

ADULTS COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 12 September 2019

Time: 2.00 pm to 4.30 pm

Present: Councillors A Bailey (Chairwoman), S Crawford, J French, D Giles, M Goldsack, N Harrison, M Howell (Vice-Chairman), B Hunt (Substituting for Councillor A Costello), S Van de Ven (Substituting for Councillor G Wilson).

Apologies: Councillors A Costello and G Wilson

197. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies received from Councillor Costello (Councillor Hunt substituted) And Councillor Wilson (Councillor Van de Ven substituted).

No declarations of interest were received.

198. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG – 22 MAY 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 May 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman. Members noted the completed actions on the action plan.

The Chairwoman clarified that action 194 should be determined as completed as the answer was contained in the comments section of the action log. Officers explained that this should have been sent round as a briefing note, and this was noted for future actions.

199. PETITIONS AND PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received.

200. FINANCE REPORT

The Committee received the July 2019/20 Finance Monitoring report for the People and Communities Service.

Officers explained that the report had previously contained performance information but that it had been agreed at General Purposes Committee that the performance element of the report be reported to Committee in a separate report on a quarterly basis, with the finance report continuing to be reported on a monthly basis.

Officers clarified that at the end of July, the People and Communities Directorate was forecast to overspend by £3 million (1.2% of budget) within this Adults Services were forecast to overspend by £1.1 million (0.7%), with

budgets relating to care provision forecasting a £5.6 million overspend and mitigated by around £4.5 million of additional funding from grants, in line with their intended purpose and corporate funding. Officers explained that the pressures forecast at this stage were predominantly in Older People's Services along with Mental Health Services to a lesser extent.

In discussing the report Members;

- Queried the opening pressure identified within the Older People's budget and the use of corporate funds to mitigate the pressure. Officers explained that estimates had been made in September/October and there had been a number of cost increases after Christmas which had then resulted in an opening pressure on the budget by the end of the financial year. There had been specific corporate funds earmarked to cover this pressure.
- Congratulated officers for their continued work on managing the Adult Social Care budget and noted that the current overspend was under 1% of the budget.
- Noted that the savings tracker was on plan.

It was resolved unanimously to:

review and comment on the report.

201. PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee considered a report outlining information on the status of performance indicators selected to monitor and understand performance of services the committee oversaw. The report covered the period of quarter one 2019/20, up to the end of June 2019.

Officers explained that the report was in a new format with a page per indicator and that the reporting was being developed over time. Officers highlighted that there was one indicator with a red RAG status, three with an amber status, two with a green status and four with a very green status. Officers explained that the indicator with a red status related to the proportion of service users with a primary support reason of learning disability support in paid employment (year to date). Members noted that performance of this indicator had started to improve recently, with a year-end figure for 2018-2019 exceeding that of the previous three years.

In discussing the report Members:

- Sought clarification regarding the colouring of the direction of travel arrows, particularly in relation to indicator 18, as the arrow seemed to show that performance was decreasing but the indicator had a RAG status of very green. **ACTION**

- Queried whether all of the indicator RAG statuses were in relation to performance over a quarter. In particular in relation to Delayed Transfers of Care (DTOCs). One member commented that as performance in DTOCs was a big risk to the council and a critical national issue, should the indicator not still be shown as red. Officers commented that DTOCs were never stable but that they kept a close eye on the overall trend. Performance was better than at the same time in the previous year but the amber status indicated the need for improvement.
- Welcomed the new format of the report overall and noted that the report was a work in progress and that the reporting of indicators would be reviewed over time, to ensure overall effectiveness and clarity.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note and comment on performance information and take remedial action as necessary.

