

CITY AND COUNTY OF SWANSEA

MINUTES OF THE PREVENTION AND SOCIAL CARE REFORM CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEE

HELD AT COMMITTEE ROOM 5, GUILDHALL, SWANSEA ON MONDAY,
15 AUGUST 2016 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor V M Evans (Chair) Presided

Councillor(s)

J P Curtice
R V Smith

Councillor(s)

E T Kirchner
T M White

Councillor(s)

H M Morris

Officer(s)

Officer(s)

Cathy Richards
Jeremy Parkhouse

Social Care Planning Officer - Carers
Democratic Services Officer

Also Present

Eleanor Norton
Nonn Evans
Karenza Cassidy
Keith Skeggs

Director, Swansea Carers Centre
Carer
Carer
Carer

Apologies for Absence

Councillor(s): U C Clay

17 **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS.**

In accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the City and County of Swansea, no interests were declared.

18 **MINUTES.**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

19 **PRESENTATION - IMPACT OF LEGISLATION ON CARERS.**

Eleanor Norton, Director, Swansea Carers Centre provided a detailed and informative presentation regarding Supporting carers and delivering upon new duties in the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

She highlighted the changes introduced by the Act, particularly the new definition of a carer; the duty to support carers; well-being, overarching duties and outcomes; social enterprises, co-operatives and the third sector; the duty to provide preventative services; the duty to assess and support plans for carers; common principles of assessment; investment in the 3rd sector; and direct payments.

The Committee asked a number of questions of the Swansea Carers Centre Director, which were responded to accordingly. Discussions centred around the following: -

- Use of community buildings to hold group meetings;
- How the Government Department / rules did not assist carers who, were very often punished for gaining employment and had lost the benefits that they were entitled to;
- The impact of the minimum wage upon carers seeking employment;
- Signposting that assisted carers;
- The need for assessments to be timely and for regular reviews to be undertaken;
- Finance being the dominant factor with assessments;
- The huge culture change needed to comply with the Act;
- Access to services provided by the Authority and the changes introduced through the 'advice, information and assistance line';
- The importance of staff being qualified and appropriately trained;
- Engaging with groups / organisations that assist carers;
- The constant obstacles being faced by carers and the constant fight carers faced in order to meet their objectives.

The Director of Swansea Carers Centre also introduced carers Nonn Evans, Karenza Cassidy and Keith Skeggs who all provided very detailed and emotional accounts regarding their experiences as carers. They highlighted the constant fight faced by carers and the difficulties they had faced when dealing with the Social Services Department. It was commented that many difficulties were caused by systems / lack of resources. Furthermore, services and support were being taken away from people and there was no empathy for and very little recognition of carers.

The Committee expressed concern regarding the experiences of the carers and recognised that more Elected Members needed to hear their accounts because many had encountered similar experiences within their Wards. The negative perception of Social Services within communities was also acknowledged. However, it was also emphasised that staff within the Service were fully committed and many of the problems had arisen due to a lack of resources.

The Chair thanked the Swansea Carers Centre Director, Nonn Evans, Karenza Cassidy and Keith Skeggs for attending the meeting.

20 **WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17.**

The Chair presented an updated Work Programme 2016/17.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting ended at 4.10 pm

CHAIR