

## **PEOPLE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 19 MAY 2022**

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

**Apologies:** Cllrs Robin Cook and Bill Pipe

**Also present:** Cllr Tony Alford, Cllr Richard Biggs, Cllr Andrew Parry, Cllr Stella Jones, Cllr Jane Somper and Cllr Kate Wheller

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

Theresa Leavy (Executive Director of People - Children), Jonathan Price (Interim Corporate Director for Commissioning), Andrew Billany (Corporate Director of Housing, Dorset Council), David Bonner (Service Manager for Business Intelligence and Performance), Andy Frost (Service Manager for Community Safety), Ian Grant (Programme Coordinator), Claire Shiels (Corporate Director - Commissioning, Quality & Partnerships), George Dare (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Kate Critchel (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and John Miles (Democratic Services Officer Apprentice)

**1. Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Robin Cook and Bill Pipe.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Minutes**

**Decision: That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2022 be confirmed and signed.**

**4. Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

**5. Councillor Questions**

There were no questions from councillors.

**6. Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

## 7. **Cost of Care Information**

The Interim Corporate Director for Commissioning introduced the item to the committee and gave a short presentation. The presentation is attached to these minutes.

Following the presentation, the members asked questions and the following points were raised and noted:

- The council is at an early stage of the Cost of care process.
- The exercise would be carried out on a regular basis which would inform rates.
- The council does not commission 15-minute time slots for care, half an hour is the minimum.
- Working towards better joined up working with the new ICS and Care Dorset to through a workforce strategy.
- Creating apprenticeship opportunities in Care Dorset.
- Adapting offer to workers to help retain them.
- Costs in Dorset may be different to other places due to the rurality and travel times.
- Using early prevention to reduce the number of people needing a care package.
- Changing relationships with care providers to become partners.
- Having conversations with block contract providers about early indications of this work and how the commissioning strategies were shaping.
- The council may change some arrangements and contracting models.

The Chairman asked for a report to come back to the committee about domiciliary care, due to staff turnover and changes which would have budgetary implications.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Chairman announced that there would be a short adjournment at this point in the meeting.

## 8. **Annual Self Evaluation of Children's Services**

The Portfolio Holder for Children, Education, Skills and Early Help presented the report to the committee. The Executive Director for People (Children) set out a summary of the comprehensive Self-Evaluation of Children's Services to support preparation for the Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.

The Corporate Director for Commissioning and Partnerships highlighted that the report set out the services strengths and areas for development. The report also identified the next steps for the service, and these included:

- Ofsted recognised the challenges around the support provided for care leavers and the service had addressed all issues that Ofsted had recommended be focused on.
- A Care Leaver Delivery Board was in place to drive through improvements.
- A Strengthening Services Plan was in place supported by a multi-agency Board.
- Transformation Plans had been considered by People & Health Overview Committee and it was suggested that scrutiny may want to review and see the impact of the transformation plan in the future.
- It was hoped that this report would help members to shape future scrutiny arrangements.

Councillors considered the issues arising from the report and during the discussion, the following areas were covered:

- Welcomed the detail set out in the comprehensive report.
- The additional provision/support for the rise in cost of living going forward and concerns about staff being able to cope with this additional workload. In response, the Executive Director confirmed that the council was already seeing families struggle due to extra costs. But staff provision was in place.
- Campaigning for families to take up their entitlement of free school meals.
- Officers were seeing more complexed needs and not necessarily more requests.
- Members were advised that the average case load was 15 with a handful of officers who had cases in the low 20's.
- There was no retention problem within the service, but a movement of officers across teams, where they wanted to try new challenges.
- Concerns expressed regarding framework providers for residential care and value for money; also, the review of the provision for children and young people who are disabled. In response, the Portfolio Holder advised that the service must deliver good or excellent provision for the county's young people and that applied to the fabric of the building. He indicated that he appreciated that young people may like and be happy with the provider, but the property in question did require some significant capital investment going forward.
- The Executive Director also highlighted the significant growth in in-house provision this year.
- Officers were congratulated on the work at the Harbour and Mockingbird project.
- Members acknowledged the value of early intervention.
- In respect of Children Protection plans, what were the key drivers that would determine whether support was stepped up or stepped down? The Executive Director advised that children protection was an edge of care activity that needed to be looked at closely. Current plans had been externally audited to ensure that the right children are on a plan.
- This has driven the families and safeguarding projects.

