



People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park,
Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ on Thursday, 14 March 2019.

Present:

David Walsh (Chairman)

Mary Penfold, Katharine Garcia, Byron Quayle, Mark Roberts and Clare Sutton.

Officer Attending: David Bonner (Intelligence, Insight and Performance Manager), Mark Fortune (Commercial Manager), Nick Jarman (Director for Adult Social Services), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance) and Helen Whitby (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(Notes: These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. This is the last planned meeting of this Committee before the start of the new Dorset Council on 1 April 2019. The minutes will therefore be confirmed and signed by the Chairman prior to 31 March 2019.)

Apologies for Absence

13 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shane Bartlett, Graham Carr-Jones and Kate Wheller.

Code of Conduct

14 There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

Councillor Mark Roberts declared an interest as his company had a small adult care contract with the County Council and would not take part in any discussions about contracting arrangements.

Minutes

15 The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2019 were confirmed and signed.

Progress on Matters Raised at Previous Meetings

16 The Committee considered a report by the Interim Transformation Lead for Adult and Community Services which set out Cabinet decisions arising from Committee recommendations and outstanding actions identified at previous meetings.

With reference to having an update on the veterans' strategy and access to mental health support through Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust, the Director for Adult Social Care would supply a written update outside of the meeting.

Resolved

That an update on the veterans' strategy and access to mental health support through Dorset Healthcare University NHS Foundation Trust be provided by the Director for Adult Social Care outside of the meeting.

Public Participation

17 There were no public questions, statements or petitions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders.

Outcomes Focused Monitoring Report: March 2019

- 18 The Committee considered a report by the Interim Transformation Lead for Adult and Community Services which set out performance against the 2017-19 Corporate Plan and population indicators for the Healthy and Independent outcomes. The report also included performance measures which showed the Council's Services contribution and impact on outcomes, and risk management information relating to outcomes and population indicators. Performance had not changed to any large degree since the last meeting.

With regard to performance in Key Stage 2 (KS2) for reading, writing and mathematics which was below the national average and for the south west, the Director for Adult Social Care provided information which showed that the situation in Dorset was improving. He did, however, highlight that both maintained schools and academies now had autonomy and the local authority's ability to influence performance was not as great as it used to be. The School Improvement Service helped schools where there were concerns about performance or if schools sought this help. Other measures introduced by the local authority to help improve performance were explained including the role of the new School Improvement Board.

Members asked the Director for Adult Social Care for information about the number of Dorset schools within the three Ofsted categories as a means of establishing current performance. It was noted that although performance in KS2 was poor by the time the children reached KS4 their performance had improved. It was noted that those children not performing well at KS2 needed consistent support throughout to improve performance.

In response to questions, the Director for Adult Social Care explained that KS2 performance could be improved by involvement of the School Improvement Board and the sharing of experience and expertise of better performing schools from within and without Dorset and accessible services available to help looked after children's emotional wellbeing and mental health were explained.

Members remained concerned about why the percentage of young people successfully completing substance use treatment was not working as well as previously and the rise in the number of care leavers that were not in education, employment and training. Officers thought the substance use treatment performance could be linked to a recent data cleansing exercise and would explore this.

With regard to those receiving direct payments, it was explained that the majority would have Learning Disabilities as this provided them with greater purchasing power. It was suggested that in future this figure be separated into those with Learning Disabilities and those needing adult social care.

Resolved

1. That the Director for Adult Social Care provide information to show the number of Dorset schools in each of the three Ofsted categories.
2. That officers explore reasons for the deterioration in substance use treatment performance could be linked to a recent data cleansing exercise.

Analysis of the recent Loneliness Survey and related reports

- 19 The Committee considered a report by the Intelligence, Insight and Performance Manager which set out the analysis of the findings of the survey into loneliness undertaken from November 2018 to January 2019 and other related reports.

A list of help available in rural and farming communities was provided, including Future Roots, In Jolly Good Company, Stepping into Nature, Livability, Livewell Dorset, Natural Choices in Dorset, Fancy's Farm - Portland, and the Dorchester

Men's Shed. Members raised the concern that those with mental illness might not know how to find out about such support. It was explained that the local authority had a role to act as broker and have a central directory to enable access to such services and there was a need to ensure that digitally excluded residents had written access to this information as access could reduce demand on statutory services in the longer term. Members supported the need for a central directory of available support, recognised that a small amount of funding might help support these small local groups or provide the means to start such groups, that small local groups seemed to work well, and that care providers or parish councils might provide a means of getting information out to harder to reach residents.

Resolved

That this is a topic which the Committee wants to signal as an important one for the new Dorset Council and any further work it wishes to progress including looking at the example of local providers like 'Future Roots' helping to tackle the challenge of mental health and social isolation in older men in the rural/farming community.

Dorset Emergency Duty Service for Adults

20 The Committee considered a report by the Interim Transformation Lead for Adult and Community Services on the new Emergency Duty Service which was set up in November 2018 to provide both emergency mental health and social care services to adults across Dorset.

The new arrangements ensured cover for out of hours and holiday periods and had been targeted towards peaks in activity and was, therefore, a more efficient use of resources.

Members welcomed the introduction of this service which was working well.

Noted

Work Programme

21 The Committee considered a report by the Interim Transformation Lead for Adult and Community Services on the Committee's work programme.

Members agreed that homelessness and the Emergency Local Assistance Funding, as well as social isolation and loneliness should be added to the list of topics for consideration of the new Dorset Council for future scrutiny.

Resolved

That homelessness and the Emergency Local Assistance Funding, as well as social isolation and loneliness, should be added to the list of topics for consideration of the new Dorset Council for future scrutiny.

Questions from County Councillors

22 No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20(2).

Reference was made to a recent press article on the current level of debt within Adult and Community Services and whether measures were in place to address this. The article had been based on a report considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 11 March 2019. The Commercial Manager explained that management of debt for Adult Services had moved to the central finance team. There had been a delay in an invoicing run and this resulted in two runs being made close together without the opportunity to collect any payment which led to a larger than normal amount of debt. A payment from the Clinical Commissioning Group had been received yesterday which reduced the outstanding amount by £600K. Some of the debt had rolled forward from previous years and consideration had to be given to whether it was economic to try to recover this through the legal department or

whether it should be written off. Members asked to be sent a copy of this report.

Resolved

That the Financial Management Report considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 11 March be emailed to members of the Committee.

Meeting Duration: Time Not Specified - Time Not Specified