

## **PEOPLE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9 MARCH 2023**

**Present:** Cllrs Gill Taylor (Chairman), Molly Rennie (Vice-Chairman), Robin Cook, Nick Ireland, Louie O'Leary, Jon Orrell, Mary Penfold and Belinda Ridout

**Apologies:** Cllrs Bill Pipe

**Also present:** Cllr Jon Andrews, Cllr Robin Legg and Cllr Peter Wharf

**Also present remotely:** Cllr Andrew Parry and Cllr Byron Quayle

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

Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Jonathan Price (Interim Corporate Director for Commissioning), Claire Shiels (Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships), Amanda Davis (Corporate Director for Education and Learning), Paul Dempsey (Corporate Director - Care & Protection), Kerry Smith (Service Manager for Inclusion), Andy Frost (Service Manager for Community Safety), Ian Grant (Programme Coordinator), Joshua Kennedy (Apprentice Democratic Services Officer) and George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

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

David Bonner (Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance), Julie Jones (Programme Manager Stroke, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust), Sally Banister (Deputy Director, NHS Dorset)

60. **Apologies**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Bill Pipe.

61. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Ireland declared that he was a governor at Dorset County Hospital and his wife worked at Yeovil District Hospital.

62. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2023 were confirmed and signed.

63. **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

64. **Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

65. **Chairman's Updates**

The vice-chairman gave updates on the work of the committee since the previous meeting. This included two briefings on stroke service reconfiguration in Somerset and at Dorset County Hospital. The committee also received a briefing from the South-West Ambulance Service, joint with BCP Council's Health & Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

66. **Improving acute hospital based Stroke services in Somerset - Consultation**

The committee considered proposals for reconfiguration of stroke services in Somerset and responding to the consultation with a preferred option.

Non-Committee members asked questions about the decision to have one hyperacute stroke unit at Musgrove Park and how it would affect ambulance journey times and times to receive treatment. The Programme Manager responded that the longer journey times were outweighed by getting the right support by the right teams and specialists upon arrival at the hospital.

Committee members discussed the options in the consultation and raised the following points:

- An acute unit at Yeovil would allow for local people to stay closer to home and family, and it would take pressure off Dorset County Hospital.
- There were good transport links to Musgrove Park.
- A member found the reasons for option B to be compelling.
- The hospital a patient attends should not matter as long as they receive the best care and treatment.
- A member sought assurance that there would be funding available for either option.

Proposed by Cllr Taylor, seconded by Cllr Ridout.

**Decision: That the Committee respond to the consultation in favour of Option A – An acute stroke unit at both Musgrove Park Hospital and Yeovil District Hospital.**

Cllrs Cook, Ridout, and Taylor volunteered to sit on a working group to respond to the consultation.

67. **Community Safety Annual Scrutiny Report**

The Service Manager for Community Safety introduced the report. The report outlined the main areas of progress against the Community Safety Plan. The service had received safer streets funding, new burdens funding for domestic abuse, and was expecting further funding. The council has new duties relating to serious violence.

The committee discussed the report, and the following points were raised:

- Violence reduction units were arranged between the Home Office and police.
- The threshold for a violence reduction unit in Dorset is not met, however there can still be a focus on reducing crime and violence related to it.
- The Committee could have training around rural crime or fraud.
- A member attended online training on coercive behaviour and would share the recording of the session with the committee.
- A member asked for information on the theft aspect of rural crime.

The Committee noted the report. Officers would explore options for the committee receiving more information on rural crime.

## **68. School Exclusions and Suspensions**

The Service Manager for Inclusion introduced the report and gave a presentation outlining the number of permanent exclusions and suspensions. They were both above the national average, with the most suspensions and exclusions in the East and Chesil Localities. The support available to schools was outlined. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

The Chesil Challenge included addressing the concerns of school leaders in the chesil locality and visiting schools with the independent chair of the Dorset Education Board to enhance inclusion in schools.

Committee members asked questions of the officers and about the report. Officers responded to questions with the following points:

- Some permanent exclusions could be overturned, however reasons for permanent exclusions could be very serious.
- All exclusions are reviewed by the children's leadership team.
- There was wrap-around support for excluded children and they receive full time education.
- Most children in the Youth Justice System had been excluded or received multiple suspensions.
- The Dorset Education Board was considering how skills delivery could be included in the Dorset curriculum.
- Each school has an inclusion lead link that can support schools and pupils before and after a suspension.
- There was significant spend in the area and schools use pupil premium money.
- There were links between people receiving free school meals and poverty.
- Excluded pupils attended learning centres or alternative provision.
- Local Alliance Groups will use the funding to focus on what is important in their areas.
- A social mobility commissioner was being recruited.

- The financial implications of schools becoming academies would need to be considered.
- There was a range of support available to children at any school.

Committee members raised the following points during the discussion:

- Many young people are encouraged to attend university which creates a lack of skills.
- There was a high cost for an excluded child to attend a community centre for education.
- Excluded children were at risk of crime and it may have been caused by a domestic abuse situation.
- Every child had something to give.
- The committee should receive further information on the role of the Social Mobility Commissioner.

The committee noted the report and thanked officers.

## 69. **Performance Review**

The Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance raised several performance areas which were identified by the committee while reviewing the performance dashboards. The areas were:

- Net number of households in B&B for the month.
- Percentage of pregnant women / families in B&B exceeding 6 week stay
- Number of active foster carers.
- Percentage of looked after children placed outside the council area.
- Percentage of children's needs assessments completed in 45 days.
- Total number of hospital discharges.
- Permanent admissions per 100k population to adults' residential homes.

Officers responded to each of the performance indicators with the following points:

- There were concerns about the number of foster carers. There was a national shortage of them, and an increase in the number of children in care.
- The foster carers recruitment campaign was not going as well as it was liked.
- It takes approximately 6 months to become an approved foster carer.
- For children in care placed out of county, the number had increased due to the number of unaccompanied minors.
- More new children in care would be placed locally.
- There were poor financial implications for independent residential provision.
- The percentage of children in foster care was increasing and the number of children in commissioned placements were reducing.
- There were a number of children in care that were not well planned for by the former Dorset County Council.

- Additional capacity in the care leavers service was being planned for.
- In relation to children's needs assessments, it was an area for improvement.
- There is normally a higher number in January due to breaks at Christmas.
- In some cases, it was appropriate for some assessments to be completed outside the timeframe and sometimes there could be issues with response times and sign-off times.
- Hospital discharges and the permanent admissions to residential homes were connected.
- A report would be prepared for the committee on hospital discharges and adult social care.

**70. Work Programme and Cabinet's Forward Plan**

The items for the next meeting were noted.

The Chairman informed the committee that it would need to meet informally to develop an annual work programme.

**71. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

**72. Exempt Business**

There was no exempt business.

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 am - 12.53 pm

**Chairman**

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