

DORSET COUNCIL - PEOPLE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 28 JANUARY 2021

Present: Cllrs Gill Taylor (Chairman), Molly Rennie (Vice-Chairman), Rod Adkins, Jean Dunseith, Nick Ireland, Robin Legg, Jon Orrell, Mary Penfold and Bill Pipe

Apologies: Cllr Barry Goringe

Also present: Cllr Pete Barrow, Cllr Ray Bryan, Cllr Graham Carr-Jones, Cllr Matthew Hall, Cllr Laura Miller, Cllr Jane Somper, Cllr Daryl Turner, Cllr Peter Wharf and Cllr Kate Wheller

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

Paul Beecroft (Communications Team), Andrew Billany (Corporate Director of Housing, Dorset Council), Vivienne Broadhurst (Interim Executive Director - People Adults), David Bonner (Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance), Eryl Doust (Project Manager), Bridget Downton (Head of Business Insight and Corporate Communications), Andy Frost (Community Safety and Drug Action Manager), Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Tony Meadows (Head of Commissioning), Vanessa Read (CCG Link Director to Scrutiny), Claire Shiels (Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships), Sarah Jane Smedmor (Corporate Director - Care & Protection), Sue Sutton (Deputy Director, Lead Member for Urgent and Emergency Care, Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group), Gill Vickers (Interim Corporate Director - Adult Care Operations), Kay Wilson-White (Community Safety Business Manager) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer)

32. Apologies

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Barry Goringe.

33. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 2 November and 11 December 2020 were agreed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

Minute 18 – Quality Account, Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

With reference to the working group that had been set up to look at the Quality Account, Cllr Orrell advised that the group had met and reviewed the performance matrix and highlighted the areas to be addressed. He felt this had been a useful meeting and it was noted that the Trust was performing quite well against national benchmarking.

34. Declarations of Interest

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

However, Cllr Jon Orrell advised that he was an active GP, with a dispensation, and was also a Trustee of the Lantern Trust.

Cllr Nick Ireland advised he was a Partner Governor to Dorset Healthcare and his wife was also a Trustee of the Lantern Trust.

35. Public Participation

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

However, the Chairman explained that she had received two questions from Cllr Jon Andrews. Although these had been received for the previous meeting the Chairman felt it would be helpful for the responses to be shared with the committee and members of the public. The questions were read out and responses provided and are attached as an annexure to these minutes.

Cllr Robin Legg recalled his experience of attending a Minor Injuries Unit (MIU) and felt it worked effectively but felt communication had not been very good. The Chairman expressed concern about the wider aspects as there were now 3 MIUs that were closed and had been for the best part of the year.

The Chairman highlighted an additional question that had been submitted from Cllr Howard Legg. This was also read out and is included in the annexure.

Decision

That the clerk request that a short report on the closure of these units be provided from the Service Director Integrated Community Services, Dorset Healthcare University NHS Trust for the next meeting of the committee.

36. Integrated System Response to Winter and Crisis Pressure

Members considered a report from the Urgent and Emergency Care (UEC) Programme Director at Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

Following a question regarding capacity levels, members were advised that triggers were in place and had been refined in terms of winter planning. These would continue to be refined and action agreed and acted upon within the remit and decision making of the group.

With reference to the transferring of patients, members were advised that mutual aid arrangements were in place for critical work. The practical pressures around the workforce were highlighted and it was noted that patients had been transferred to the Nightingale hospital in Exeter.

Decision

1. That the report be noted.
2. The Chairman to write a letter of thanks to the CCG on behalf of the Committee.

37. Service Performance

Members considered a report by the Business Partner, Policy, Research and Performance which highlighted those council performance measures that were relevant to this committee that were classified as red or amber in October 2020, or at the last time they were reported on in the 2020/21 reporting year.

Members were advised that officers were developing a prototype tool to give up to date performance information to them. This would be a useful tool to help Chairs in the forward planning of the work of their committees and for members of the public and communities.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Development and Change advised that the system was still being built but wanted members to use the system as it currently was to build their confidence in it.

Ensuring up to date actions were associated with the performance indicators was an important part of the system and a network of service managers would be addressing this.

The Chairman asked members to give some thought about how the Committee planned to work with this system in readiness for the Quarter 3 report in April.

Decisions

1. That the council's emerging performance framework be noted.
2. That the performance measures that were rated as red or amber either at the end of October 2020, or at the last time they were reported in 2020/21 be noted.

38. Response to Homelessness during Winter

Members considered a report by the Corporate Director for Housing and Community Safety which responded to the request for an update on winter pressures which impact on homelessness and the way that Dorset Council was responding.

Questions from Cllr Peter Barrow and Cllr Howard Legg had been received and those along with their answers are attached as an annexure to these minutes.

Following a discussion on homelessness and rough sleepers it was agreed that a focus group be set up.

In respect of discretionary housing payments members were advised that these were used to prevent evictions and the Corporate Director for housing and Community Safety undertook to provide supplementary information on this outside of the meeting.

Decision

1. That the report be noted.
2. That a focus group be set up (Cllr Taylor, Cllr Rennie, Cllr Orrell, Cllr Dunseith, Cllr Barrow) to look at the holistic approach to homelessness and to look at the predicted spike in terms of evictions as a result of Covid.

39. Community Response

Members considered a report from the Corporate Director, Commissioning, Quality and Partnerships which focused on the partnership response of the council and the community response to the pandemic.

Members' attention was drawn to the critical and valuable contributions that had been made from all the various voluntary and community partnerships during the pandemic.

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health noted that the response from communities had been incredible throughout the pandemic and felt some long lasting good had come from it.

Following a discussion about the delivery of prescriptions, the Corporate Director advised that initially volunteers were matched with residents to collect prescriptions where possible. Also, pharmacy contracts had changed to be able to fund them providing prescriptions to shielded residents.

Other areas highlighted in discussions were food insecurities and grants.

Decisions

That the committee:

- (a) Receive and comment on the contents of the report.
 - (b) Endorse the strategic approach described in section 10 and the coordination of partnership community responses through 'Dorset Together'
 - (c) Consider in particular the lessons learned and next steps in section 16.
2. That every opportunity should be taken to recognise and thank Dorset's communities and the voluntary sector for their critical part in the ongoing response to the pandemic.
 3. That an item on Grants be added to the Forward Plan.

40. Community Safety Annual Scrutiny Report

Members considered a report by the Service Manager for Community Safety which provided information on partners' work in three main areas:

- Progress against the Community Safety Plan 2020-23

- Work undertaken to tackle domestic abuse, including partners' response during the Covid 19 pandemic
- The response to issues emerging from Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) that are relevant to Dorset Council

Areas highlighted and discussed included:-

- Domestic Abuse work
- 'Drive' project
- HRDA (High Risk Domestic Abuse)
- Competing pressures
- Criteria for DHRs

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Safety reminded members to be mindful that this was a partnership and thanked officers for their sterling work on this.

Decision

That members considered and commented on the Community Safety Annual Scrutiny report.

41. Committee and Cabinet Forward Plans

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

Actions for the Committee's Forward Plan:-

- Remove housing from April
- Add a report on SEND and include a look at how Covid has affected young people and those not in mainstream school for April
- Add an item on Grants
- Look at how to prioritise Housing Association working group
- Reference made to co-opt other members with particular interests in areas to take forward

Decisions

1. That the Cabinet and Committee's Forward Plan be noted.
2. That the Committee's Forward Plan be updated.

42. Urgent Items

There were no urgent items of business.

43. Exempt Business

There was no exempt business.

Duration of meeting: 10.00 am - 12.40 pm

Chairman

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