategy for a period of more than a year.
- concern was noted by the members regarding staffing problems in the directorate. The Welfare and Social Services Portfolio Leader expressed her wish to see the salaries of social workers being standardised throughout the country. At the moment different sums are paid by local authorities.

In response to questions from members he noted:

- i) that the Wanless report was a review of how health and social care is financed. It was explained that the conclusion of the report was that there was too much expenditure on hospital treatment with a specific acute course and as a result the National Assembly for Wales asked local authorities in collaboration with the Local Health Boards to present a plan which would reduce expenditure in this area.
- ii) that it would be extremely difficult to cut down on the proposed objectives and plans as they are issues that truly need to be addressed
- iii) that the intention is to report back to this committee regarding the improvement plans every 6 months and there will be an opportunity for members to monitor the progress of the plans and put questions to officers at that time.
- iv) that he recognises that it is difficult to fill some jobs in the directorate and that efforts are being made to try to deal with this.

The Head of Social Services added that there are staffing problems in the Child Services Unit, and although additional money had been allocated in order to employ extra staff, they were unsuccessful in appointing anyone. He admitted that a stronger strategy was needed for the workforce in order to try to attract and retain staff. He also noted that it was difficult to compete with other employers, especially in the private sector as many of them offer better work conditions.

RESOLVED to accept and note the report.

iii) Resources and Public Protection Plan

The Head of Administrative and Public Protection Services presented the above report on the elements of the service which are relevant to this committee, namely the following units – Environment Protection; Food and Health and Safety; Trading Standards; Licensing and Registration.

Councillor William Arthur Evans noted that he was eager to see the forming of a strategy in order to attract and retain professional staff in the service as well as developing them.

In response to the above, the Head of Administrative and Public Protection Services noted that recruiting and retaining staff is important and that it will be addressed in the resources directorate plan. He also added that an action plan could be included to attract and retain staff to the Service Plan.

RESOLVED:

- i) **to include another plan for improvements regarding attracting, recruiting and retaining staff in the service.**
- ii) **to accept and note the report.**

iv.) HOUSING IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Head of the Housing Service presented a report on improvement plans for the Private Sector Unit; the Management, Rent, Homelessness and Support Houses Unit and the Maintenance and Development Unit.

In response to questions from members, the Head of the Housing Service noted:

- i) that attracting contractors to do the work is still a problem and the local available capacity is still low. He noted that the Council had employed 6 apprentices in the maintenance unit but that unfortunately it is difficult to increase that number at the moment.
- ii) that many welfare adaptation applications were received to adapt bathrooms. However, it was emphasised that only some resources are available and as a result it will be difficult to find someone to do the work under the Council's arrangements.
- iii) that the maximum renovation grant given by the Council is £30,000.

The Senior Policy and Performance Manager added that the Underspend Working Group had discussed the lack of capacity and how this can be overcome.

RESOLVED to accept and note the report.

v.) SOCIAL SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Head of Social Services presented a report on the above including details of Services for Adults and Services for Children improvement plans.

In response to questions from members, the Head of Social Services noted that the needs of the residents of Bryn y Neuadd and Plas Tre Mal were assessed, and it was discovered that some will need health care and others will need nursing care 24 hours a day. These will more than likely be placed in a nursing home. He elaborated that Gwynedd Council will be responsible for those residents who will need support to live in the community. He added that Bryn y Neuadd will close within the next few years.

In response to a question from a member regarding Hafod y Gest Home, Porthmadog, the Senior Policy and Performance Manager noted that it was decided to employ a Project Officer to supervise the work of adapting the four homes in question.

RESOLVED to accept and note the report.

vi.) PROVIDER SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Strategic Director – Care presented a report on the above, including details on the improvement plans for the Day and Residential Services, Community Care and Commercial Services Units.

RESOLVED to accept and note the information.

2. GWYNEDD HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND WELL-BEING DRAFT STRATEGY 2005-2008

The above draft strategy was presented, in accordance to the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, by the Health, Social Care and Well-being Officer.

It was reported that it was a 3 year strategy and that the intention was to present the final version to the Board of the Council and the Local Health Board during December 2004. It was noted that the vision of the Gwynedd Health, Social Care and Well-being Partnership Board, which was jointly established by Gwynedd Council and the Local Health Board in order to supervise, co-ordinate and develop the strategy, is to aim for a level of health and well-being for the people of Gwynedd, comparable to the best in Europe. The Health, Social Care and Well-being Officer added that she was eager to consult with members regarding the content of the document and that any comments will be appreciated. She added that the proposed strategy will be operational from April 2005 onwards.

RESOLVED

- i) to accept and note the information.**
- ii) that every member should complete the questionnaire distributed with the strategy in order to express an opinion on the proposed strategy.**

The meeting started at 2:00 pm and ended at 4:25 pm.