SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND HOUSING
POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2006

Present:

Councillor Charles Rideout CVO., QPM (Chairman)
Councillor John Ince (Vice-Chairman)
Councillors Roger Charsley, Geoff Gostt, Jennifer Hillier,
Carole Hubbard, Michael, Jenny Powell and Karen Roberts.

Richard Lane, Barbara Langridge, Leslie Marks
and Mark Eaton

Also present:

Councillor Chris Phillips (Portfolio Holder for Social Care Health
and Housing), Councillor Mrs Ingrid Buckley (Executive Assistant)
and Brenda Thompson

52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Dr Angela Bhan and her
alternate, and from Diane Lea, Keith Marshall and Caroline Titley.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members made the following declarations of interest –

(a) Cllr Carole Hubbard declared a personal interest as an employee of
Bromley Primary Care Trust.

(b) Councillor Ince declared a personal interest in respect of Minute 58
Promoting the Independence of People with Learning Disabilities in Bromley –
Expanding supported Living opportunities.

(c) Richard Lane declared a personal interest as an employee of
Bromley Autistic Trust (Minute 58 - Promoting the Independence of People with
Learning Disabilities in Bromley and Minute 60 – Budget Savings Options).

(d) Barbara Langridge declared an interest as a representative of
Bromley Mental Health Forum in respect of Minute 56 – Update on Scrutiny of
Mental Health.

(e) Leslie Marks declared a personal interest as Chairman of Bromley
Council on Ageing and a member of Bromley Mind (Minute 56 – Update on
Scrutiny of Mental Health and Minute 58 – Promoting the Independence of People
with Learning Disabilities in Bromley – Expanding supported Living opportunities).
(f) Councillor Jenny Powell declared a personal interest as a member of her family worked for the PCT.

54 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING AND TAPEING OF THE MEETING

Four questions had been received from members of the public, the first was from Mr Harold Barker (see below) and the other three had been submitted by Ms Susan Sulis for the Community Care Protection Group, on behalf of herself and two other members of the Group. However, the Chairman advised that neither Ms Sulis nor the other two representatives were able to attend this evening and in their absence written responses would be sent.

Question by Mr Harold Barker: “Are you satisfied with the scrutiny of mental health services provided in the London Borough of Bromley by Oxleas Trust?”

Reply: ‘Oxleas performs well in terms of external scrutiny of services and has achieved the highest rating of 3 stars. In order that the PDS can be fully informed of the quality of service in Bromley, officers are proposing that the Mental Health Member Working Group focus on the quality of outcomes for mental health service users. Item 5 on the Agenda provides and update on Scrutiny of Mental Health and Mr. Barker may wish to stay to hear Linda Loft, Asst Director, Social Services and Housing and Helen Smith, Oxleas update members on the scrutiny arrangements of mental health services.’

Supplementary question: “In view of the following three points:

- The meeting held on Friday 11th February 2005 which decided that the complaints made by the whistleblower were not substantiated was not scrutinised as a scrutiny of the Sub-Committee of the Health PDS (Statutory Instrument 2002 No 3048).
- The providers who attended to give evidence at the meeting were also involved in the decision.
- Written evidence submitted to the meeting appears to have been destroyed (the Information Commission is being appraised of this).

Based on the above, I am satisfied that Oxleas Trust have attempted a cover up of inadequate and unsafe services in the community and at Green Parks House. How can you satisfy me and the general public that these services are safe?”
The Chairman replied: ‘You received a letter from the Council’s Freedom of Information Officer dated 21st December 2005 in which he advised you that the Council did not have the information you referred to and your request should be addressed to Oxleas. I therefore am also advising you to address these questions to Oxleas. You were also advised of the appeal procedure should you wish a review of that decision. As for the meeting held on 11th February 2005 you have already been supplied with the Minutes from that meeting where it can be seen that the providers attended and took part in the meeting. As far as I am concerned there was no statement agreed beforehand at a pre-meeting to this meeting, both of which I attended. The providers attended and took a part in the process by giving information to the Sub-Group.

In view of the fact that there are still ongoing discussions (see Minute 56 below it would be inappropriate of me to say anything further at this time.’

The Chairman further reported a formal request from Ms Sulis for the meeting to be taped. He drew attention to the Council’s Standing Orders in respect of the matter and the recent decision of the Executive who had refused a similar request on the basis that there was not a sufficiently strong reason to do so.

