



People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ on Monday, 20 March 2017.

Present:

David Walsh (Chairman)
Steve Butler (Vice-Chairman)
Ronald Coatsworth, Barrie Cooper, Fred Drane and Ros Kayes.

Members Attending

Jill Hayes (Cabinet Member for Adult Health, Care and Independence) and Rebecca Knox (Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Communities).

Officers Attending: Helen Coombes (Interim Director for Adult and Community Services), Mark Taylor (Group Manager - Governance and Assurance) and Helen Whitby (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

For certain items, as appropriate

John Alexander (Senior Assurance Manager – Performance), Stephanie Farr (Corporate Policy and Performance Officer (Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme)) and Patrick Myers (Assistant Director – Design and Development).

(Notes:(1) These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on **Monday, 26 June 2017.**)

Apologies for Absence

15 Apologies for absence were received from Spencer Flower, Mary Kahn, William Trite, Michael Turnbull and Kate Wheller.

Code of Conduct

16 Councillor Kayes declared a pecuniary interest in relation to minute 21 as she (and others) had been awarded a contract for Carers by the County Council. She would leave the meeting whilst discussion about carers took place.

Minutes

17 The minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2017 were confirmed and signed.

Progress on Matters Raised at Previous Meetings

18 The Committee considered a report by the Interim Director for Adult and Community Services which set out progress on matters raised at previous meetings.

Noted

Public Participation

Public Speaking

19 There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1).

There were no public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing

Order 21(2).

Dorset Syrian Resettlement Programme

20 The Committee considered a report by the Director for Children's Services which provided an update on the Dorset Syrian Resettlement Programme.

Members were reminded that the Cabinet had decided in June 2016 that 6-8 families could be resettled in Dorset and this was likely to rise to ten families by December 2017. A further report would be considered by the Cabinet on 5 April 2017. A brief outline of how Syrian refugees were identified and the process followed for resettlement in the UK was given. This process was designed to identify the resources needed to support these families during their first twelve months including housing, health services, school places and English lessons to help them integrate. The important part played by the Dorset Councils Partnership and the Voluntary and Community Sector in the resettlement programme was highlighted, as was the recent article reported in the Dorset Echo.

In response to questions it was noted that part of the settlement programme identified areas where there were schools with vacancies so as not to add to pressures on oversubscribed schools, that there were instructions as to how the £8,500 funding could be used, that after the initial 12 months additional funding could be applied for with supporting evidence and that experience in other local authority areas had demonstrated that 12 months was long enough for families to be settled.

Further reports would be provided at the appropriate time.

The Committee had previously agreed to a review of Hate Crime and the Senior Democratic Services Officer was asked to facilitate a meeting between the Lead Member and Lead Officer to complete the scoping report.

Resolved

1. That the report be noted and further updates be provided at the appropriate time.
2. That the Senior Democratic Services Officer facilitate a meeting between the Lead Member and Lead Officer for the Hate Crime Review to complete the scoping report.

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. The 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.

Work Programme

- 22 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive which detailed the updated work programme for 2016-17 and were asked to request additional items through the Chairman.

The Committee were reminded that at the last meeting it was agreed that, as Lead Members, Councillors Kayes and Wheller would identify scrutiny items relating to the Corporate Plan with John Alexander, the Lead Officer. A number of issues has been identified for possible future scrutiny including mental health, elderly care and delayed transfer of care as set out in the appendix to the report.

One member highlighted the reduction in the Special Education Needs Budget, its impact on schools and children, and the lack of transparency of the process that had led to this decision. Members, including the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Communities, recognised the importance of this matter and agreed to it being added to the work programme and treated as a priority. Councillor Steve Butler was identified as the Lead Member and Jay Mercer as the Lead Officer. The Senior Democratic Services Officer was asked to arrange a meeting to complete the scoping document as a matter of urgency.

In response to a question about scrutiny training, it was explained that this would form part of the induction programme for members following the forthcoming County Council elections and that a further session to develop scrutiny skills was being scheduled for later in the year.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to help prioritise items for scrutiny was explained especially in allocating reviews which could be undertaken by more than one of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It highlighted that any members interested in particular reviews could take part regardless of which Overview and Scrutiny Committee they sat on. It was also noted that reviews could be progressed more urgently without reference to the main Committees and in between meetings.

Members agreed that an annual report be drafted to show the Committee's work and the outcomes achieved. Officers were asked to undertake this.

The Chairman thanked members for their contributions to the work and achievements of the Committee since its establishment in April 2016.

Resolved

1. That items of mental health, elderly care and delayed transfers of care be added to the work programme.
2. That an item on Special Education Needs Budget be added to the work programme as a priority.
3. That the Senior Democratic Services Officer arrange a meeting between Councillor Steve Butler, Lead Member, and Jay Mercer, Lead Officer, to complete

- the scoping report as a matter of urgency.
4. That officers draft an annual report on the work of the Committee and outcomes achieved.

Questions from County Councillors

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

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 11.25 am