

PEOPLE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2021

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

Apologies: Cllrs Rebecca Knox and Daryl Turner

Also present: Cllr Cherry Brooks, Cllr Piers Brown, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr Matthew Hall, Cllr Laura Miller, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Molly Rennie, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr Andrew Starr, Cllr Gary Suttle, Cllr David Taylor and Cllr Bill Trite

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

Elizabeth Broadhurst (Social Care Consultant), Amanda Davis (Head of Locality and Strategy - Chesil), Bridget Downton (Head of Business Insight and Corporate Communications), Rebecca Forrester (Business Intelligence & Performance), Jennifer Lewis (Service Manager for Communications and Engagement), Stuart Riddle (Senior Manager), Sarah Jane Smedmor (Corporate Director - Care & Protection), Steve Veevers (Corporate Director Operations, Adult Care), Vik Verma (Interim Director of Education and Learning) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

58. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Rebecca Knox and Daryl Turner.

59. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made at the meeting.

60. Public Participation

There were no submissions from town or parish councils or from members of the public.

The Chairman made reference to some recent correspondence members had received from Swanage regarding their ambulance car and advised members that the CCG had been clear that they would be consulting before they made any decisions about the ambulance car. Like others Dorset Council would be a consultee of the CCG but to date had not been consulted, so there was nothing to consider and nothing for us to respond to at the present time. He added that the CCG had confirmed that pending the outcome of the consultation there would be no change to the current service.

The Chairman noted that he was happy for this to come to committee or to have a sub-committee but was clear this would not be until the CCG launched their consultation. There was a need for members to be clear about our role as a consultee.

61. **Questions from Members**

There were no questions received from Councillors.

One member highlighted the concerns from town and parish councils regarding the Swanage Ambulance Car and asked if the Chairman would consider having a task and finish group set up in readiness. The Chairman undertook to speak with the Portfolio Holder about this but highlighted the need to ensure members did not follow a route on predetermination. He also stated that he was not prepared to take any more questions until the consultation was launched. He understood how passionate people were about this but emphasised there was a process in place and this would be looked at.

62. **Updated Dorset Council Plan**

The Committee considered a report which included the updated Council plan which reflected on the learning and changes as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic prior to it being presented to Cabinet on 5 October 2021.

Officers advised that there had been an informal meeting held at the end of July in order for members to look at priorities and for an opportunity to contribute to the Plan.

Areas of discussion/questions

An important part would be the synopsis of the Plan which was quite lengthy. Needs to be something easy for members of the public to read. A key point document would be prepared.

While some of the issues that the Council faced were included it was felt it did not address all the points. The Plan included comments and input from all directorates but officers were happy to look at any activity that was not currently reflected

Biggest issues facing Dorset Council was demographics.

Revisit wording in respect of ASB and crime

Skills to wage ratios highlighted

Prevention of scale not adequately reflected

Highlighted the need to keep our youth in the county to help support our older people.

63. **Birth to Settled Adulthood - Review and Next Steps**

The Committee considered a report which set out recommendations made as part of the Spring 2021 review into the current transition to Adulthood approach and was a shared ambition with both Children's and Adult Services.

The Corporate Director for Care and Protection highlighted to members the relevant statutory responsibilities that the Council had to work to.

The Corporate Director for Adult Social Care highlighted that the work focussed on areas that were really important to people. Some systems could be put in place for the short term but officers recognised the need to put in some long term ambitions.

Areas of discussion/questions

Key issue in young people was mental health and CAMS offered a lot of emotional support for young people but when they transferred to adult services it became a clinical diagnosis. Officers highlighted the complex legal jurisdiction that was in place and made reference to the mental health social care review which was looking at a range of preventative measures. The aim was to make all pathways from Children's Services to Adults as seamless as possible.

There was a question regarding assessments not taking place for young people and the identification of 400 other young children waiting for school placements. The Corporate Director for Education and Learning advised that a number of children in post 16 educational settings received some care, discussions were ongoing with Adult Services regarding the referral processes. Both Directorate now worked differently which was helping to provide good in-reach services in Children's Services.

Support for those after the age of 19. Officers advised that Adult Services had the legal responsibility to support those post 18 and in Children's those with SEND up to the age of 25. This highlighted the need to work in a multi-agency way.

Dorset Council are Corporate Parents up to age 25 and beyond.

