

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 7 March 2017.

PRESENT

Mrs. R. Camamile CC (in the Chair)

Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC

Mr. S. J. Hampson CC

Mr. D. Jennings CC

Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC

Mr. J. Miah CC

Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC

Mr. T. J. Richardson CC

Mr. L. Spence CC

In Attendance:

Mr. D. W. Houseman MBE CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care

56. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2017 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

57. Question Time.

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

58. Questions asked by Members.

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

59. Urgent Items.

The Chairman advised that she had agreed to consider the following urgent item of business:

- Care Quality Commission Inspection Report on the Hales Group and the Actions Taken by Council

60. 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 declarations were made.

61. Declarations of the Party Whip.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

62. Presentation of Petitions.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

63. Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy 2016-20.

The Committee considered a Cabinet report of the Director of Adults and Communities concerning the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy 2016-2020, the associated delivery plan and the work taking place to restructure the Department. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 8", is filed with these minutes.

The Cabinet Lead Member in introducing the item drew members' attention to the ongoing and significant rises in those requiring care and the difficulties the Council had experienced in recruiting and retaining staff in this area.

Arising from a discussion, the following points were noted:

- The Strategy aimed to stabilise and re-structure the Department and would result in around £2.9 million of savings. It was hoped that a balance could be struck which, whilst efficient, would enable the wider sector to be supported;
- There remained a good level of engagement with some private sector care providers and the Council continued to meet with them regularly. It was hoped that the Strategy would embed a new way of working which would enable the Council to engage and be more pro-active in its work with the independent sector and the direct payment market.

RESOLVED:

That the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy 2016-20 be supported.

64. Accommodation Strategy for Working Age Adults 2017-22.

The Committee considered a Cabinet report of the Director of Adults and Communities concerning the Leicestershire Accommodation Strategy for Working Age Adults (aged 18 – 64) 2017-22 which was subject to a Cabinet decision at its meeting on 10 March. A copy of the report and a supplementary report, marked "Agenda Item 9", is filed with these minutes.

The Cabinet Lead Member in introducing the item drew members' attention to the positive effects of the Strategy which would enable those affected to be cared for in a more independent setting to achieve a more fulfilling life.

RESOLVED:

That the Accommodation Strategy for Working Age Adults 2017-22 be commended to the Cabinet.

65. Safeguarding Adults Board Business Plans 2017/18.

The Committee considered a report of the Independent Chairman of the Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Board which set out the business plan priorities for the

coming year, 2017/18. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

The Independent Chairman, Mr. Paul Burnett outlined the priorities going forward and advised the Committee that these had been heavily influenced by the Care Act. He drew particular attention to the number of cases of "self-neglect" leading to increasing numbers of adult protection alerts. This remained a challenging issue as cases were not always visible to trained staff or local communities.

In response to a comment regarding the engagement of partner organisations, it was noted that there was a good level of engagement, though there remained some issues in the dissemination of important safeguarding messages to frontline staff.

RESOLVED:

That, subject to the comments now made, the priorities of the Leicestershire and Rutland Local Safeguarding Board in relation to adult safeguarding be supported.

66. Performance Report 2016/17 - Position at December 2016.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive and Director of Adults and Communities concerning an update on performance as at the end of December 2016. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 11", is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the item, the Cabinet Lead Member drew members' attention to the fact that the number of delayed transfers of care at the University Hospital Leicester as a direct result of the Council's Adult Social Care team had dropped from 12 in the last period to only 1. Though delayed transfers of care were currently marked with a "red" rating, the Council remained above average for this area of performance.

A set of recommendations around improving discharge services was being taken forward with the aim of them being implemented by the summer.

RESOLVED:

That the performance position as at December 2016 be noted.

67. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 6 June at 2.00pm.

68. Urgent Item: Care Quality Commission Inspection Report on the Hales Group and the Actions Taken by Council

The Committee considered this matter, the Chairman having decided that it was of an urgent nature in view of the recent publication of the CQC's report on the Hales Group and the need to enable members to have a debate on the matter and ask questions of officers. A copy of a report, marked "Urgent Item", is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the item, the Cabinet Lead Member drew members' attention to the fact that, whilst the CQC inspection report was of significant disappointment, the Hales Group had since recruited staff and were known to be making improvements which had led to a significant reduction in missed calls. Hales Group's next CQC inspection was scheduled

for June which it was hoped would reflect the improvements that had since been made. The Committee was due to consider a report at its June meeting concerning the lessons learned from the Help to Live at Home process.

Arising from a discussion, the following points were noted:

- In response to disappointment being expressed that the Group's lack of staff had not been picked up as part of the mobilisation process and due diligence, it was noted it was standard procedure for the provider winning the contract to be given up to six months to allow them the time to recruit mobilise the staff necessary to carry out the work. It was felt that, whilst Hales Group's business plan had been good, their implementation of it had ultimately proven to be poor;
- Whilst it was unfortunate that Hales Group's issues in recruiting and mobilising staff had been discovered late in the process, it had been possible to remove those service users considered to be most at risk and place them in another setting. The actions of Council staff who had been required to work beyond their usual hours in order to address these issues were praised;
- Hales Group was not the only care provider with which the Council had concerns though Hales Group were the only provider viewed as being "inadequate" by the CQC. It was known that most providers had adequate care plans in place;
- Whilst the situation that occurred was clearly regrettable, it had to be viewed within what was seen as a challenging market position for domiciliary care.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

69. Chairman's Announcement.

As it was the final meeting of the Committee in this Council term, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank officers and members for their support and contribution during the last four years. As it would be the final meeting of the Committee that he attended prior to his retirement, the Chairman took the opportunity to thank the Cabinet Lead Member, Mr. D. W. Houseman MBE CC, for his contribution to the Committee's work.

2.00 - 3.35 pm  
07 March 2017

CHAIRMAN