

**MINUTES of the meeting of the Health and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 March 2012 at 7.00pm.**

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**Present:** Councillors Wendy Herd, Victoria Holloway and Angie Gaywood

**Apologies:** Councillors Sue Gray

**In attendance:** R. Harris – Head of Commissioning, Peoples Services  
L. Billingham – Head of Adult Services  
L Sinclair - Interim Head of Housing  
J White - Service Manager, Housing Strategy and Renewal  
R Evans – Senior Democratic Services Officer

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**42. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gray. Councillor Gaywood attended as substitute for Councillor Gray.

**43. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the Health and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Meeting held on 21 February 2012**

The minutes of the Health and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny held on 21 February 2012 were approved as a correct record.

**44. To receive additional items that the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency, in accordance with Section 100B (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972**

There were no such items.

**45. Declaration of interests**

Councillor Gaywood declared a personal interest in Item 5, in that a member of her family has a social worker from the Team for Disabled Children.

**46. Housing Offices Reconfiguration**

The Committee received a report which provided Members with information concerning the future potential for the reconfiguration of the local housing offices. This work followed on from the approval of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan by Cabinet in February 2012.

Work was being undertaken as to which approach to adopt regarding the future of the local offices; with alternatives such as the creation of local multi-service community hubs or a more simple extension of the current service. Members wished to have some detail regarding any cost savings arising from proposed changes and were advised that these were in an early stage but would be made available to the Committee as soon as possible.

**RESOLVED: That**

**i) The Committee noted the report.**

**47. Thurrock Transitions Services Update**

Members were provided with an overview of the past, present and planned services for the transition of Disabled Young People between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five.

**RESOLVED: That**

**i) Overview and Scrutiny note the Transitions Service report and a brief update of current position and headlines of work since April 2011**

**48. Welfare Benefit Reforms – Report of the Member Task and Finish Group**

Members were asked to endorse a report of the member Task and Finish Group established to examine the implications of the proposed changes to the welfare benefit system.

**RESOLVED: That**

**i) The whole issue of the potential impact of these changes needs to become a whole Council priority and so reflected in the Corporate Plan for 2012/13 and the Corporate Risk register.**

**ii) Because of the significance of this issue and the need to ensure it has senior political and officer oversight a lead member and a lead Director for Welfare Benefit reforms should be appointed.**

**iii) An officer, Welfare Benefits Task and Finish group, should be established – reporting into the Resources Board – to oversee and assess more fully the impact of the proposed changes. The membership should be reflective of the wide**

**range of Council functions potentially impacted – Council Tax, Housing Benefit, Adult and Children's social care.**

- iv) A temporary post (approx 18 months) should be established to lead the work of this group and undertake a full impact assessment. This will not necessarily be a benefits expert but someone who can lead and have an oversight of the whole project. It could be open to a secondment.**
- v) Further work should be undertaken to ensure that there are sufficient welfare benefits advice and information services available for people in the community.**
- vi) The Bill received Royal Assent on 8<sup>th</sup> March. However, a lot of the final details are yet to be confirmed. In order to understand the implications for Thurrock residents a full impact assessment should be commissioned by the Council.**
- vii) A full report should come to Cabinet later in the year, once the impact assessment has been complete about the implications for Thurrock residents and the Council – this should include a full risk assessment of some of the IT and staffing implications.**

**49. Exclusion of the press and public.**

It was resolved to exclude the press and public during the consideration of the following items as they might disclose exempt information under Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972; i.e. information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).

**50. Thurrock 2012 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Refresh**

The Committee received a report setting out the purpose of the Thurrock 2012 Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Strategic Refresh. Members were given a presentation on the suggested key priorities for the forthcoming year. The JSNA was an important document that outlined the general lifestyle and health choices of the Thurrock community, including health, transport and employment. It was intended that this refresh would be fed into the Health and Wellbeing Board to highlight key areas where action is needed to improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

**RESOLVED: That**

- ii) The Committee endorse the contents and process of the 2012 Thurrock JSNA Refresh**
- iii) The Committee endorse the recommendation to focus on the two key priorities areas of tobacco control and obesity.**

**The meeting finished at 8.36pm**

Approved as a true and correct record

**CHAIRMAN**

**DATE**

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
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