

Adult Services & Health Select Committee

A meeting of Adult Services & Health Select Committee was held on Monday, 1st October, 2007.

Present: Cllr Mrs Ann Cains (Chairman), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Mrs Eileen Craggs, Cllr John Gardner

Officers: R. Hill (CESC); G. Birtle, F. Shayler (LD).

Also in attendance: E Conn (Alcohol Counselling Service), K Wilson (Chief Executive - Albert Centre)

Apologies: were submitted on behalf of Cllrs Apedaile, Cockerill, Dixon, Mrs Nesbitt and Javed.

ASH 24/07

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Mrs Cains declared a personal/non prejudicial interest as she is a Trustee of the George Hardwick Foundation.

ASH 25/07

Minutes - 3rd September, 2007

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd September 2007 were agreed as a correct record.

ASH 26/07

Review of Alcohol Services

Mr Kevin Wilson, Chief Executive of the Albert Centre and Mr Edward Conn of the Alcohol Counselling Service attended the Select Committee as witnesses for the review of Alcohol Services.

Mr Wilson detailed the work of the Albert Centre that is a charitable service that helped anyone who felt they had a problem relating to alcohol, drugs and any other dependancies. The Albert Centre is located in Middlesbrough but also provided counselling services at various sub centres, and via Primary Alcohol and Drugs Service (PADS) at North Tees General Hospital. The Albert Centre was established around 25 years ago by a Social Worker, Psychologist and Probation Worker. Funding was received at that time from the NHS to train counsellors in the community to provide a service within the Teesside area. The Addictive Behaviour Service was set up around this time at South Cleveland Hospital to run a detoxification programme and counselling.

The National Drug Strategy was implemented in 1998 and funding was concentrated in this area, with no further provision for alcohol services.

The Albert Centre offers individual counselling, substance management, information and advice. People are able to self refer, or be referred by a GP, friends or family, Addictive Behaviour Service, George Hardwick Foundation etc. The Counselling is provided for a maximum of 12 weeks but can sometimes be extended for exceptional circumstances. Measures are in place to assess how the person was at the beginning of the counselling compared to at the end of the counselling. The Care Planned Counselling Model was utilised.

Funding for the Albert Centre is provided by the Northern Rock Foundation, PCT and DAT. Two further Counsellors based at Williams Street, Stockton had been funded through NRF and go out into the different community centres to

offer services.

Discussion was held on the links between alcohol and crime. The Arrest Referral Service in Middlesbrough works towards assessing why crimes were committed and whether they were connected with alcohol consumption. A Government initiative to be introduced later this year would be 'Alcohol Treatment Orders', whereby the person would have to follow a six month programme if their crime/s had been associated with excessive alcohol consumption. Trials of these Orders are taking place at other authorities. Discussion was also held on Specified Activity Orders, which are implemented following three alcohol related offences, group counselling sessions are ordered for 2hrs per week for one month.

Mr Conn of the Alcohol Counselling Service detailed the service that they offer based in Hardwick with commissioning to offer three sessions per week at Port Clarence. Mr Conn stated that this service is more flexible to peoples needs, with open ended counselling sessions that were not restricted by time both during the session and the amount of sessions that are held. People were collected for appointments if necessary. Counselling is also offered to the family to enable them to help one another when a family member had alcohol problems. The project is funded by NRF and supported by North Tees PCT. They currently employ three Counsellors and were looking to recruit a further Counsellor to assist with the increasing work load. Each Counsellor is professionally trained and works within the ethical framework of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Overall, it was felt there is a lack of detoxing services; some alcohol services could be offered through GP Surgeries; long term mainstream funding was required; more links between different organisations and care pathways need to be developed; a lead person to have overall responsibility for this area to ensure that gaps and any duplication of services is identified.

CONCLUDED that the comments by both witnesses by noted.

**ASH
27/07** **Work Programme**

Members requested that further witnesses be invited from Licensing, Community Safety and the Financial Director of PCT. This would cause some slippage in the work programme but it was felt necessary for those views to be received before Members could conclude the review and make recommendations.

Concluded that the update on the Work Programme be noted.

**ASH
28/07** **Any Other Business**

The Scrutiny Officer informed Members that Carole Langrick wished to provide Members with an update on Pathways to Healthcare.

The Chairman and the Scrutiny Officer had met with Mr Paul Frank to discuss the 'Patient Experience' and Local Involvement Networks (LINKS). A presentation would be provided in the near future and it was requested that Peter Smith and Naomi Garbutt of the Adult Strategy Team leading on links in

Stockton Council be invited.

The Scrutiny Officer had sent out information to Members on the new telephone system being used by the NHS.

The Chairman requested that an item 'Chairmans Update' be placed on forthcoming agendas of this Select Committee.

Concluded that the information be noted.