

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 10 June 2014.

PRESENT

Mrs. R. Camamile CC (in the Chair)

Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC

Mr. P. G. Lewis CC

Mr. D. A. Gamble CC

Ms. Betty Newton CC

Mr. D. Jennings CC

Mr. R. Sharp CC

Attendance.

Mr. R. Blunt CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Heritage, Culture and Arts (minutes 13 and 14 refer)

Mr. D. W. Houseman MBE CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care (minutes 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, and 18 refer)

Ms. Fiona Barber, Healthwatch Leicestershire (minutes 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, and 18 refer)

Mr. Matthew O'Callaghan, Lead Petitioner (minute 12 refers)

1. Appointment of Chairman.

That Mrs. R. Camamile CC be appointed Chairman of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2015.

(Mrs. R. Camamile CC in the Chair)

2. Election of Deputy Chairman.

That Mr. R. Sharp CC be elected Deputy Chairman of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2015.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2014 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

5. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

6. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

7. Declarations of interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No such declarations were made.

8. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

9. Change to the Order of Business.

The Chairman sought and obtained the consent of the Committee to vary the order of business from that set out on the agenda.

10. Strategic Review of Preventative Services in Leicestershire.

The Committee received a report of the Director of Adults and Communities updating the Committee on the recent strategic review of Adults and Communities' Preventative Services and invited comments. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mr. D. W. Houseman MBE CC, for this and other items. Mr. Houseman advised the Committee that the County Council was required to save £110 Million over the next four years and £21 million of this saving would need to be found in the budget for Adult Social Care. As a result of the extent of the savings required all areas of Adult Social Care would need to yield some savings with resources targeted at areas that had the greatest impact on service users.

The Chairman also welcomed to the meeting Fiona Barber, Healthwatch Leicestershire, for this and other items. Ms. Barber advised the Committee that Healthwatch had supported the County Council in some of the work undertaken through Preventative Services. There was some concern expressed at the capacity of communities to pick up work where the Council would no longer provide support or services. The Director advised that the County Council proposed to establish a seed fund to help the setting up of social groups and peer support groups and providing practical support for lunch clubs. In providing housing related support the County Council would need to seek a more unified approach, working with partners, particularly District Councils, to ensure the most vulnerable people were supported.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i) The proposed new model for secondary prevention for vulnerable people at risk formed part of the overarching prevention offer and services would be re-commissioned focusing around four main areas:

- Identification;
- Supporting Independence;
- Maximising and Enhancing Community Resources;
- Community Development.

This commissioning process would help to ensure that the new model would deliver to all appropriate groups which included young carers. The Adults and Communities Department worked with colleagues in Children and Young People's Services and Public Health to ensure a joined up approach to this issue. It was envisaged for a unified prevention offer, incorporating NHS partners, to be provided through the Better Care Fund (BCF);

- (ii) Detailed and comprehensive Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIAs) would be undertaken as part of the re-commissioning process. There was a need to ensure that EHRIAs were robust and that vulnerable people, especially those that were isolated, were given appropriate consideration;
- (iii) The Committee expressed concern that the high level of savings outlined for Preventative Services and potential areas for efficiency should be undertaken sensitively. It was explained that the 40% savings identified for Preventative Services would be by way of a targeted approach as opposed to simply slicing 40% of the service;
- (iv) It was understood that change was required in providing Preventative Services to meet the savings outlined in the MTFS. It was necessary to ensure that savings made in this area would not have a negative impact elsewhere and reconfiguration of services would be done following consultation with the NHS and other partners;
- (v) The Committee noted the large number of risks identified in the Review and sought assurance that these would be mitigated. Specific concern was expressed in relation to housing related support services for vulnerable people and the potential for an increase in homelessness and crime as a result of a reduction in service provision in this area. It was explained that the resources available were significantly reduced and that the proposed service would need to be more flexible, targeting the most vulnerable people who were at greatest risk of harm. The work undertaken by District Councils in this area was also being examined to inform the work of the County Council;
- (vi) Time Banking provided investment in community solutions to prevent or reduce service need. It was a relatively small investment, £35,000, that helped to build up community capacity and maximise the development of community services;
- (vii) The Committee was advised that there were three domestic abuse refuges within Leicestershire. These were funded through housing related support.

RESOLVED:

That the comments now made in respect of the Strategic Review of Preventative Services in Leicestershire be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet.

