



# Notes of evidence

Name of meeting	<b>POLICY COMMISSION FOR CARE HEALTH AND HOUSING</b>
Date and time	<b>WEDNESDAY, 9 JULY 2008</b>
Venue	<b>COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT. IOW</b>
Commission	Cllrs William Burt, Erica Oulton (Chair), Lady Pigot, Margaret Webster and Colin West.
Cabinet Member	Cllr Dawn Cousins
Other	Nancy Ellacott and Robert Jones (Local Involvement Network - LINK), Matthew Martin (MIND - The National Association for Mental Health)
Officers Present	Jonathan Baker (Committee Services), Claire Foreman (Head of Community Care), Mark Howell (Head of Housing), Sarah Mitchell, (Director of Community Services), April Ross (Democratic Services)
Stakeholders	Margaret Pratt (Interim Chief Executive – Isle of Wight NHS PCT), Helen Shields (Director of Commissioning – Isle of Wight NHS PCT)
Other Councillors	Cllr Roger Mazillius
Apologies	None

1. **Notes of Evidence**

- 1.1 It was noted that the previous meetings minutes should have referred to the Island premium as being for services that could not be run on a national scale.
- 1.2 The minutes were agreed subject to the change being noted.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest received.

3. **Directors Update**

- 3.1 The Director of Community Services reported that results for the 2007/08 period were comparable to other Local Authorities of a three star status.
- 3.2 It was noted that the challenges of 2007 had been met, in particular those involving Mental Health.

- 3.3 The Commission were advised that there was minimal over spend within the directorate and it was anticipated that this would be recovered.
- 3.4 The Warm Home scheme would be tied in with the Eco Island initiative and the Council would be keeping an eye on the recent credit crunch and its impact on the possible consequences.
- 3.5 It was noted that robust discussions would take place to ensure the delivery of good quality care for those with learning disabilities.
- 3.6 The Safeguarding Adults policy that was set up to help protect vulnerable adults had resulted in a number of whistle blowing incidents and subsequent prosecutions. It was noted that all concerns would be dealt with.
- 3.7 The Commission were advised that there would be a Members Briefing on Transforming Social Care and the Darzi Review of the NHS in September 2008.
- 3.8 It was noted that the Local Involvement Network (LINK) contract had been awarded to Help and Care following a strong tender process. Help and Care also run the LINK service in areas including Oxfordshire and Dorset.
- 3.9 The Wightcare – developing a Re-Ablement Service for Older People was now in place and was providing a much needed night service of care.
- 3.10 The Director of Community Services stated that there continued to be a healthy relationship with the Councils partners.

4. **Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older Person's Mental Health Services**

- 4.1 The Isle of Wight Councils Head of Community Care gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Strategy and was assisted by the Director of Commissioning for the Isle of Wight NHS PCT.
- 4.2 It was noted that the focus of the strategy was to redevelop the service ensuring that older people would get access to a full range of services meeting all requirements.
- 4.3 Care for younger people with mental health problems was easier to access than care for older people and that the Strategy would ensure equality of care irrespective of age.
- 4.4 It was noted that due to the inevitable increase in the Islands population, there would be a rise in the number of older people with mental health problems. The strategy therefore proposes the

development of a Joint Dementia Service across both health and social care to address the problem.

- 4.5 The Commission was advised that a large number of older people suffer from mild depression to more serious, long term depression which meant that comprehensive care was needed.
- 4.6 The Head of Community Care advised the Commission that the Council needed to find a way forward with the resources available to meet all people's needs.
- 4.7 Consultants would treat people with a serious condition as a priority.
- 4.8 It was noted that the Strategy would look at the needs costs that would be associated with all service areas. These would include such areas as nursing and residential home care.
- 4.9 It was also noted that the costs associated with Alzheimer's disease was more than the cost of stroke, heart disease and cancer combined.
- 4.10 The strategy also recognises the concerns that are associated with the relatives and carers of older people with mental health problems.
- 4.11 Members of the Commission suggested that a service for Dementia Care be named sympathetically in order encourage its use. The Dementia Service was not considered to be an appropriate name.
- 4.12 The Commission was advised that investment in some training would be provided to enhance any new skills that would be required, but it was recognised that there was still work needed in this area as skills required to deal with mental health patients were specialised and therefore very difficult to acquire.
- 4.13 It was noted that the percentage figure representing depression, dementia and delirium in the Strategy would be corrected in the final version.
- 4.14 The Commission was advised that Shackleton House Mental Care Services would stay on its current site in Ryde and have more modernised facilities developed.

## 5. **Warm One Island**

- 5.1 The Head of Housing reported that as part of the Councils Eco Island Vision, it was the intention to introduce a scheme where up to 1,500 households on the Island can take advantage of grants to provide a range of insulation products to their properties. This would be funded by £500,000 of Capital Grant.