The Committee was asked to weigh the reasons for this request against the availability of other means of meeting the needs of people unable to be present at the meeting. Having considered the request and on a vote it was –

RESOLVED that the request to tape this meeting be not agreed and that this decision will apply to any future requests to record meetings of this Committee unless there are valid reasons requiring reconsideration of the matter.

55 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22nd NOVEMBER 2005

The minutes of the above meeting were received and reference was made to following:

Minute 44 – Bethlem Royal Hospital
The Chairman reported that a response had been received to the letter sent to SLaM following this meeting. The Chair of the Trust had indicated that they would reply to the concerns raised and she would be attending the Committee’s meeting on 19th April 2006.
Minute 45 – Progress Report 7: Development of Day services for Adults with Learning Difficulties

The Chairman asked about the future of the café at Community House and the Officers agreed to report back to him on its status.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on the above date be confirmed.

56 UPDATE ON SCRUTINY OF MENTAL HEALTH
Report LDS06005

At its meeting on 20th October 2005 (Minute 37) the Committee agreed to carry out a further review of mental health services, based on the series of questions submitted by Councillor Gostt, and to reconvene the Working Group to meet in the new year to look at these issues and the Mental Health Strategy. Councillor Gostt had requested a progress report be submitted to this meeting and the Chairman advised that he had asked both the Assistant Director of Social Services & Housing (Adults) Linda Loft and Helen Smith from Oxleas to address the Committee. Councillor Brenda Thompson was also in attendance for this item.

The Assistant Director highlighted the remit of the Working Group which had been widened by the Committee to consider the Mental Health Strategy that had been commissioned by the Council and the PCT not Oxleas. She outlined the background to the production of the Strategy and advised that although a draft had been produced last year the Mental Health Board had agreed further work should take place. Brief reference was made to various issues arising from the work undertaken so far and that an interim report had gone to the Board in November last year when a timetable for its completion by March 2006 was agreed. The Strategy would go to the next Board meeting on 25th January 2006 when it was hoped that it would be signed off for circulating to all. Attention was also drawn to the recent establishment of a new telephone helpline service.

Helen Smith spoke on issues around Green Parks House and outlined the background to the way the concerns raised had been dealt with by the Working Group. She stated that previous surveys of those attending Green Parks House indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the service provided. A number of external organisations already scrutinised Oxleas’ work and the Trust had consistently performed well with being rated as one of only 21 3 Star Mental Health Trusts in England. The Trust was also one of only 5 in the country invited to apply for Foundation Trust Status. Internally the Trust placed high emphasis on maintaining good quality of care and the Board received regular reports on the matter which were public documents.
Councillor Brenda Thompson asked a number of detailed questions and received replies concerning the changes in approach since the original key objectives for the Mental Health Strategy was published some 10 years ago; the availability of counselling services now through local GPs and bed numbers and waiting times. Reference was made to the need for additional beds and that this was being addressed under the new Strategy as well as looking at other ways of providing services. It was also pointed out that Councillor Thompson had been given a tour of Green Parks House by senior staff who had answered questions she raised at that time.

Councillor Gostt asked whether his list of questions circulated with the agenda papers had been referred to Oxleas. In reply he was advised that there had already been an intensive scrutiny into Green Parks House which had addressed the issues raised. In respect of the other more general questions these would be answered through the Strategy. Councillor Gostt reiterated his request for the questions to be formally answered by Oxleas and the Chairman advised that these would be considered by the Working Group alongside its review of the new Strategy. The Director of Social Services & Housing regretted that the Strategy had not been ready earlier due to various pressures. He commented on the importance of the scrutiny role of the Committee and its Working Group. Revised Terms of reference for the Working Group were being presented to the Committee for approval, as follows:

- Analysis of regular Patient surveys both for Green Parks and the rest of the service;
- Analysis of complaints, serious incidents and suicide rates;
- Details of bed numbers, length of stays and re-admission rates;
- Benchmarking information on bed numbers and other areas;
- Risk Management Procedures;
- Summaries of external inspections such as the Mental Health Commission etc.
- To consider suggestions on development of a clear Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework.

RESOLVED that

1) the Mental Health Working Group’s terms of reference be revised as set out above;

2) the questions set out in the Appendix to the report be referred to the Working Group for consideration of the answers in conjunction with the review of the Mental Health Strategy; and
3) membership of the Mental Health Working Group be reconfirmed as follows – Councillors Charsley, Gostt, Charles Rideout and Karen Roberts, together with Barbara Langridge.

