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PEOPLE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2021

Present: Cllrs Pauline Batstone (Vice-Chairman), Rod Adkins, Tony Alford, Pete Barrow, Jean Dunseith, Ryan Holloway, Stella Jones, Beryl Ezzard and Rebecca Knox

Apologies: Cllr Mike Parkes

Also present: Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Cherry Brooks, Cllr Les Fry, Cllr Barry Goringe, Cllr Rob Hughes, Cllr Nick Ireland, Cllr Laura Miller, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Molly Rennie, Cllr Jane Somper and Cllr David Taylor

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

Louise Drury (Head of Service Children in Care and Care Leavers), Kirsten Hallett (Team Manager, Social Work - Adolescents), Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), 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)

69. **Chairman's Introductions**

Cllr P Batstone, Vice Chairman in the Chair.

Chairman's statement

In consultation with Group Leaders, the Chief Executive had exercised his delegated powers to revert to virtual informal meetings of council committees until the webcasting equipment has been installed and tested.

Members were advised that where a decision was required, the appropriate Corporate Director would be the responsible individual to make the decision, whilst considering the views expressed by the wider committee membership.

The reports on today's agenda were for review by the committee, to seek comments from the committee and support for the direction of future work and also provide the committee with information to determine if any additional areas should be added to the forward plan for further review.

70. **Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Mike Parkes.

71. Declarations of Interest

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

72. Public Participation

There were no submissions from town or parish councils. However, there was a question from a member of the public which is attached, with the response given, as an annexure to these minutes.

73. Questions from Members

No written questions were received from members.

74. Update on the Care Leaver Offer

Members considered a report from the Executive Director for People, Children which updated members on the current Care Leaver Offer and highlighted the work that had taken place from April until October this year. It was noted that the Financial Policy, that had been agreed at a previous meeting of this Committee, had now been successfully implemented.

Areas of discussion/questions

Further survey in January 2022.

Care Leaver Delivery Group.

Confirmation that this report would be going to the next Corporate Parenting Board meeting

Statutory responsibilities of Corporate Parents were highlighted.

Harbour work with adolescents highlighted.

Time of transition into adulthood noted as very challenging.

The Lead Member for Health advised the Committee how proud she was of this piece of work and aimed to continue this work in her new role in Adult Services. She assured the team that this area would become an area of priority for Adult Services also.

'Minded to' Recommendation

That the People and Health Overview Committee supported the Care Leaver Offer update.

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

75. Dorset Centre of Excellence Commissioning of Places

Members considered a report from the Executive Director for People, which set out the cohort of children and young people that Dorset Council intended to place at the new special school at the Dorset Centre of Excellence. It also

included the types of special educational needs that the setting will be able to provide for and the process of transition and induction.

Areas of discussion/questions

The possibility of children returning to mainstream education. There were examples happening locally that some do return to mainstream. However, the expectation is that the majority of children would continue their education at the Centre of Excellence.

How much notice needs to be given for those children currently out of county but aiming to join the Centre of Excellence. A managed transition would take place which involved working closely with the child and family.

It was hoped that parents would see the opportunity for their children at the Centre of Excellence.

Following a question about the governance arrangements at the Centre, officers explained the distinction between commissioning and governing.

The Commissioning Board were currently working on a Shareholder Agreement.

Assurance sought from officers that when looking at the pupils attending the preference would be given to those children who resided in Dorset. Officers advised that as the Centre was so close to the border of Wiltshire there would inevitably be some children from over the border but the majority of places being commissioned would be for Dorset children.

From an educational aspect the centre would cater for those aged 5-19 although the statutory duty for care of SEND children was 0-25.

In respect of any analysis that had been carried out on the proportion of young people being educated out of county that could come back to Dorset, the Corporate Director for Education undertook to provide a full response outside of the meeting.

Conversations were ongoing about the school nurse and many other specialist roles working in partnership at the Centre and who would pay for them.

Helpful to add in the Health and Wellbeing section of reports which part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) was being addressed.

Would the initial intake of 60 be increased over the years? The Corporate Director advised they would start with an initial cohort of 60 to ensure a managed transition. Over time he anticipated the school growing to 280 places. There were 250/300 children currently being educated out of county at present.

Initially day placements would be offered at the Centre.

There were residential facilities on site but this would continue to be looked at. Moving children was disruptive, assurance was sought there would be a balanced decision to move a child. The Corporate Director wanted to ensure that the Centre of Excellence was the most appropriate setting for a particular child. Communication with families would be key.

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help highlighted that the Centre of Excellence wanted to meet the needs of our children in Dorset. There would be a phased approach to capacity at the Centre. Following a question about those children being educated out of the area seeming to attract a higher rate of funding, he explained that for a number of reasons out of county placements had a higher premium.

‘Minded to’ Recommendation

That the Committee noted and supported the work being done to identify and place children with SEND at the new Dorset special school at the Dorset Centre of Excellence in Shaftesbury.

The Executive Director of People, Children, having heard the debate, confirmed the ‘minded to’ Recommendation, under delegated powers on behalf of the informal meeting of the People and Health Overview Committee.

76. Committee and Cabinet Forward Plan

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

77. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items of business.

78. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.06 am

Chairman

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Public Question

Question from Anna Webb

Having read the submission of the GP referral scheme members, we would like to know your proposals for keeping this vitally needed service, either at this venue (QE Leisure Centre) or a similar site.

Response from the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Community Services

Thank you for your question and your representation on behalf of those attending the GP Referral Scheme at QE Leisure Centre. We are hoping that the consultation will enable us to better understand the potential impacts if we were to withdraw from the management arrangement at the centre, and if necessary consider how we could best respond to the concerns raised by users such as yourselves.

The consultation finished on 7 November and we are really keen to see what has been said and reflect upon this. So, at this stage we are unable to provide a specific response to your question, but can say that we are committed to ensure that moving forward our leisure spend is used effectively to increase people's healthy life expectancy and reduce health inequalities across the whole Dorset Council area.

It's great to hear that the activities that you are currently doing as a group are making a real difference to your health and wellbeing and we will continue to work collaboratively with our health partners to deliver the best possible health outcomes for our residents, and especially for those most in need.

We really want to encourage everyone that has a view on this matter, to share their thoughts through the consultation as this will undoubtedly help us to consider how we best deliver services moving forward.

