

Minutes

of the Meeting of the

Adult Services & Housing Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 12th April 2018

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

Meeting Commenced: 10.00 a.m. Meeting Concluded: 11.45 a.m.

Councillors:

P Reyna Knight (Chairman)

P Mary Blatchford (Vice-Chairman)

A Robert Cleland

A Ruth Jacobs

A David Shopland

P Liz Wells

P Deborah Yamanaka

A Richard Nightingale

P David Jolley

P Richard Tucker

A Roz Willis

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Officers in attendance: Mark Hughes, Gerald Hunt, Sheila Smith, Katherine Sokol (Development and Environment); Leo Taylor (Corporate Services)

ASH Declarations of Interest by Members

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None

ASH Minutes of the Meeting held on 7th December 2017

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

ASH Domiciliary Care Update (Agenda Item 6)

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The Head of Commissioning updating Members on domiciliary care performance.

In summary, he said the report showed that recent difficulties encountered by one of the Council's domiciliary care providers were being addressed and had now returned to an acceptable position. Nevertheless, he emphasised that the overall position remained challenging in respect of supply and capacity noting that 59% of Councils nationally were facing situations where care contracts had been turned back.

The report also focussed on the work through the recommissioning process on significant unit cost savings through the reconfiguration of the service.

The challenge going forward however was on the long-term viability of services and the dynamic nature of the current social care market.

Concern was raised by Members about the numbers of service users awaiting packages of care and the lack of information about outcomes and service user feedback. Members had been provided with this kind of information when services had been provided in-house, its omission now leading to concern that the quality of outsourced services may not be of the same standard as those that had been provided in-house.

The Head of Commissioning acknowledged that there had been some issues around the transition between the in-house (Start) service and the new commissioned services, and that there were some ongoing issues around service access but he emphasised that current performance was generally steady and national returns to the Department for Health (including service user feedback indicators) showed that the Council was performing well (in the upper quartile nationally).

He responded to Members' specific comments and queries as follows:

(1) *Effects of Brexit* – The care home and domiciliary care sectors had been affected, with some European staff returning home, and this trend was expected to continue. There were issues generally around recruitment and Council's had a duty to challenge the low esteem given by society to care staff.

(2) *Notaro (Council commissioned care provider) covered a large area in North Somerset but there were smaller and less financially challenged agencies in the district* – he acknowledged these were available but said that the costs of using them were considerably higher.

Concluded: that the report be noted and Members' comments be provided to officers in the form of the minutes.

ASH 23 Grant for housing related support update (Agenda Item 7)

The Head of Commissioning presented the report updating the Panel on progress with the award of a £1m grant for NHSA (Alliance Homes), replacing the previous contracted arrangements for housing floating support.

In recognising that the change would lead to some reduction in service against the former arrangements, Members queried how the impacts would be monitored. Officers said that impacts on the statutory provision and referrals to other agencies would be monitored and gave reassurance that the new provider would be best placed to utilise in-kind services where these were needed.

Concluded: that the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of the minutes.

ASH 24 Community Meals Service (Agenda Item 8)

The Director, People and Communities, presented the report providing an update on the community meals service and priority actions for 2017/18/19.

Members' sought and received clarification on the following issues:

- opportunities for more effectively marketing the community meals service (for instance on the Council's website); and
- challenges around services potentially provided by social enterprise schemes and the voluntary sector in the current financial climate.

Concluded: that the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of the minutes.

ASH 25 Performance monitoring Quarter 3 (Agenda Item 9)

Members noted the performance monitoring report and sought and received clarification on the following issues:

- *Below target enablement indicator* - Officers explained that this related to issues identified in a recent Ombudsman report and the Council was reviewing pathways;
- *Below target "homelessness prevented through use of private sector housing"* – Members were referred back to the performance report in which the causes of and steps being taken by the Council to address this issue were outlined (second bullet point on page 3 of the report);

Concluded: that the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of the minutes.

ASH 26 Steering Group Recommendations – housing conditions in the private rented sector (Agenda Item 10)

Members considered the report and recommendations of the Panel's Housing Steering Group in respect of proposals set out in the Council's recent review of housing conditions in the private rented sector.

In considering the Steering Group's report, the Panel noted that the report had been circulated to all Panel Members for information and comment prior to it being submitted to the Executive Member.

Resolved: that the recommendations to the Executive Member for Planning, Highways, Transport, Housing and Economic Development, set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be retrospectively endorsed.

ASH 27 Month 10 Adult Care Budget Monitor (Agenda Item 11)

The Finance Business Partner (People and Communities) presented the report which summarised and discussed the current forecast spend against budget for adult services, highlighting key variances, movements and contextual information. It also made reference to the principles and processes associated with the setting of the 2018/19 budget.

Members sought and received clarification on the following issues: -

- the £1.74m projected budget variance for learning disabilities
- further development of the unit cost by activity approach to monitoring and managing expenditure; and

- work being undertaken to address issues around the “transitions” period between children and adult social care.

Concluded: that the report be received and an outline of the discussions arising be forwarded to officers in the form of the minutes.

ASH 28 The Panel’s Work Plan (Agenda Item 12)

Having considered the Work Plan which had been updated to reflect outcomes of discussion from the previous meeting, Members: -

Concluded: that the work plan be updated to include actions and proposals arising from the current meeting.

Chairman