57 PATIENT AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT FORUMS – UPDATE
Report LDS06004

As part of its health scrutiny, the Committee had previously looked at the establishment of Patients Forums and their progress since their formation in 2003. Following the Committee’s meeting in November 2004 concerns had been raised with the Secretary of State for Health about the inadequacy of local Forum support organisation. It was noted that subsequently changes had been made and from September 2005 the Shaw Trust had taken over responsibility as the local provider of Forum Support. Feedback about the performance of the Shaw Trust had been very positive.

The three main local Forums in Bromley related to the Bromley Primary Care Trust (PCT), the Bromley Hospitals Trust and Oxleas Mental Health Trust. Representatives from each of these Forums had been invited to attend and give a brief update on their current work. Both Mr Jim Stillman, recently appointed Chairman of the Bromley PCT Forum, and Bryan Lester, Chairman of the Bromley Hospitals Trust Patients and Public Involvement Forum, were in attendance. Apologies had been received from the representative of Oxleas Mental Health Trust Forum as this organisation was having difficulties with sufficient membership at this stage.

The Committee received written and verbal reports from both the Chairmen present and members asked a number of questions on their work. The speakers reiterated that the assistance provided by the Shaw Trust was helping both organisations make progress. Reference was made to the written reports produced by the Forums which were submitted to the respective Trusts and in future copies would be sent for members of this Committee. Attention was also drawn to the need for more public support and involvement in the Forums, an issue that they were now trying to address through wider publicity etc.

The Chairman thanked the representatives for attending and it was agreed to record the thanks of the Committee to Mrs Rose Covell who had recently retired as Chairman of the Bromley PCT Forum.

RESOLVED that the progress reports from the two Forums be noted.
The Committee received a report on an application for funding agreed by the Executive at its meeting the previous evening under the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) reward fund. The bid was for funding of £830,000 over the next two financial years to implement a programme to reduce the Borough’s reliance on long term, often out of borough, residential care for people with learning disabilities to actively increase the opportunities for supported living within or close to the borough.

The Business Case for the proposal had been developed by the joint working party of members from the Resources PDS Committee and this Committee who had been tasked with looking at the issue of the reliance on residential care and the needs of those requiring it. The core elements of the proposal included:

- The establishment of a “Review & Resettlement Team” to assess and settle a number of people currently in residential care.
- Reduced use of residential care for young people reaching adulthood.
- Enhanced advocacy services commissioned from the voluntary sector.
- Development of a Learning Disabilities Register to assist long term planning; and
- Working with local providers and Registered Social Landlords to develop more supported living options.

The Assistant Director, Adults, briefly explained the main elements of the proposal as referred to above and answered members questions concerning the approach being taken. She emphasised the broad range of options that would be made available to people, the resources provided to enhance the advocacy services and the importance of full and thorough consultation with all those concerned. Some issues were raised by those members representing related voluntary sector organisations particularly around the timing of consultations. It was agreed that Officers would meet with the Voluntary Organisations and those involved to explain the proposals and in this way hope to allay any concerns that families might have or misunderstandings that could arise.
The Committee expressed its support for the proposals on the basis that there would be careful monitoring.

RESOLVED that

(1) the Business Case and the intention of expanding supported living options for people with Learning Disabilities be endorsed;

(2) the implementation of this programme during the forthcoming year be scrutinised by the Committee; and

(3) arrangements be made for meetings with the voluntary groups and those families concerned as soon as possible to fully explain the Business Case for the proposal and the implications for the families concerned.

59 UPDATE ON HOUSING STRATEGY ACTION PLAN
Report DSSH06001

The Portfolio Holder for Social Care Health & Housing had approved the Executive summary and update of the Council’s Housing Strategy at his meeting in November last year. Subsequently this had been agreed, with some minor amendments, by the Executive in December 2005 for final approval by the Council.

A detailed Housing Strategy Action Plan accompanied the Strategy explaining how the aims set out in it would be met. This Action Plan had been updated to show progress made against targets in the 2004/05 financial year and the first two quarters of 2005/06 and was being submitted to the Committee for consideration.

The report highlighted key areas where substantial progress had been made including – reducing homelessness against the three main causes, maximising the development programme funded by the Housing Corporation to fund additional properties in 2006-08, maximising the number of units achieved under the Affordable Housing policy, progressing the Supporting People programme with two new schemes for people with Learning disabilities and a scheme for young homeless people and for young mothers.

RESOLVED that the progress being made against the aims set out in the 2004-7 Housing Strategy Action Plan be noted.
Further to Minute 49 of the last meeting, the Director reported on proposals to make budget savings in 2006/07 affecting the following two areas, subject to consultations:

- **Day Care at Belle Grove** (approximate saving £50,000) – this facility operated a day care service for some 50 older people from premises attached to the Belle Grove residential home. The unit cost of this facility was very high and it was proposed to provide an alternative day care service nearby at a lower cost. Detailed reviews of each users’ needs would be undertaken, including consultations with carers. Full details of the consultations would be reported back in March.