11. Strategic Review of Carer Support Services in Leicestershire.

The Committee received a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which sought the Committee's comments on the outcome of the Strategic Review on Carer Support and the proposed commissioning options for future Carer Support Services. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 13' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i) Carer Support Services formed part of the Adults and Communities Department's wider early intervention and prevention offer to service users. The Carer Support Services model outlined sought to be consistent with the development of the early intervention and prevention offer. Work was being undertaken through the Better Care Fund (BCF) to provide a more joined up approach to intervention and prevention services with the NHS and other partners;
- (ii) It was noted that carers could themselves be vulnerable, especially young carers and older carers. The County Council would ensure that support was available at all levels for carers through restructuring current provision. Demand for Carer Support Services due to the higher number of carers expected to be identified through the requirements of the Care Act 2014 had not yet been ascertained. The new model would be developed to meet this expected increase in demand for services;
- (iii) Assurance was given that the Carers Strategy for Leicestershire provided support to both adults and young carers. The Adults and Communities Department and Children and Families Service worked closely together to provide appropriate support across all age groups. The County Council also undertook the 'Care Free Project' with Barnardo's which offered a wide range of practical and emotional support services to young carers in Leicester and Leicestershire;

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's support for commissioning 'Option 1' for the future of Carer Support Services be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet, together with the comments now made in respect of the Strategic Review of Carer Support Services in Leicestershire.

12. Presentation of Petitions: Community Libraries.

A petition signed by 1061 residents was presented by the Lead Petitioner Mr. Matthew O'Callaghan in the following terms:

"We the undersigned petition the Council to reconsider its decision to close or transfer 36 of Leicestershire's smaller libraries."

At the request of the Chairman, Mr. O'Callaghan, addressed the Committee. Mr. O'Callaghan explained that the petition had been undertaken in Barrow Upon Soar to demonstrate a snapshot of local feeling in one of the areas affected by the proposals. Libraries were seen by many local people as key community hubs, especially in more rural areas. Concern had been expressed from petitioners as to the potential unsustainable costs for parish councils or other local community organisations seeking to run community libraries. There had also been some concern raised as to the number and

ability of volunteers needed to run library services given the limited support from trained library staff.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the contents of the petition be noted;
- (b) That the Cabinet be asked to have regard to the petition together with the other public consultation responses received on its proposals for changes in the delivery of Community Library Services to be considered at its meeting on 12 September 2014.

13. Consultation on proposals for changes in the delivery of Community Library Services.

The Committee received a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which invited the Committee to comment, as part of the consultation exercise, on changes to the way community library services were to be delivered by the County Council in order to make the required savings in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman advised the Committee that written representations had been received in relation to proposals for changes in the delivery of Community Library Services, copies of which were circulated to members and are filed with these minutes, as follows:

- Leicestershire UKIP Group proposals 'The Option for an Industrial and Provident Society Model'
- Comments received from Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC
- Comments received from Mr Geoffrey Smith, Trustee of the Quorn Old School

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the Cabinet Lead Member for Heritage, Culture and Arts, Mr. R. Blunt CC, for this and other items. Mr. Blunt advised the Committee that public meetings had begun to take place at a local level as part of the consultation. These meetings were designed to be 'open floor exercises', allowing people to put their ideas and views forward. The County Council was also considering work other local authorities had been undertaking in this area to gain a better understanding of how community run libraries could work in Leicestershire.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i) The consultation would help to gauge public enthusiasm for running community libraries. Libraries were, in some cases, local assets that were being underused. By placing libraries in the hands of local communities their usage as key community hubs could be increased;
- (ii) The Committee expressed support for a community partnership approach to the running of community libraries but queried the potential for closure of libraries where community groups did not come forward. It was explained that as a result of the engagement already undertaken the likely level of interest in running libraries was known. This would be used as the basis for developing sustainable proposals;
- (iii) The Committee had some concern at the ability of parish councils to retain sufficient volunteers for community run libraries to meet long term user demand. It was explained that potential interest in volunteering had been gauged and sustainable

plans would need to be developed and assessed once the outcomes of the public consultation exercise were determined. Specialist advice would be available to volunteers to help ensure that they were provided with the necessary skills to deliver an efficient service. It was noted that there was already a high number of people already volunteered in local community services. It was also noted that online library related services would still be available;

- (iv) The Committee noted that an extensive EHRIA had been undertaken as part of the consultation process. It was important for the County Council to maintain libraries as a valuable resource. The Council was focused on seeking a community partnership approach to running community libraries and that EHRIA's would continue to be developed in detail as specific proposals came forward;
- (v) In relation to the 16 larger libraries the public consultation gauged when people most wanted to use library services and allowed the public the opportunity to engage with library managers. This process would help to better align library opening hours with usage levels;
- (vi) Whilst not forming part of the consultation the Committee was advised that Leicester City Council had recently undertaken a review of its music service, which covered the whole of Leicestershire. This service was important as it provided sheet music for many live performances and the County Council would engage with the City Council once the outcome of the consultation was known.