The allocation of enough resources to make everything work and the risk assessment area of the report highlighted.

Timeline and structures highlighted.

How to gain knowledge of young people's views. The Corporate Director for Care and Protection noted the need to listen to our children's voices all the time, and there were a range of ways to ensure they were heard: through good social work, support in schools, advocates work with special schools, Dorset Children Parent Council and participation work.

Reference to Fostering Panel highlighted.

Proposed: Toni Coombs

Seconded: Anthony Alford

Members agreed a 'Minded to Decision' to adopt and endorse all recommendations made as part of the Spring 2021 review into the current Transition to Adulthood approach.

The Corporate Director for Care and Protection, having heard the debate, confirmed the 'minded to' decision to approve the recommendations under delegated powers on behalf of the informal meeting of the People and Health Overview Committee.

64. **Strategy relating to Children missing out on Education**

The Committee considered a report which provided information on the policies and strategies in the three main areas of Children Missing out on Education(CMOOE) that Children's Services had enacted on, the impact this had and the planned next steps to further support children.

Areas of discussion/questions

Reference was made to previous safeguarding issues and legislative concerns in previous councils. Officers advised they were still operating under older legislation in that there was not a national register of children being home educated but as a Local Authority a register was kept, but this was not a statutory requirement.

Trends of people opting to home educate as a result of COVID. There had been a slight rise in children that were now home educated in Dorset but there was good support throughout the teams. The number could potentially have been higher without the support that was in place.

Pleased to note the reduction in permanent exclusions.

Did Dorset Council have any influence over exclusions from academies? Officers worked closely with academy partners to promote more inclusive processes through this work and wanted to see the overall number of exclusions reduce further.

Reference was made to 56 young people with no provision. Officers advised that the inclusion leads within localities identified where they were and were working with partners and police to reduce this.

Alternative provision provided by the Council included learning centres, registered providers and re-engagement providers.

Concern over the lack of authority in respect of a register and how children not in formal education were identified. Officers explained the referral process of notifying officers about those children not attending or those opting for home education in order to fulfil our safeguarding requirement. There was a legal duty on families to register their children for education. Councils were reliant on health colleagues to keep contact and if children did not start school it was all about multi-agency partnership work. There was no statutory mechanism to track children.

The Chairman felt members had the opportunity to steer national legislation to ensure the Council had the tools to monitor this work. He would like to see a statutory register and the right level of funding in place. The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help would welcome greater clarity around legislation and additional government funding to address this and agreed to discuss this further with the Chairman to draft a letter to members of parliament with the aim of securing an effective route forward.

65. **Development of Family Hubs**

The Committee considered a report on the Family Hub Service delivery model to support the development of family hubs in Dorset.

Members were advised that a hub did not need to be a physical space but could also be a virtual space.

Areas of discussion/questions

Regarding another way of networking for young people and families, the outcome of bids was still awaited.

Importance of having one integrated front door highlighted.

In respect of a digital front door and digital service delivery were there other models in existence? Officers advised that work around mediations were very new and they would see how this could be built into a family hub approach.

Reference was made to family courts and the safeguarding measures that were in place. The multi-purpose safeguarding hub was highlighted and the good relationship that was in place with the Police.

Relationships were key to the success of hubs.

The need to look at a feedback loop for when concerns had been raised.

In respect of delivery of this work, the Local Authority were doing the discovery phase with partners and a stakeholder group would be brought together. Following this report work on the governance aspect would commence.

Highlighted that partners had pan Dorset responsibilities, and there was a need to ensure Dorset received a fair share of the service delivery.

Work on domestic abuse toolkit highlighted.

How would this work with existing children's centres. Officers advised that the link with the community sector was very strong and family hubs were the best elements of children centres and would make them work even more. Some local authorities had already created some family hubs.

66. Committee's Forward Plan and Cabinet's Forward Plan

The Committee considered its Forward Plan and that of the Cabinet.

Following a comment about the Swanage Ambulance Car, the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health recognised that this was a very emotive subject and advised that she was in constant contact with colleagues at the CCG and they were very aware of the public interest. As soon as anything happened Dorset Council would know, through her, but there was no time frame in place for the consultation at present. She highlighted the need to ensure all services were equitable for all residents of Dorset.

67. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items of business.

68. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.58 am

Chairman