- In response to a question about the impact of 0-25 birth to 25 settled adulthood and a new way of working, there will be a new service design and the focusing on importance about talking across services, discussing the child's whole life. Including supportive programmes for employment, transport, and the visibility of children with disabilities and SEN.

The Chairman thanked officers for the report and welcomed the useful discussion that was held.

## 9. **Performance Scrutiny**

Councillors reviewed the performance dashboard. The following points were noted:

- HR issues - there were still concerns regarding the current staff turnover and in relation to short-term sickness (Covid absence).
- Noted that turnover levels in the People Directorates were slightly higher in these areas.
- Acknowledged and assured that in Children Services there was much movement between departments.
- In Adult Services, the Corporate Director for Commissioning advised that officers were not sure that this did accurately reflect the current position, a further report on this area would be brought to a future meeting of the committee.
- Homelessness - there had been a rise in the number of people presenting to the council as being potentially homeless. Work had been undertaken to secure existing or alternative accommodation. There was a reduction in private rental housing and a commitment to exit Bed & Breakfast accommodation. However, this was a complex situation and councillors welcomed a detailed report to come forward in the future.
- Hospital discharges – councillors felt that the commentary on the dashboard was unclear and asked for clarification for a future meeting.

## 10. **Committee and Cabinet's Forward Plans**

The Committee considered its forward plan and that of the Cabinet.

The Chairman had two scrutiny requests to report:

- Dedicated schools grant debt.
- Adult Social Care Changes including back office changes, quality assurance and digital.

Further potential items included:

- Care leavers review (future date to be confirmed)
- A piece of work for Somerset Council (on hold)
- Joint work with BCP Council on the Ambulance Trust and

- Healthcare Quality Audit (a working party, including Cllr Ireland, Cllr G Taylor, Cllr Pipe and Cllr Orrell). Any other member wishing to attend should contact the Chairman. The working group would report back to the committee on outcome of the meeting.

## 11. **Prevent and Channel**

The Chairman advised that the first part of the paper would be discussed in the public domain. Any detailed discussion would be held under the exempt element.

The Service Manager for Community Safety addressed the committee and advised that the report aimed to provide an opportunity for councillors to scrutinise the council's work in compliance with the prevent duty 2015 and to provide a further opportunity to scrutinise compliance with the channel duty guidance 2020.

The Programme Coordinator for the Community Safety Team set out the requirements on local authorities in terms of the prevent duty and guidance.

Councillors considered the report and raised points in the following areas:

- Prevent was a fast-moving picture that continually evolved.
- Channel Panels were multi-agency panel meetings
- Prevent should focus on all aspects of extremist behaviour and needed to be kept up to date with all the latest threats.
- At a local level, partners worked together to complete a local counter-terrorism local profile, to give an understanding of threat, issues, and intelligence in the area.
- In respect of concerns of hate presented on social media – how seriously should we take these posts? In response, officers advised that there was a whole spectrum of behaviour from peaceful protesting to extremist activity. The right response/intervention needed to be considered carefully with intelligence available for each activity concerned.
- In respect of training, a programme was in place for staff which was mandatory. The problem and issues around this area was that threats, and risk were fast moving and changing.
- Acknowledged the role of the community partnership, including working with Dorset Police.
- Noted that retraining was refreshed each 2 years.
- In respect of young people, the PAN Dorset Prevent Partnership has strong engagement with educational establishments, however future development should include youth providers on the frontline.

To enable councillors to discuss the case study in detail, The Chairman proposed that the committee move into exempt business.

## 12. **Exempt Business**

It was proposed by Cllr G Taylor seconded by Cllr M Rennie.

**Decision: That the press and the public be excluded for the following item in the view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 7 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).**

**13. Prevent and Channel**

The committee received and discussed a Channel Case Study Report.

**Duration of meeting:** 10.00 am - 12.57 pm

**Chairman**

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