

ADULT AND COMMUNITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 13 December 2011

Present:

Councillor Judi Ellis (Chairman)

Councillors Ruth Bennett, Buckland, Peter Fookes,
William Huntington-Thresher, Catherine Rideout and
Charles Rideout

Angela Clayton-Turner, Leslie Marks and Lynne Powrie

Also Present:

Councillor Robert Evans and Councillor Diane Smith

72 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF ALTERNATE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillors Roger Charsley and Tom Papworth. Apologies were also received from Keith Marshall and Brian James. Councillor William Huntington Thresher submitted apologies for lateness.

73 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Peter Fookes declared that he was a Trustee of AgeUK Penge and Anerley. Councillor Judi Ellis declared that her father had dementia and was resident in a care home in Bromley. Councillor Diane Smith declared that she was the Local Authority representative on the Board of Governors of Bromley Healthcare. Mrs Angela Clayton-Turner declared that her husband was in a care home, managed by Mission Care, in Bromley. Mr Peter Buckland declared that he was a Board member for Affinity Sutton.

74 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions were received.

75 QUESTIONS TO THE ADULT AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO HOLDER FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS ATTENDING THE MEETING

No questions were received.

76 PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING

The Committee noted the decisions taken by the Portfolio Holder since the last meeting held on 30th November 2011.

77 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO REPORTS

78 GATEWAY REVIEW : INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE SERVICES

Report ACS09123

The Committee considered a report outlining the current arrangements for the provision of general and specialist information, advice and guidance services in the field of social care, housing and general enquiry services available to any members of the public that were funded and commissioned by Adult and Community Services and Children and Young People Services, and proposing a future approach to the provision of these services.

A member raised concern that the report appeared to indicate that the public only used the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for benefits advice. His experience was that his local CAB dealt with a wide variety of cases. He was also concerned that a number of people would still need this advice and he did not feel that telephone and internet access to the service were sufficient. Officers explained that there would still be opportunities for face to face contact in addition to the internet, telephone and the kiosk.

Officers explained that the move away from the traditional face to face contact was initiated by the CAB in response to the limited numbers of volunteers available. Officers had been in discussion with the CAB for a year and this proposal was part of the strategy adopted by the National CAB organisation.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the proposals for training Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to deal with older people and people with learning difficulties and mental health needs. The concern was that the DWP would not offer the level of support needed for vulnerable people to help them through, what is often, a difficult time. Dealing with vulnerable people could take up a considerable amount of time. In addition they were unlikely to want to offer help to people appealing against decisions taken by the DWP. The Chairman added that specialist provision would need to meet the needs of all the community and that the specialist advisors would need to be closely monitored.

Officers informed the Committee that the training and support for staff within the DWP would be provided by specialist organisations. In addition, for issues such as appeals, they could signpost people to other services, such as Broadway, for the necessary advice and support.

Officers also reported that rather than always being “building based” the service would become more peripatetic and conduct “surgeries” and go to groups and give talks. This would make the services more accessible.

Councillor Fookes moved that that the issues relating to the CAB be deferred to a future meeting and that the CAB be invited to make presentations. This was motion was unsupported.

The Chairman stated that the DWP would be encouraged to write to people explaining the changes. She appreciated that a number of vulnerable people would need someone to ring on their behalf as they were not comfortable with using the telephone.

The Chairman then explained that with regard to recommendation 3 she wished to make changes and in relation to recommendations 1 and 2 these would not be for noting but for recommendation to the executive. A copy of the proposed amendment to recommendation 3 was circulated and supported by the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Executive is recommended to approve:

- i) that all Council service providers in future will have clear contractual responsibility to provide information on their service both in hard copy (where appropriate) and electronically and to ensure this is published either directly, or through links to other websites, on Bromley MyLife;**
- ii) that one strategic partner/core contract has been identified for each care group to provide information, advice and guidance and that efficiency savings will be sought with regard to existing contracts;**
- iii) that specialist advice provision is reviewed to ensure that it is meeting an identified priority need including consideration as to the impact of any changes to people requiring support to appeal against a benefit decision. The outcome of the review will be reported back to the Adult and Community Services Policy Development and Scrutiny prior to any decisions being taken by the Portfolio Holder.**
- iv) that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is the primary agency responsible for providing assistance with accessing welfare benefits and that the Council will where necessary arrange training for DWP staff to ensure that they have the necessary skills to assist people with particular needs;**

