

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF SCRUTINY PANEL 4 - ADULT SOCIAL CARE FACILITIES

Thursday, 17 January 2019

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Councillor Zoe Smith (Chair), Councillor Sally Beardsworth (Deputy Chair);
Councillors Julie Davenport, Anamul Haque, Arthur McCutcheon and
Brian Oldham

Councillor Danielle Stone, - observing

Witnesses Chris Duff, Chief Executive, Age UK
Northamptonshire

Officer Tracy Tiff, Scrutiny Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Janice Duffy, Jamie Lane and Cathrine Russell.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING)

There were none.

3. DEPUTATIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2018 were signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record.

5. WITNESS EVIDENCE

(A) CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NORTHANTS - AGE UK

Chris Duff, Chief Executive, Age UK Northamptonshire, presented his written response to the Scrutiny Panel highlighting the salient points. Background to Age UK Northamptonshire was provided.

The Scrutiny Panel made comment, asked questions and heard:

- Partnership working is essential. A meeting between Adult Social Care, NCC and Northants Age UK is scheduled. The Scrutiny Panel asked Mr Duff to provide and update to the Panel at the following meeting.

- It is easier to recruit volunteers in urban areas largely due to transport and because volunteers want to serve their immediate community
- In answer to a query, the Scrutiny Panel was advised that if clients can pay for certain services, such as gardening or toe nail cutting, it can be provided for by Age UK Northamptonshire, an overall profit is not made on these services; the organisation breaks even.
- Information and advice, including Attendance Allowance and benefits checks, are provided to all that ask for this.
- Currently, a number of GP practices proactively refer to organisations such as Age UK Northamptonshire so as to positively support their clients needs.
- Clients being supported through NHS funded services are referred from a mix of sources. Some are referred via word of mouth and many from other Age UK Northamptonshire services. Around two thirds of the referrals for Age UK Northamptonshire NHS funded services are from GPs.
- The Chair suggested that a potential recommendation of the final report could be that the Scrutiny Panel recommends that support is given for social proscribing in relation to day care.
- Loneliness is, arguably, the most significant issue that needs to be dealt with.
- Literature from Age UK Northamptonshire is widely available in GP surgeries across the County, and in Northampton and the North in particular given the services supported by NHS funds.
- In answer to a query regarding patient confidentiality, Chris Duff confirmed that one practical proposal was for the first organisation liaising with the client to obtain their permission to share the data with the other relevant signposted Agencies and organisations, as listed or named. All those organisations could then share information and responses and provide an integrated response more easily, especially if they shared access to a common IT database.
- Chris Duff confirmed that the London Borough of Islington has an excellent joined up approach.
- The complexity of the application form for Attendance Allowance was highlighted.
- In response to a query regarding Disability Living Allowance, the Scrutiny Panel heard that people aged 16-64 (up to State Pension Age) can no longer make a new claim for DLA, and should instead be able to claim an existing benefit called Personal Independence Payment (PIP). If an individual is State Pension age (currently 65 years) or over, they should instead claim Attendance Allowance.
- It was commented that some individuals don't claim for the benefits that they are entitled to.
- In response to a query, Chris Duff commented that it would be good if best practice could be shared between the two Unitary Authorities.

Mr Duff was thanked for his informative address.

AGREED: That when the weather is warmer, a site visit is organised to the London Borough of Islington to speak with relevant Officers about their Adult Social Care service. The Chair and Deputy Chair would attend the site visit and report back to a future meeting of the Panel.

That Mr Duff is invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel scheduled for 11 February 2019, 6pm, to provide an update on his recent meeting with Adult Social Care Services.

(B) DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE, NORTHANTS CARERS

The Scrutiny Panel welcomed and noted the comprehensive response from the Deputy Chief Executive, Northants Carers. It was suggested that Mr Roberts is invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel scheduled for 11 February 2019, 6pm, to present his report to the Panel.

AGREED: That Mr Roberts is invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel scheduled for 11 February 2019, 6pm, to present his report to the Panel.

(C) MANAGER, INDEPENDENT LIVING ORGANISATION, NORTHAMPTON

A response to the core questions was not received from Manager, Independent Living organisation, Northampton.

6. CASE STUDIES FROM WARD COUNCILLORS

The Scrutiny Panel provided some case studies:

Individual A

Miss A was a hoarder and had no downstairs cloakroom. She had been advised the only option was a commode. This was not suitable for her needs and Miss A was not coping well with the situation. The Ward Councillor obtained the trust of Miss A and helped to clear and tidy her house; she also made contact with the relevant Officers and a downstairs toilet was put in for Miss A.

Individual B

Miss B was a vulnerable adult that also had housing issues. There was no liaison between Adult Social Care and Housing Services. The ward Councillor made contact between the two Agencies and felt there is a need for more joined up thinking.

Individual C

Miss C was also a vulnerable adult that had mental health needs. The ward Councillor had contact details from a clearing company that she had used for Miss A and made contact. The ward Councillor gained the trust of Miss C. When she had first visited Miss C, her front door had been open. Miss C would buy a book every afternoon, read two chapters and then buy another book the next day. The ward Councillor suggested that the books were donated to Northants Age UK and Miss C agreed. Miss C had not been sleeping on a proper bed and a suitable bed was organised by the ward Councillor. A Sex Worker had been using Miss C's property; the ward Councillor arranged for an intercom system to be installed on the property to prevent this continuing.

In discussing the case studies the Scrutiny Panel acknowledged data protection constraints and suggested that a potential recommendation of its final report would be around the exploration of an integrated system to be used by all relevant Agencies.

The meeting concluded at 7:05 pm