

Minutes

of the Meeting of the

Adult Services & Housing Policy & Scrutiny

Panel

Friday, 16th January 2015

Item 4

held at the Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

Meeting Commenced: 10.30 am Meeting Concluded: 12.45 pm

Councillors:

P Anne Kemp (Chairman)

P Jill Iles (Vice-Chairman)

A Michael Bell

A Robert Cleland

- Peter Crew

A Catherine Gibbons

P Tom Leimdorfer

- Robert Payne

P Arthur Terry

P Roz Willis

P Mary Blatchford

P Andy Cole

- Stephen Fudge

A David Jolley

A Ian Parker

P Marcia Pepperall

A Liz Wells

P Deborah Yamanaka (substitute for Michael Bell)

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Also present: Councillors Ann Harley, Reyna Knight and Dawn Payne (Assistant Executive Members) and Georgie Biggs (North Somerset HealthWatch)

Officers in attendance: Mark Hughes, Gerald Hunt, Claire Leandro, and Martin Hawketts (People and Communities Directorate), Jane Haros (North Somerset Community Partnership), David Jellings (Corporate Services)

ASH 30 **Declarations of Interest by Members (Agenda Item 3)**

None.

ASH 31 **Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st November 2014 (Agenda Item 4)**

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

ASH 32 Better Care Fund – Update and Presentation (Agenda Item 8)

The representative of the Director of People and Communities introduced a powerpoint presentation on this subject matter (the slides would be emailed to Members and a copy placed in the signed minute book).

The representative of the Director of People and Communities responded to Members' questions, queries and comments. The key points raised were-

(i) BCF Funding – It was explained that the sums reflected the totality which included the reinvestment of existing funds.

(ii) There continued to be concern regarding neighbouring authorities taking up residential places in North Somerset.

(iii) It was noted that whilst there was enthusiasm for joint working, the environment for pooled budgets health and social care services, shared between the NHS and local authorities for arrangements would be challenging.

(iv) It was acknowledged that the aspiration for seven day working to assist hospital discharge would be challenging given the limited resources available.

(v) The Panel was pleased to learn that NHS England had confirmed the classification of North Somerset's Better Care Fund as 'Approved with Support' following the Nationally Consistent Assurance Review. The review had identified some areas for improvement, but recognised that North Somerset's plan was strong, with no areas of high risk and as such should progress with plans for implementation.

ASH 33 North Somerset Annual Complaints Report 2013-14 (Agenda Item 7)

The representative of the Director of People and Communities introduced this report

The Director of People and Communities' representative responded to members' questions, queries and comments on the detail of the report, and highlighted the following-

(i) The number of recorded complaints in 2013/14 was 66 compared to 47 in 2012/13.

(ii) The number of recorded compliments in 2013/14 was 330 compared to 404 in 2012/13. The majority of these were for the START team whom had 260 feedback forms returned all with complimentary comments from the service user. Panel Members complimented the START team on the excellent service provided.

(iii) It was commented that not responding to a minority of complaints within the ten day timescale was partly due to the post of Complaints Manager becoming vacant.

(iv) The Complaints Manager post was vacant again but recruitment was progressing.

(v) Liaison with stakeholders (including Weston Hospital) was determined by the nature of individual complaints. This liaison would continue with the Taunton and Musgrove Health Trust.

Concluded: that the Annual Complaints Report for 2013-14 be received and endorsed.

ASH 34 Performance Monitoring Report (Agenda Item 10)

The Panel received the latest finance and performance figures, including key performance indicators.

The representative of the Director of People and Communities commented on the finance and performance figures and the areas of performance. He responded to Members' questions, queries and comments which principally related to the following areas of activity-

(i) The threshold for direct payments – this had not increased.

(ii) Congratulations were expressed for the continuing excellent performance of the START team.

(iii) Performance regarding Integrated Care and Community Meals continued to be positive and the results regarding Adult Care Key Corporate Performance Indicators were very positive.

(iv) Housing Key Corporate Performance Indicators

- Average number of days between the date of HMO licensing inspection to the issuing of formal representations of the licence – performance under target mainly due to the implementation of a new licensing scheme.
- Total number of HMO buildings improved (new) – slightly under target but current licensing activity should improve year end outcome.
- Average time taken from receipt of Occupational Therapy Assessment to approval of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) (in weeks) - – performance affected by staff vacancies and recruitment delays..
- Number of households in temporary accommodation – It was noted that access to the private rented sector was becoming increasingly difficult as market rents had risen far in excess of housing benefit levels.