RESOLVED:

That the comments now made in respect of the consultation on proposals for changes in the delivery of Community Library Services be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet at its meeting of 12 September 2014.

14. Consultation on Snibston Proposed Future Offer.

The Committee received a joint report of the Directors of Adults and Communities and Corporate Resources which sought the Committees views on the proposed future offer at Snibston based around the mining and colliery assets. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Heritage, Culture and Arts, Mr. R. Blunt CC, advised the Committee that the County Council had put forward a proposal for Snibston which was considered viable, affordable and sustainable. He confirmed that any suggestions for the future provision of Snibston were welcomed and would be considered as part of the consultation process.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i) The Committee recognised the need for the County Council to make savings in this area but queried whether the consultation provided sufficient opportunity for interested parties to put forward alternative options to those put forward by the County Council for redeveloping Snibston. Mr Blunt clarified that although a preferred option for Snibston had been put forward, alternative proposals submitted would also be considered. It was hoped that through the stakeholder meetings, organised as part of the consultation process, that a better perspective on any

potential development at Snibston would be gained before final proposals were presented to the Cabinet;

- (ii) It was noted that through the EHRIA all relevant groups would be consulted so that their needs would be taken into consideration. It was explained that the EHRIA was an ongoing process and that stakeholder groups, such as schools and people with disabilities, would be consulted through the process with any appropriate actions required being mitigated;
- (iii) Comments were made that museum collections currently housed at Snibston should be retained by the County Council where possible and displayed appropriately throughout sites in Leicester and Leicestershire, noting there were a number of excellent museums located throughout Leicestershire and that three universities could also be asked to house collections. The Committee was advised that provision of museum collections would form part of future work once the outcomes of the consultation were known. Where possible the County Council would try to retain ownership of collections or transfer them to appropriate alternative museums or bodies where the public would be able to make use of them.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the comments now made in respect of the consultation on Snibston Proposed Future Offer be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet at its meeting of 12 September 2014;
- (b) That the Committee consider the outcome of the consultation and proposed way forward for Snibston at its next meeting prior to its consideration by the Cabinet on 12 September 2014.

15. Review of Non-Residential Charging Policy for Adult Social Care.

The Committee received a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which invited the Committee to comment on a review of the County Council's non-residential charging policy for adult social care. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14' is filed with these minutes.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mr. D. W. Houseman MBE CC, advised the Committee that under the proposals the meals on wheels service would continue to operate. For those who could not afford to pay for hot meals, frozen meals as an alternative were also available for delivery at a lower rate.

Fiona Barber, Healthwatch Leicestershire, advised that when eligibility criteria for adult social care services changed from moderate to critical needs many service users became ineligible for some services. Healthwatch would have concern if current community meals services became unaffordable and people no longer used the service. Delivery of meals to people's houses was vital in maintaining contact and was a means of assessing a person's social care needs.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i) It was recognised that lunch clubs provided value beyond a hot meal for users, they also gave people the opportunity to have social interaction which added great benefit to the service. It was explained that the way that lunch clubs produced and charged for meals varied between providers. Through the review it was intended for County Council funding for lunch clubs to be provided to support infrastructure costs. This would allow lunch clubs greater freedom to provide services how they saw fit;
- (ii) Where people opted out of the Lunch Clubs service due to financial or other reasons they would be advised about alternative sources of meals and social activities. If a person opted out and were unable to prepare a meal or feed themselves it would be considered if they were eligible for care services.

RESOLVED:

That the comments now made in respect of the Review of Non-Residential Charging Policy for Adult Social Care be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet at its meeting of 12 September 2014.

16. Cost Effective Care Policy for Adult Social Care.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which invited the Committee to comment on the draft Cost Effective Care Policy for Adult Social Care, which had been developed to deliver the required savings in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2014/15 – 2017/18.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mr D W Houseman MBE CC, explained that following the introduction of the Care Act 2014 and cap on self-funding for Adult Social Care services it was expected that the County Council would experience an increase from 7000 to 8000 people seeking an assessment for a personal budget.