202. BUSINESS PLANNING

The Committee received a report that provided an update on the business planning process for Adults and Safeguarding. The Committee received a presentation from officers on the current pressures on the service. Officers highlighted the financial challenges the council was facing including demand pressures in relation to an aging population in Cambridgeshire and increasing costs of care. A Member questioned the uptake of attendance allowances as it would be to the Council's advantage if individuals claimed the allowances when eligible. A Member commented that Fenland District Council held a Golden Age Fair on a quarterly basis where residents over 60 could go for useful information and practical advice which included a benefits check. Officers explained that they had increased the benefits advice available through the Adult Early Help team and this was core to the Council's practice, but that some people were reluctant to claim benefits. Officers explained that they would review the website to ensure that this was highlighted. **ACTION.**

In discussing the report further Members:

- Queried the impact that the financial pressures on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would have on the Council. Officers explained that the CCG were under significant pressures and that both parties were working together to understand the challenges that both organisations faced and that this was built into business planning.
- Commented on the recent CCG presentation to Committee in relation to more joint commissioning. Officers explained that the council worked with the STP North and South Alliances and that

both organisations worked closely to ensure that where there would be benefit to the community, an integrated approach was taken and resources pooled. Officers gave an example of the current pooled budget for learning disability and integrated Learning Disability Partnership.

- Requested that the presentation be circulated in advance to the Committee in future as Members did not have the information to debate beforehand. Members also requested that the slides be made clearer. **ACTION**

The Chairwoman, in closing the debate, reiterated that the council faced a challenging budget situation and that officers had produced a positive report on a very challenging situation about what should be done over the next period in order to meet the challenges faced. The Chairwoman thanked officers for their positivity to ensure that the needs of individuals and their outcomes were being met.

It was resolved unanimously to:

consider and comment on the contents of the report.

203. ADULT SOCIAL CARE CHARGING POLICY REVIEW

The Committee received a report that put forward a number of proposed changes to the Council's Adult Social Care charging policy in order to bring it in line with those of other local authorities following changes arising from the Care Act 2014.

The Chairwoman explained that most Members of the Committee had attended a briefing on the proposals for the charging policy that morning and that they had been given an opportunity to ask officers technical questions. She explained that changes to the policy had been brought to Committee two years ago and that, at that time the majority of the proposals had been rejected, other than agreement to introduce a direct debit system. She explained that the Council was looking at every opportunity to manage the financial challenges it faced and that other difficult decisions would need to be made if there was not agreement to consider an increase in the charges.

In presenting the report officers highlighted that the number of people affected by the changes was likely to be different from the numbers included in the paper. Identifying the accurate number was a work in progress and based on information available at a point in time. The Council was in the process of moving to a new system Mosaic which had resulted in better reporting of data and that the figures would be updated as the work progressed and set out in the consultation materials if members approved the proposal to consult. Officers explained that there were five proposed changes to the policy which included additional charging income arising from:

- Disability benefits review
- Respite care contributions
- Appointee charges
- Minimum Income Guarantee
- Care arrangement fees

There were also a number of protections and the council had the discretion to consider people's individual circumstances to ensure charges were affordable. The Council proposed that the options were publicly consulted on and that the results of the consultation would be brought back to committee in January for a decision. If the changes were implemented individuals would be assessed on a rolling basis when they came up to their annual assessment.

In discussing the report:

- A Member queried the cost to the Authority that the increase would potentially have in terms of means testing and debt collection. She queried whether an increase in council tax had been considered. Officers reiterated that means testing would be on a rolling basis and would be carried out by the existing financial assessment team when each individual came to their annual review, so would not be an additional function. Officers explained that debt collection was separate function and that they were not expecting the changes to increase cost in this area.
- A Member put forward her view that the Council should provide an estimate of the costs to implement the changes before the consultation took place. In her view nothing had changed since the decision was made not to increase the charges two years ago. She raised her concerns regarding the implications of individuals not feeling they could afford to have respite care. She understood that the increased charges would be hard to consult on as the Council would be consulting those directly impacted.
- A Member queried the communication strategy for the consultation and highlighted that there was very little information in the report in relation to how the consultation would take place. Officers clarified there was a communication strategy that had just been finalised and that it would be a wide reaching consultation and would be fed into other consultations that were happening in parallel, in relation to the Think Communities Programme and business planning as well as detailed conversations with service users and their representative bodies through the Partnership Boards.
- A Member questioned whether the Council was in a position from an administrative perspective to implement a new system as there had been a number of issues with double invoicing and she had dealt with some casework recently on this issue. Officers acknowledged

that there had been some issues recently with incorrect invoicing and that this was being monitored but that they did not see this as an ongoing issue. Officers clarified that they would include a proposed implementation process for the charges and the associated costs when the report came back to committee in January with the results of the consultation. **ACTION**

