

## **PEOPLE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

### **NOTES OF INFORMAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 JULY 2021**

**Present:** Cllrs Andrew Kerby (Chairman), Pauline Batstone (Vice-Chairman), Tony Alford, Pete Barrow, Toni Coombs, Beryl Ezzard, Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Rebecca Knox and Daryl Turner

**Apologies:** None

**Also present:** Cllr Dave Bolwell, Cllr Cherry Brooks, Cllr Simon Christopher, Cllr David Gray, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Carole Jones, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Mary Penfold, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Molly Rennie, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr David Taylor, Cllr Gill Taylor and Cllr John Worth

**Officers present (for all or part of the meeting):**

Vivienne Broadhurst (Interim Executive Director - People Adults), Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Jonathan Mair (Corporate Director - Legal & Democratic Service Monitoring Officer), Vik Verma (Interim Director of Education and Learning), Lesley Hutchinson (Corporate Director for Adults Commissioning), Andrew Billany (Corporate Director of Housing, Dorset Council), Sharon Attwater (Service Manager for Housing Strategy and Performance), Fiona Brown (Service Manager for Homelessness Prevention and Housing Advice), Laura Cornette (Business Partner - Communities and Partnerships) and Lindsey Watson (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

**49. Declarations of Interest**

A question was raised with regard to the need for members of the committee to declare an interest in respect of agenda item 7, 'Dorset Council Grants Protocol', as a number of committee members were involved with local organisations such as youth centres. It was noted that the report was with regard to the creation of a process and was not about any specific grants. Clarification would be sought from Legal as to the position for councillors in respect of the item.

**50. Public Participation**

There were no questions or statements from members of the public or local organisations related to items on the agenda.

**51. Questions from Members**

There were no questions from councillors.

## 52. **The Impact of Covid on Schools and Youth Provision**

The committee considered a report of the Corporate Director for Education and Learning, which provided an overview of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on schools and youth provision, the work being done to support Dorset schools and youth providers and the efforts of schools that had continued to deliver support in their communities.

The committee considered the issues arising in this area and during discussion the following areas were covered:

- Recognition of the importance of monitoring performance in this area to monitor impact and provide focus for potential change
- Potential for the committee to monitor the long-term strategy plans with the suggestion of a report back to committee at an appropriate time
- Overview of support provided to early years settings
- Detail of regular communications taking place with schools, including around exams
- Support provided to schools including an outreach service, advice for headteachers, a focus on children with vulnerabilities and working to improve outcomes for all children
- Support for children who had now left school including a focus on apprenticeships and other work opportunities and the national conversation required in this area
- Reference to summer activity programmes being run by some schools
- Accessibility to services and resources to support young people
- A report to be brought to committee in September 2021, with regard to a policy for home educated children.

The Chairman thanked all involved for their work in supporting children and young people. In addition, he recognised the big impact that the pandemic had had on children and young people and the need to address funding for this area through MPs and government.

### **ADVICE FROM MONITORING OFFICER ON DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ASSOCIATED WITH AGENDA ITEM 7, 'DORSET COUNCIL GRANTS PROTOCOL'**

The Chairman invited the Monitoring Officer to comment on whether committee members needed to declare an interest in respect of the agenda item 'Dorset Council Grants Protocol'.

The Monitoring Officer noted the concern that had been expressed by committee members as to whether they were required to declare an interest in the Dorset Council Grant Protocol item due to their involvement with any community organisations. The Monitoring Officer recognised that all councillors could potentially be involved with community groups. He noted that the Code of Conduct required councillors to declare an interest if it affected their finances or those of any group that they were involved with, if it

affected them more than others and whether a member of the public would think that their involvement could potentially affect their judgement on a matter. The report on the agenda was with regard to establishing a process which would apply to all bodies and was not considering specific grants to any organisations. Therefore, he did not believe that committee members were required to make a declaration at the meeting and therefore all committee members could take full part in consideration of the item.

53. **Dorset Council Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021 - 2026**

The committee received a report of the Service Manager, Housing Strategy and Performance, which outlined the process which had been undertaken to draft a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy for Dorset Council and sought support from the committee to recommend the strategy to Cabinet for approval.

The committee considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following points were raised:

- The objectives included in the report would be useful for future monitoring
- Issues around the lack of affordable and social housing. A future piece of work around the council's Housing Strategy was noted for future review by the committee
- Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on homelessness which would continue to be monitored
- Links to work around domestic abuse reduction
- Recognition of the challenge for officers and the Portfolio Holder in joining these issues up
- The Equality Impact Assessment looked at challenges faced by people with protected characteristics and should highlight any issues around the armed forces covenant
- A possible future report for the committee following discussions to take place with the Foster Carers Association
- Suggested action required to ensure the availability of housing
- Recognition of the role for the council working with a range of other organisations. Thanks were expressed to all involved in the work.

It was proposed by P Batstone seconded by A Alford

**'Minded to' Recommendation to Cabinet**

That members of the committee recommend that Cabinet:

Endorse the work and agree:

1. The adoption of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021 - 2026
2. Delegation of authority to the Portfolio holder for Housing and Community Safety to make minor amendments to the strategy and

action plan and any amendments necessary to reflect legislative change.

The Corporate Director for Housing, having heard the debate, confirmed the 'minded to' Recommendation to Cabinet, under delegated powers on behalf of the informal meeting of the People and Health Overview Committee.

#### **54. Dorset Council Grants Protocol**

The committee received and considered a report of the Business Partner – Communities and Partnerships which considered a proposed Dorset Council Grants Protocol, to provide a baseline standard for all competitive grants offered to the Voluntary Community Sector.

Consideration was given to the draft protocol and the following comments were made:

- Small organisations without a bank account could nominate another organisation, such as a town or parish council, to hold grant funding on their behalf – this would be clarified in the protocol
- Full terms and conditions were included with all grants and funding had to be returned if it was not spent
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on some grants awarded was noted
- The important role of local ward councillors and a request that the assessment process was amended to include consultation with local ward councillors (5-day timescale for comments), with their views to be provided to the assessment panel
- Issues around liability insurance – further clarity would be provided within the protocol.

The Business Partner – Communities and Partnerships, noted the comments made by the committee as set out above which would be reported to the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services, who would take the decision in respect of agreeing the Dorset Council Grants Protocol.

#### **55. Committee's Forward Plan and Cabinet's Forward Plan**

Councillors noted the forward plan for the committee and the Cabinet Forward Plan.

A request was made for a workshop on the development of the Integrated Care System Plan to include an oversight of governance and achievements. The workshop could be open to all interested councillors. Following this, the committee could agree any further review to be undertaken.

#### **56. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**57. Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 am - 12.25 pm

**Chairman**

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