- v) **that residents will be encouraged to access general information, advice and guidance services through the use of the internet and national help lines;**
- vi) **to waive the requirement for competitive tendering pursuant to Contract Procedure Rule 13.1 and that a new contract be entered into with Bromley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) for a period of two years commencing 1st April 2012 as set out in the report on Part 2 of this agenda, with the option to extend for a further year (with authority to exercise the option to extend to be delegated to the relevant Chief Officer in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder). Funding will be reduced over a two year period (2012/13 and 2013/14), to enable the CAB, in line with its own development proposals, to move to a service based on outreach provision, telephone and internet access.**

(Councillor Fookes recorded his objection to reducing the funding to the CAB over a two year period from 2012/13 and 2013/14)

79 SUPPORT FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR - COMMUNITY LINKS BROMLEY

Report ACS11073

The Committee considered a report outlining the current arrangements with Community Links Bromley for providing support to the local voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, and proposing that a new contract be entered into from 1st April 2012 for a period of three years with an option to extend for a further two years. It also proposed additional funding for one year to provide enhanced support to the voluntary sector during a period of significant change and financial pressure in social care and support services in both adults and children's sectors.

The Chairman made a slight change to recommendation B to include reference to funding being given on a targeted basis. She also wanted close monitoring to ensure the targets were being met and noted that a number of other voluntary organisations would need support to achieve the required savings.

RESOLVED that the Executive is recommended to approve:

- (a) **Waiving the requirement for competitive tendering in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule 13.1 and approve the award of a contract to Community Links Bromley for a period of three years from 1st April 2012 with the option to extend for a further two years (with authority for the option**

to extend to be delegated to the Director of Adult and Community Services in consultation with the Adult and Community Portfolio Holder), and

- (b) additional funding during the first year (2012/13) funded from uncommitted LPSA reward grant on a targeted basis.**

80 GATEWAY REVIEW - DAY OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Report ACS11071

The Committee considered a report outlining a review undertaken around dementia day services to ensure the volume and the type of service provided aligned with current and projected requirements. The contracts for dementia day centres with the Alzheimer's Society and Bromley Mind would expire on March 31st 2012, and the contracts for the mainstream centres, including dementia specific places would expire on 30th June 2012, and in both instances there were options to extend contracts for up to one further year.

Officers outlined the various types of day centre available across the Borough. Members were pleased to note that the service was changing to meet the needs of its users. For example to assist carers to drop relatives at a day centre early enough to then travel onto work one of the day centres, Rachel Notley, had opened a breakfast club. It was also noted that a number of "self funders" accessed the service.

One of the proposals was that permission would be sought from service users, when they contacted Bromley Social Services Direct (BSSD), to pass their details onto partner agencies so they could be contacted about the range of support and services that was available to them.

Members also recognised that the service would need to change as people did not necessarily want to attend a day centre where the only common denominator amongst them was their age. Consideration should be given to signposting people to services that would be of particular interest to them. However there was still a need for day centre provision for respite, the most vulnerable elderly and those with dementia.

Officers confirmed that there was a "downward trend" in the numbers taking up places at day centres. The greatest demand was for places at centres specialising in services for Dementia sufferers. However even in these centres the waiting lists for places had dropped dramatically.

RESOLVED that the Executive is recommended to approve the extension of the current contracts until March 2013.

**81 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION)
(VARIATION) ORDER 2006 AND THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT 2000**

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it was 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.

**82 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF EXEMPT (PART 2) ADULT AND
COMMUNITY PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

A) CONTRACT FOR INTERMEDIATE CARE

Report ACS11070

The Committee considered and agreed the recommendations within the report.

To reassure the Chairman asked that the part one minute outline that Officers were seeking a contract reduction but that this may not be received. The part two report was about financial transparency and not the needs of the service.

**83 GATEWAY REVIEW : INFORMATION ADVICE AND GUIDANCE
SERVICES**

Report ACS11076

The Committee considered the recommendations within the report.

**84 SUPPORT FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR - COMMUNITY
LINKS BROMLEY: FINANCIAL SECTION ONLY**

Report ACS11074

The Committee considered the recommendations within the report.

The Meeting ended at 8.35 pm

Chairman