- Number of empty private sector dwellings that have been empty for more than six months then brought back into use – performance affected by staff absence but it was expected that mitigating steps would ensure the target for 2015-16 would be met.

(vii) Revenue and Benefits – performance regarding both new claims and case tracking was very positive.

Concluded: that the General Performance Update report be noted.

ASH 35 Integrated Care Teams (Agenda Item 6)

The representative of the Director of People and Communities and the representative of the North Somerset Community Partnership (NSCP) introduced this report and highlighted the following progress-

- Establishment of second Integrated Care Team for Worle
- Appointment of a manager for each team – one employed by NSCP and one employed by the Council
- Weekly Multi-Disciplinary Team meetings for both teams – these were held in partnership with GPs and AWP. They identified high risk residents/patients and allocated a key worker to oversee the care required. As at November 2014, since April, 99 people had been allocated a key worker to ensure the delivery of the multi-disciplinary care plan
- Multi-disciplinary meetings for two final localities had commenced in preparation for formally establishing these two teams
- Occupational Therapy staff developing joint working approaches and shared pathways
- Administrative staff were being trained on both Council and NSCP information technology systems to facilitate shared working. There were now internal referral systems in place to speed up services for patients/service users
- Work with GPs was progressing. Staff attended meetings at surgeries to assist in identifying patients for the multi-disciplinary team approach.

Councillor Ann Harley, Assistant Executive Member echoed officers' comments on progress and highlighted their positive approach for dealing with a challenging brief.

The officers responded to Members' queries and comments.

The Chairman on behalf of the Panel thanked the officers and their joint team for their hard work. The Panel asked for an update on progress at a future meeting.

Concluded: that the report be received and that the Panel receive an update report on progress later in the year.

ASH 36 Update from Assistant Executive Member – Councillor Dawn Payne (Agenda Item 9)

The Panel welcomed an oral report from Councillor Dawn Payne.

Panel Members were referred to Councillor Payne's report to the Community and Corporate Organisation Policy and Scrutiny Panel on 20th January and highlighted the following matters of relevance to this Panel-

(i) Welfare Provision Scheme – no additional funding for WPS – the settlement will be finalised in February. The Local Government Association had urged the Department for Communities and Local Government to reconsider its decision before the settlement is finalised in February. An outstanding balance could be carried forward into the next financial year.

(ii) Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP)

This year's spend up to the date was £248,864 (budget £394,300) and was expected to be within budget by the end of the year. An existing take up campaign had allowed for DHP to be considered for the following groups-

- All 15-16 years (same gender) to be allowed additional DHP to pay towards the rent restriction of 14% or 25%. Once they reach this age they are allocated a bedroom of their own in the overall bedroom allowance
- Additional help towards rent arrears in social housing to help move people to smaller accommodation which in turn removes the reduction of 14% or 25%.

There would be an attempt in the fourth financial quarter to try and avoid a large underspend by further take-up activity designed to assist qualifying claimants who find themselves in financial need. Members were encouraged to make contact if they were aware of any residents who may be eligible.

Councillor Payne and the representative of the Director of People and Communities responded to Members' questions and queries.

Councillor Payne advised that she had asked for a review of benefit cases which were taking between 40 – 50 days to process in order to identify any potential reasons for the delay and then take action to address these if possible. Performance details will be provided to Councillor Payne on a monthly basis going forward.

Housing officers worked closely with colleagues regarding the entitlement of vulnerable people to Housing Benefit. They also worked closely with Leaving Care Team to help support the accommodation needs of care leavers.

The Chairman on behalf of the Panel thanked Councillor Payne for her comprehensive report.

ASH 37 The Panel's Work Plan (Agenda Item 11)

Officers' reports dealt with at this meeting would be deleted from the Work Plan.

The representative of the Director of People and Communities explained that the Council was in the process of revising and updating the Housing Strategy. An event was being arranged at Weston College on 24th February 2015, 9.00 am – 12.30 am (approx) which would be attended by registered housing providers, private sector landlords and the business sector. It was agreed that Councillors Kemp, Iles and Leimdorfer would be invited to attend the event.

The Chairman updated the Panel on the work of the Support Services (START and Community Meals) Working Group and briefly referred to the meeting with the Leader, Business Support officers and Agilisys that she had attended. Panel Members welcomed the assurances given.

The representative of the Director of People and Communities advised that staff would be transferred to Agilisys on 1st February 2015 as scheduled whilst accommodation details were continuing to be worked on.

It was agreed that the working group would remain in existence and carry out further engagement by reviewing implementation at a relevant time later in 2015.

Concluded: that the work plan be updated accordingly.

Chairman