- 5.2 Advice on heating resident's homes in the most efficient manner would also be provided as part of the scheme.
- 5.3 The Head of Housing advised Members that energy audits from the National Energy Suppliers of Island homes along with the utilisation of any other relevant grants would be considered before Warm One Island money was used.
- 5.4 It was noted that the 5 most deprived areas on the Island had been initially identified but that the service would be effectively available to residents across the Island.
- 5.5 The scheme will make a positive contribution towards reducing Islanders housing fuel bills as well as lowering CO2 emissions.
- 5.6 It was noted that it is possible to identify residents who might be suffering from Fuel Poverty. These were residents spending 10% or more of their average income of less than £10,000 a year on energy bills. The strategy would help to address this problem.
- 5.7 The Commission was advised that the Warm One Island scheme would help to address various health needs including respiratory problems and help reduce the risk of hypothermia amongst vulnerable groups on the Island.
- 5.8 It was noted that a specification for the provision of the service had been prepared and that is planned that the Councils Procurement Board would receive a report later in July 2008 with a view to implementation in late summer 2008.
- 5.9 The Private Sector Renewal Team would monitor the success of the scheme with reports being made to Government, where required, from the data received. They would also be responsible for helping to resolve any customer complaints as well as conduct random samples of work to ensure contract compliance.
- 5.10 The scheme would also help to reduce respiratory infection associated with living in cold damp housing, providing a quality of life and dignity for vulnerable people as well as helping to ensure that more people are able to remain within their own homes for as long as possible thus potentially reducing the impact on the NHS, and Social Care.
- 5.11 The Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Community Wellbeing stated that such a scheme was important in helping people to meet their energy bills. It would help prevent people young and old suffering in their homes in order to save money when the cold weather arrives.
- 5.12 The Commission were assured that a similar scheme run by the Footprint Trust, funded by the National Lottery and targeting some 3,000 homes over a three year period would not be compromised

and that the Isle of Wight Council would engage with the Trust to ensure that there was no duplication of work.

5.13 It was anticipated that the scheme would be extended over the coming years.

## 6. **New Homelessness Strategy**

6.1 The Head of Housing reported to Members that the new Homelessness Strategy 2008-13 was an update of the initial strategy of 2003-08 which had been developed in response to the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness Act 2002.

6.2 The Strategy was also in keeping with the Isle of Wight Council's Eco Island Vision, delivering under the themes of:

- Thriving Island
- Healthy and Supportive Island
- Safe and Well Kept Island
- Inspiring Island

6.3 It was reported that due to the Island's average wage, buying property on a first time basis had for a large amount of people become an almost impossible prospect.

6.4 The Commission were advised that approximately 80% of first time buyers were unable to get on the property ladder. This was because the average Island wage of £17,464 meant the house price to income ratio needed would be 10.2 in order to purchase the average Isle of Wight home at £177,730

6.5 The annual shortfall of affordable housing on the Isle of Wight is 1,595 affordable units. There are currently with 260 applicants being in temporary accommodation and 140 families officially recorded as homeless.

6.6 It was noted that consultation had been carried out with statutory agencies and partners as well as private developers and landowners.

6.7 The Head of Housing advised the Commission that the social rented housing provision is over 40% less than the actual need.

6.8 The previous five year strategy's action points had been achieved and the focus was now on carrying the strategy forward over the next five years.

6.9 Other measures within the 2008-13 report would include:

- Reduction in the use of temporary accommodation
- Delivery of support to families in temporary accommodation - making their stay as short as possible
- Increasing the range of housing options

- Ensure that services promote equality and diversity
- Increasing consultation with service users
- Improving delivery and advice services

6.10 It was noted that in order to help move households out of temporary accommodation, it would mean attracting private landlords to work with the Isle of Wight Council. It was therefore noted that the Cabinet Member for Health, Housing and Community Wellbeing and the Head of Housing would launch the “Find a Home Scheme” on the 11 July that would assist with this.

6.11 Members were advised that a key practical measure would be the setting up of a Court Desk, providing last minute advice for people who are facing home repossession. This new service would be designed to maximise the chances of avoiding such action.

6.12 Other longer term measures would include educating young people at school about the housing programme.

6.13 The issue of shared home ownership with the Islands Housing Associations was also raised and the Commission were advised that this was still an option for people to pursue as some 12% surveyed expressed an interest. However, it was noted that only two high street lenders are currently known to be in a position to provide loans for this option.

6.14 The Commission were advised that plans were being made to conduct a second rough sleeper’s count towards the end of the current financial year.

6.15 The anticipated results of the strategy would include:

- Reduction in the number of homeless applications
- Greater access to the private rented sector
- Reduction in the use of temporary accommodation
- Better understanding of the council role across service users, partners and external agencies
- Greater user satisfaction

CHAIRMAN