

Reports from Executive Assistants

Councillor Diane Smith: Executive Assistant, Care Services.

Over the past year I have continued to serve as the Executive Assistant for Care Services providing support and assistance to the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Bob Evans.

Having originally taken up the Executive Assistant position in May 2011, I have highlighted within previous reports submitted to this Committee, elements of my work which have become and continue to be a core part of my role. In particular over the last twelve months the routine, weekly Portfolio briefing sessions have been a priority and particularly important as the Council faces an unprecedented financial challenge. Detailed discussion and attention has been paid to budget pressures and delivering savings to support the Local Authority commitment to reduce the budget gap, but these have needed to be finely balanced against the needs of an ageing population and our determination to secure front-line services of quality, and protect services for our most vulnerable residents.

On occasions I have attended Cabinet and have been invited to meetings with stakeholders and external providers. I have routinely met with the Chairman and Chief Executive of Bromley Healthcare both in my role as Executive Assistant and also in my capacity as Vice Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board. Discussions have focussed around service priorities and remodelling particularly within the context of progressing the agenda around the integration of health and social care. My background in the Health Service and operational experience within both the acute and community sector has been particularly useful in this regard. Meetings with the Director of Public Health have also continued throughout the last year.

In September 2014 I was co opted to the Bromley Dementia Action Alliance, a multiagency group which alongside the Health and Wellbeing Board dementia subgroup, of which I am also a member, is focussing on moving forwards an action plan in line with National Dementia Strategy priorities and our locally owned Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The management of dementia across the Borough is also a priority for the Portfolio as in 2012 it was estimated that there were @ 4,100 people with dementia in Bromley a figure which it is anticipated is set to rise to over 6,000 in 2030. This year the Adult Stakeholder Conference in March will be focussing on "Living Well with Dementia in Bromley "

Apart from my work directly supporting the Portfolio Holder I have also been required to act and follow up on issues that have been raised by other Ward Councillors and residents in his absence. On occasions I have also offered

advice when requested by colleagues about Care Service/Health related matters on an individual basis.

In addition to continuing to attend the scheduled Care Services PDS, Health Scrutiny Committee meetings and also the Children's Safeguarding and Corporate parent working party, I have continued to undertake a rolling programme of visits to services which are part of the core business of the Care Portfolio. These have included visits to Extra Care Housing Schemes, including Sutherland Court in Penge and Lubbock House in Locksbottom. I have also visited Nash College an establishment which provides specialist care and support for students with moderate to profound learning disabilities, and also Hollybank, a facility which provides short term breaks for children with disabilities and complex health needs.

I have also spent time at the intermediate care unit at Lauriston House and undertaken visits to the Older People's day centres including the specialist dementia facility at White Gables. Maintaining links with the voluntary sector continue to be a priority and I have met with key service personnel at CAB, Community Links Bromley and Healthwatch.

The Local Authority Care Managers based at the PRUH site have been under increasing pressure this year due to the challenging NHS environment in the Acute sector. I have not only observed the work that they do on site but have also attended an Older People Panel where the future care needs of eligible residents are addressed.

Taking into account the operational Housing function of the Portfolio I have visited the temporary accommodation unit at Bellgrove and also a smaller unit in Anerley. Additionally I also spent some time travelling around the Borough with the Empty Properties and Empty Homes Officers to look at the valuable work that they do with regard to the implementation of the Disabled Facilities and Repair and Renew Grants, and in bringing a property back into use.