

PEOPLE AND HEALTH OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 31 JANUARY 2023

Present: Cllrs Pauline Batstone (Vice-Chairman), Jean Dunseith, Beryl Ezzard, Stella Jones, Rebecca Knox and Cathy Lugg

Present remotely: Cllr Ryan Holloway

Apologies: Cllrs Mike Parkes and Tony Alford

Also present: Cllr Carole Jones, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Byron Quayle, Cllr Jane Somper and Cllr Peter Wharf

Also present remotely:

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

Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Vivienne Broadhurst (Executive Director - People Adults), Jonathan Price (Interim Corporate Director for Commissioning), Mark Tyson (Commissioning Consultant), Amanda Davis (Corporate Director for Education and Learning), Sarah Sewell (Head of Service - Commissioning for Older People, Prevention and Market Access), Paul Dempsey (Corporate Director - Care & Protection), Ed Denham (School Admissions Manager), Louise Drury (Head of Service Children in Care and Care Leavers), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer) and George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

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

42. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Alford and Parkes.

Cllr Holloway attended virtually so he was unable to take part as a committee member.

43. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

44. Minutes

Proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Ezzard.

Decision:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 24 October and 19 December 2022 be confirmed and signed.

45. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

46. Councillor Questions

There were no questions from councillors.

47. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

48. Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy Update

The Head of Service for Children in Care and Care Leavers introduced and outlined the report. The proposals included a recommended 15% increase in the overall payment for foster and supported lodging carers.

Members asked questions about the report and received the following responses:

- The foster carers' allowance rises annually in line with national guidance. The fee paid by the council has not increased which was why it was included in the proposal.
- Unaccompanied children under the age of 18 automatically become children in care.
- Dorset carers receive the Dorset payment rate if they do not live in the Dorset Council area.
- There was a need to ensure that unaccompanied minors living out of county could access education and healthcare.
- Some potential foster carers do not become foster carers because they are not deemed suitable, or they decide they themselves decide they are not ready during the assessment process.
- In some cases, it was possible to match a child with a family on the same day that they are approved.
- It used to take an average of 9 months to approve a potential foster family, but it now takes 6 months.

Proposed by Cllr S Jones, seconded by Cllr Ezzard.

Decision:

That an average of 15% increase in the overall payment for Dorset foster carers and supported lodging carers be recommended to Cabinet.

49. **School Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme 2024-2025**

The School Admissions Manager introduced the School Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme 2024-25. They were a group of statutory documents that were needed for allocating school places.

Members asked questions related to catchment areas, school transport, and reducing numbers of pupils at school. The School Admissions Manager advised members that:

- There were no plans to make changes to school catchment areas.
- There were consultations when there was a proposal to change a catchment area.
- The Portfolio Holder speaks to local members when there were significant consultations on schools.
- There needed to be a consultation if academies wanted to change their admission numbers.
- The Local Authority may submit an objection during a consultation.

Members also made the following comments:

- Children going to schools where they were not entitled to free school transport could lead to a financial burden on the family.
- The Armed Forces Policy was welcomed due to the number of armed forces families living in Dorset.
- All Dorset schools should be rated good or outstanding.

Proposed by Cllr Ezzard, seconded by Cllr Lugg.

Decision:

That the following policies that make up the School Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordinated Scheme 2024-25 be recommended to Cabinet for approval:

1. Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme Timetable 2024-2025
2. Primary Co-ordinated Scheme 2024-2025
3. Secondary Co-ordinated Scheme 2024-2025
4. In Year Co-ordinated Scheme 2024-2025
5. Admissions Arrangements for Community & Voluntary Controlled Schools 2024-2025.
6. Admissions to Maintained Nursery Units Policy 2024-2025
7. Sixth Form Admissions Policy 2024-2025
8. Guidance on Placement Outside of Normal/Chronological Age Group 2024-2025
9. Armed Forces Policy 2024-2025

50. **Family Hubs**

The Executive Director of People – Children introduced the item and summarised the key parts of the report. Dorset was one of 12 national pilot sites opening family hubs. The hubs would create revenue savings for the council and they would be accessible and integrated with other services. There was an aim to open a network of hubs by June 2023. Some hubs were capital projects and would not

open until 2024. Part of the family hub network would be virtual to enable families to access the resources online.

Members made comments and asked questions on Family Hubs. The following points were raised:

- There has been engagement with Primary Care Networks and Local Alliance Groups.
- In response to a question on getting the right model for different communities, the council will be working in partnership with voluntary organisations.
- Local community groups could get involved with family hubs through their Local Alliance Group.

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills, and Early Help felt the council was ready and excited to deliver family hubs because the council was leading nationally on them and because children's services was rated good and outstanding.

A non-committee member said that the Local Alliance group in the north of Dorset was not working well. The member felt that a digital offer would not work well for families who needed one-to-one contact. The Portfolio Holder and officers responded. The option of a 'pop up' model for rural areas was being considered. Officers would look at the Local Alliance Group.

51. Adult Social Care Market Sustainability Plan 2023-25

The Commissioning Consultant introduced the report and updated the committee on what happened to the Market Sustainability Plan since the last time the committee considered it. The draft plan was submitted to Government and there was national feedback on the plans. There was no reason to change any actions in the plan. The Fair Cost of Care exercise would be completed again.

A member asked for an explanation of Care Cubed. It was an independent piece of software which helped to understand placement costs with providers.

A member asked for clarification on the role of the Provider Association. It was an association led by care market professionals and looked at best practice and key issues in the industry. It gave an independent voice to providers working with the council.

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health thanked the committee for the input they have given to the Market Sustainability Plan. He was disappointed that Government did not provide specific responses to the plans.

52. Day Opportunities Task and Finish Group

The Committee considered the draft terms of reference for the Day Opportunities Task & Finish Group.

Members discussed the timescale of the task & finish group and how members would be appointed to the group.

The group may choose to extend the timescale until May or June.

Proposed by Cllr Knox, seconded by Cllr Dunseith.

Decision:

That the terms of reference for the Day Opportunities Task & Finish Group be agreed.

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

The Vice-Chairman updated members on items that had been added to the committee's forward plan following the publication of the agenda.

The committee were content with the forward plans.

54. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 - 11.49 am

Chairman

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