Fiona Barber, Healthwatch, advised that a small proportion of service users required extensive care to enable them to stay in their own home and could potentially reach the limit of care provision provided by the County Council. There was concern that in such cases people should only be placed in a residential care home on care grounds, rather than to reduce costs to the County Council.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i) It was explained that the proposed policy outlined new guidance on how the County Council delivered assessments for personal budgets. The appeals process was detailed through the Care Act. However, through the new guidance a process was set out whereby people could request a review of the decision made about their personal budget funding;
- (ii) It was not only financial assets but also other forms of support that were important to ensure that people could continue to receive services in their own home, where appropriate, and were not channelled into residential care. The County Council was keen to get people's views on the potential impact to them of a change in policy and better understand what other assets people had available to enable them to continue to receive services in their own home;

- (iii) The proposed new policy would be applied to existing service users at the time of their next review. If the review identified that the assessed needs only required a lower cost support package it was expected that provision would be reduced accordingly. Reviews took place annually as a minimum but could be undertaken at any time where required;
- (iv) The Committee recognised the need to ensure that the base level personal budget provided to those who could not afford to buy extra services was adequate. It was expected that some people would have a larger number of resources than others and costs to the County Council could be reduced where this was the case. The County Council needed to ensure that assessments were carried out consistently across all users and did not adversely target those with the most expensive packages who were often also the most vulnerable.

RESOLVED:

That the comments now made in respect of Cost Effective Care Policy for Adult Social Care be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet.

17. Implementation of the Care Act 2014.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided information on the proposed reforms to Adult Social Care through the Care Act 2014, the implications for the Council and the steps being taken to respond to these challenges. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 16' is filed with these minutes.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mr D W Houseman CC, advised the Committee that the Care Bill had attained royal ascent on 14 May 2014 and was now an Act of Parliament. The Care Act 2014 represented the most substantial piece of Adult Social Care legislation in the last 60 years.

As such, an All Member Briefing on the Care Act 2014 was to be organised to take place summer 2014.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed reforms to Adult Social Care within the Care Act 2014, the implications and risks for the Council and the steps being taken to respond to these challenges be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that officers will be arranging an All Member Briefing on the Care Act 2014 to take place summer 2014.

18. Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board and Safeguarding Adults Board Business Plan.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which drew to the Committees attention the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Board/Safeguarding Adults Board (LSCB/SAB) Business Plan for 2014/15. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 17' is filed with these minutes.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mr. D. W. Houseman CC, advised the Committee that both he and the Cabinet Lead member for Children and Families Services, Mr. I. D. Ould CC, were participating observers on the Board and that the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this item on the 9 June.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- (i) As a result of comments made by the Committee when the 'Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2012/13' was previously considered, two private sector representatives had now been appointed to the Board;
- (ii) It was explained that partnership agencies had a duty to alert the LSCB/SAB where they made financial changes as this had the potential to heighten risks to vulnerable people. Any financial change would be tested for potential impact on safeguarding performance. A Safeguarding summit event was to held in September which would help Boards to understand the impact of possible cuts in agencies across partners. It was recognised that cuts in one area could lead to greater pressure and have an adverse impact in another area;
- (iii) Priorities 2B and 3B outlined in the Business Plan referred specifically to adult safeguarding and there was a need to ensure that key adult safeguarding issues had been identified. To help ensure this, a new quality assurance and performance management framework had been developed which would take in to consideration partnership agencies;
- (iv) It was noted that referrals to Leicestershire Adult Social Care had increased and there was a need to understand why this had happened. Safeguarding referrals were received through a range of sources, such as, the Police, health professionals and relatives. A greater awareness of safeguarding issues had partly led to the increase in referrals. Also, as an incident could be referred through different sources, this could lead to a number of referrals through a single incident;
- (v) MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) were regular local meetings where information about high risk domestic abuse victims, those at risk of murder or serious harm, was shared between local agencies. MAPPAs (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) were a set of arrangements to manage the risk posed by the most serious sexual and violent offenders once released from prison.

RESOLVED:

That the LSCB/SAB Business Plan 2014/15 be noted and supported.

19. Date of next meeting.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in early September, prior to the Cabinet meeting on 12 September to enable the Committee to consider and comment on the outcome of public consultations on Snibston and Community Library Services.