- **Charges for Day Care** – (approximate saving £30,000) proposal to introduce a system of charging for the day care element for attendees of learning disabilities and older people’s day centres. This would be on the basis that charges were already made for users of non-residential services such as domiciliary care. The charge would be for the equivalent of 2 hours personal support each day of attendance. Some other Boroughs were already making such charges. Questionnaires were being sent to day care users and voluntary organisations for a report back to members.

Representatives of the Voluntary groups asked about the timetable for returning the questionnaire in respect of the charges for day care and were advised that they should be returned by 3rd February 2006. Leslie Marks, Bromley Council on Aging spoke about the difficulties that her organisation would have in meeting the short deadline as did Richard Lane, Bromley Learning Disability Forum. The Director of Social Services & Housing reminded members that he had given advance warning of the proposals at the last meeting. A member suggested that should the voluntary groups be unable to respond to the questionnaire with in the timetable they submit their views in a letter direct to the Portfolio Holder.

**RESOLVED** that the budget saving proposals outlined above be noted and consultations take place immediately with all those affected and that should they subsequently be implemented appropriate monitoring arrangements be put in place for reporting back on the outcome to members.
61 BUDGET MONITORING 2005/06 – SOCIAL SERVICE AND HOUSING
Report DSSH06005

The Committee received an update of the latest budget position giving ‘early warnings’ of further possible cost pressures. The 2005/06 projected outturn was shown in Appendix 1 to the report. This included a forecast of projected expenditure for each division compared to the latest approved budget and also identified the reason for any variations. The final column in Appendix 1 gave the impact of any overspend in 2005/06 in future years. (Note: a second appendix 1 had been circulated with the agenda papers and should be withdrawn.)

The forecasts were based on expenditure and activity levels up to November 2005 and included the estimated impact of management action aimed at reducing cost pressures. The main areas of budget pressure were similar to those previously reported and there had been little change - Older Peoples Domiciliary Care, Adults Domiciliary Care and Adults Residential Placements. The Director advised that efforts were continuing to address the overspend where possible and there had been some reduction since last time.

RESOLVED that

1) the latest projections, which indicate a forecast overspend on the Social Care, Health and Housing Budget of £1,080,000 be noted. (included within this figure was management action of £175,000 relating to domiciliary care in the Older Peoples division and £10,000 for domiciliary care in the Adults Division, which if not achieved would increase this overspend to £1,265,000); and

(2) the continuing volatility of demand of certain services, as detailed in this report, which could impact on the final spend for both current and future years, be noted.

62 MEMBER INDUCTION 2006

For the 2006 Member Induction all PDS Committees were being provided with an opportunity to contribute suggestions towards the format and arrangements for the induction. These would then be put to the Working Party commissioned by the Strategy and Resources PDS Committee to consider the overall arrangements.

The Committee discussed the request and suggested an updating of the members’ handbook listing the various services and officer contacts. It was also suggested that a glossary of abbreviations and terms regularly used in Council reports/documents would be useful. The Chairman asked Members to pass on any further ideas to the officers.
RESOLVED that the report be noted and Members’ comments as outlined above be submitted to the Working Party reviewing Member Induction and Development.

63 SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND HOUSING PDS COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
Report LDS06003

The Committee received a summary of its work programme for 2005/06 and an update on the activity of the various Working Groups. Leslie Marks, Chairman of the Select Committee on Older People’s Independence, gave a brief update on the work being done and that a consultation exercise was about to start with users of the service. The next meeting was on 13th February 2006 when representatives of the statutory authorities would be interviewed.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme and the activities of the Committees Working Groups be noted.

64 CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE SOCIAL CARE HEALTH AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO HOLDER AGENDA ITEMS

No particular issues were identified to be passed on to the Portfolio Holder who had been present at the meeting.

65 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the item of business listed below as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

The following summary refers to a matter involving exempt information

66 SOCIAL SERVICES INFORMATION SYSTEMS

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Social Services & Housing summarising the procurement process that had been followed to obtain a new Social Care Information System. The report gave an overview of progress made to date, the forward plan and actions proposed resulting in a supplier being selected by March this year.
The report was also being submitted to the Children & Young People PDS Committee at its meeting on 11th January 2006 for information.

The meeting ended at 10.27p.m.

Chairman