

Buckinghamshire County Council

Minutes

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON PARTNERSHIP

AGENDA ITEM: 3

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ON PARTNERSHIP HELD ON TUESDAY, 11 DECEMBER 2001 IN MEZZANINE ROOM 3, COUNTY HALL, AYLESBURY, COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM AND CONCLUDING AT 12.30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr T J Fowler (in the Chair)

Mr M C Appleyard, Mr D C T Graves, Mr C Jones, Mr D J Rowlands.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Hugh Carey, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

DISTRICT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Ms M Hamilton, Chiltern District Council and Mrs J Kverndal, South Bucks District Council.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Mrs P Bacon, Mrs V Letheren, Mr B Lidgate, Mr R Lingham-Wood and Mrs C S Willetts.

DECLARTIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 30 November 2001, copies of which had been circulated, were confirmed.

2 PRESENTATION BY HUGH CAREY

The Chairman welcomed Hugh Carey, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care. The main points of Hugh Carey's presentation were as follows:-

- The voluntary sector was a key provider of services.
- The size of engagement with the Voluntary Sector was substantial. £870,000 was given annually direct to voluntary organisations which excluded SLA's e.g Red Cross, Fremantle but included the voluntary sector providers relating to Children and Young People.
- The service aim of Adult Social Care was 'to meet the assessment of care needs of individual adults promptly and effectively within available resources'.
- One of the supporting policies was to proactively establish partnership arrangements with organisations such as health, PCT's and the voluntary sector to provide a seamless service.
- Pre-modernisation, the Council used to have an Independent and Voluntary Sector Panel which consisted of County Councillors. They would invite organisations to undertake presentations on their service and agree a number of budgets.
- Post-modernisation, relationships with the voluntary sector would be through the Departments, Older People and Adult Services, within the portfolios. Each Head of Department would have joint policies with each provider which would meet the strategic aims of the County Council.
- Commissioning and contracting departments would be set up within each part of the Adult Social Care portfolios and would play a crucial part in the partnership with the voluntary sector.

During discussion the following points were made and noted by Members:-

- In clarifying the definition of contracting, Hugh Carey reported that it was not possible to have Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with all voluntary sector providers because of limited resources. Those providers who received the highest allocation from the County Council would have an SLA.
- The responsibility for monitoring voluntary organisations would be delegated to the commissioning and contracting departments of Adult Services and Older People. Members would be involved through the Policy Advisory Group.
- A Member expressed concern about the split of commissioning and contracting into the two Departments as he felt that there should be some continuity from the top in the development of policy and strategy and that there were very few top quality commissioners. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care reported that there was a sufficient volume of business in the two service areas to justify two specialist commissioning operations. He reported that there would be strong links with the County's Purchasing Department.

- A Member referred to Bucks Association of the Blind which had a good reputation nationally and abroad and should be used as a role model for good practice for other voluntary organisations.
- In answer to a question regarding the Partnership and Locality Forums the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care reported that this was a useful forum for the voluntary sector, County Council and Health Authority. The Locality Forums in particular had made a significant input into the Community Care Plan.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care was thanked for attending the Committee and providing the information required.

3 SCRUTINY OF THE NHS

A report was tabled which was drafted for submission to the Cabinet on 17 December in relation to the Scrutiny of the NHS. It recommended that an extra Overview and Scrutiny Committee be set up to scrutinise the Health Service.

A Member expressed concern regarding one Committee scrutinising three Primary Care Trusts, the Ambulance Trust, the Mental Health Trust, Social Services and the Health Authority. He particularly felt that local health organisations should be scrutinised on a local basis not County-wide. It was agreed therefore that an additional recommendation be added that one of the first tasks for the new NHS Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be to examine the most appropriate way to scrutinise the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs). This should take account of the local nature of the PCTs and should consider the possibility of creating sub-groups based around the PCT areas.

Other comments that were made included the need to adequately resource the Committee to perform its task. This Partnership Committee would continue to run separately although there may be areas for joint working on Health Scrutiny. Members noted that consideration was being given, in conjunction with the Health Authority, to what training and development would be required.

With the amendment outlined above, the Committee agreed that the report should be submitted to Cabinet.

4 MEETINGS WITH VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Members were reminded that there had been a suggestion at a previous meeting of the Committee that they visit District Councils and voluntary organisations to find out their views on how they could work with the County Council.

Members agreed that the Chairman should inform each member what visits they would need to undertake. It was suggested that Members should not visit their own District Council..

5 FEEDBACK FROM A MEETING WITH THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HEALTH AUTHORITY

The Chairman provided feedback from a meeting with the Chief Executive of the Health Authority. The Chief Executive had updated the Chairman on the changes that had been undertaken in the Health Service and how this had been implemented locally. The Chairman then discussed the new Scrutiny role, training for members and the pilot scrutiny of the proposed amalgamation of the South Bucks and Stoke Mandeville Hospital Trusts. The Chairman concluded that it had been a productive meeting in taking partnerships forward into the new structure.

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS

25 January 2002
22 February 2002
22 March 2002 [to avoid Good Friday]
26 April 2002
31 May 2002
28 June 2002
26 July 2002
27 September 2002
25 October 2002
29 November 2002

All meetings to commence at 10.00am.

MR T J FOWLER
CHAIRMAN