

Cabinet – 5 April 2017

Recommendation from the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 March 2017

Quality and Cost of Care - Inquiry Day

21 (Note: Cllr Ros Kayes declared a pecuniary interest in this item as she (and others) had been awarded a contract for carers by the County Council. She left the room whilst discussion centre on carers.)

The Committee considered a report by the Interim Director for Adult and Community Services which provided a summary of the recent Inquiry Day into the cost and quality of care held on 13 February 2017. The Committee was asked to consider the findings and make any recommendations for the Cabinet to consider in due course.

The Chairman reminded members of the successful Inquiry Day which had brought together representatives from commissioners, providers, inspectors, health, services users and carers and all had benefitted from hearing each other's perspectives. The Committee now needed to establish the next steps and identify any recommendations for the Cabinet to consider.

The Interim Director for Adult and Community Services presented the report highlighting the key issues and themes identified during the Inquiry Day within the four individual Evidence sessions. She also updated members on work by the Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group and the County Council on the joint commissioning of a new contract for home care and residential care for older people which would be in place by December 2017. This was trying to address the issues of price, demand and quality of services between areas.

Having discussed the Evidence Sessions individually, issues and key themes, it was suggested that a Working Group be established to look at staff recruitment, retention, training, means of attracting staff to work in Dorset, key worker accommodation, potential staff benefits, respite care and perhaps working with other authorities on this. It was also suggested and agreed that the Group should look at work undertaken in Somerset where small groups of carers organised services for local people and review the contract between the County Council and Healthwatch to ensure that their profile relating to the quality of care was sufficiently high enough. Cllr Barrie Cooper was identified as the Lead Member and Cllrs Steve Butler, Ros Kayes, Fred Drane and David Walsh to form the Working Group, subject to election results.

It was also suggested that a further Working Group be established to look at investment in care, advice and its accessibility and support at home, although it was recognised that there was some potential overlap with the work of the Group established above. This Group would address the issue of lack of information, advice and accessibility generally and specifically for self-funders. It could also consider accessibility to information for those living alone and in isolated areas and review information accessible from the website.

The possibility of investing in new care homes which could also provide worker accommodation on site, and a hub service to look after people in their own homes was mentioned. Members were also keen that although there had been much talk about action in the past, there now needed to be a commitment to actually deliver.

The Interim Director for Adult and Community Services reported on the Proud to Care Campaign which was being run across the South West to address recruitment issues and which included the possible introduction of Care Worker Oscars. She suggested that the Working Group might like to consider this as part of their review.

Members were reminded that one of the Care Home providers in Dorset who had attended the Inquiry Day had invited members to visit his care homes. It was agreed that this would increase their understanding of care homes and better equip them to undertake the identified reviews. It was also noted that visits used to take place by members to Care Homes in their electoral divisions on a regular basis and, although this practice had not be continued, it was hoped that members could be encouraged to do this following the forthcoming elections.

With regard to the integration between health and social care and whether the Better Care Fund had resulted in any change, members agreed that this was an area for future scrutiny. They noted that it would be possible for the Committee or a Working Group to invite representatives from other organisations and interested parties to take part in such a review in order to improve outcomes for residents.

Resolved

1. That a Working Group be established to look at staff recruitment, retention, training, means of attracting staff to work in Dorset, key worker accommodation, potential staff benefits, respite care, the Healthwatch contract, the Proud to Care Campaign, work with other authorities and the work being undertaken in Somerset. The Group would comprise Cllr Barrie Cooper (Lead Member), Steve Butler, Ros Kayes, Fred Drane and David Walsh, subject to election results.
2. That a Working Group be established to look at investment in care, advice and support at home as set out in the minute above.
3. That members accept the invitation from a Care Home provider to visit its properties.
4. That the integration between health and social care, including the Better Care Fund, be added to the Work Programme as an area for scrutiny.

Recommended

That the Cabinet:-

1. Note the outcomes from the Inquiry Day in the cost and quality of care as set out in the interim Director's report.
2. Note the discussions outlined in the minute above and support the Committee's resolutions.

Reason for Recommendations

To promote independence and build on good practice to meet the predictable and growing challenges around the costs and quality of care in Dorset in years to come.