In closing the debate the Chairwoman highlighted that the Council was in a very different financial situation than it was two years ago and that, prior to the recent Comprehensive Spending Review announcement, £35 million of funding from grants was due to come to an end in March 2020. The Council had already made nearly £180 million in savings over the last five years, £15.3 million last year. The reality was that there would be ever increasing residential care costs and Cambridgeshire had the lowest spend per head on adult social care among its statistical neighbours. The Council had made a significant move towards shifting its resources into prevention and were proud of their workforce. She reiterated that responsibly the Committee had to look at increasing charges as the only areas where cuts could be made were unpalatable, such as prevention services and front line care packages. The review of charging had not been brought back to Committee lightly and it was a difficult decision to make. She thanked officers for their work on the review and their briefing of the Committee.

It was resolved by majority to:

consider the proposals to change the Council's care charging policy to bring it into line with those of other Local Authorities following changes arising from the Care Act 2014 and to consent to undertake a full public consultation on these proposals.

204. CAMBRIDGESHIRE MENTAL HEALTH SECTION 75 PARTNERSHIP: ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

The Committee considered a report that gave an update on service and financial performance, activity and outcomes under the Mental Health Section 75 Partnership Agreement 2018-2019 with a significant focus on the review and renewal of the Partnership Agreement.

In introducing the report officers explained that clearer monitoring and a dedicated action plan had been put in place. Officers highlighted the continued pressures in relation to the small number of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs). Officers explained that some progress had been made in this area with four individuals being put forward for training. In terms of finance, there had been an underspend of £9,000. There had also been a reduction in the number of people remaining in and depending on the service.

In discussing the report Members:

- Discussed the reduction in the number of service users and noted that there had been an increase of two in relation to service users receiving nursing care. Officers explained that the service had been increasingly effective with preventative work with increased supported living, reducing the number of people that progressed through the care system.
- Noted that the number of AHMPs continued to be a local as well as a national pressure and the officers were constantly monitoring the situation.

In bringing the debate to a close the Chairwoman congratulated officers on a positive report.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- i) agree the report as a full account of service and financial performance, activity and outcomes under the Agreement 2018-19.
- ii) approve the revised Agreement 2019-20.

205. CUSTOMER CARE ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee considered the Adult Social care Customer care Annual Report 2018-19 which provided information on complaints, compliments, representations and MP Enquires and the learning from the feedback and actions taken to improve services.

In presenting the report officers drew the Committees attention to a number of points in the report including:

- The total number of formal complaints received was 183 compared to 163 in the previous year which was an increase of 12%. This equated to 3% of the total population of Cambridgeshire who received Adult Social Care Services.
- There was a decrease in complaints in relation to Older People's long term services but an increase in relation to short term services for Older People.
- There had been a significant rise in complaints about financial issues and communications. This coincided with the introduction of a new financial system at the Council. The situation was being closely monitored.
- The largest category of complaints was in relation to support from social care teams in particular in relation to the type of support provided.

- In relation to our comparative neighbours we received a lower number of complaints

In discussing the report Members:

- Queried the amount of time it took to respond to complaints as 25 working days was a long period of time and 52% were not being responded to within this timescale. Officers explained that individuals were contacted in between times and updated on the progress of their complaints, but that there were complex issues that were being dealt with that took a long time to investigate thoroughly.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note and comment on the information in the Annual Adults Social Care Customer Care Report 2018/19
- b) agree to the publication of Annual Adults Social Care Customer Care Report 2018/19 on the Council's website.

206. AGENDA PLAN, APPOINTMENTS AND TRAINING PLAN

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the Agenda Plan and the Training Plan.

207. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was resolved unanimously:

that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the agenda contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

208. CARE HOME DEVELOPMENT

The Committee considered a report that gave an update on work stream two of the Care Homes Development Programme and sought approval to convert a proportion of spot purchased care home beds to block contract arrangements via an amendment to the scope of the work stream.

It was resolved unanimously to:

seek approval from Committee to convert a proportion of spot purchased care home beds to block contract arrangements via amendment to the scope of Work Stream 2.

209. DITCHBURN PLACE CONTRACT

The Committee received a report that outlined options for the care contract at Ditchburn Place.

It was resolved by majority to:

directly award the care contact at Ditchburn Place to an independent provider for ten years.

210. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 10 October 2019

Chairwoman