

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 2 September 2019.

PRESENT

Mr. T. J. Richardson CC (in the Chair)

Dr. P. Bremner CC
Ms. L. Broadley CC
Mr. B. Crooks CC
Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC

Mr. J. Miah CC
Mr T. Parton CC
Mrs. J. Richards CC
Mrs. M. Wright CC

In attendance

Mr. R. Blunt CC – Cabinet Lead Member
Mrs. C. M. Radford CC – Cabinet Support Member
Mrs. A. Hack CC – Spokesperson of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Micheal Smith – Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire
Webcast.

18. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2019 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

19. Question Time.

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

20. 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).

21. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

22. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

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.

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

There were no declarations of the party whip.

24. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

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

25. 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.

26. Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board 2018/19.

The Committee considered a report of the newly appointed Independent Chair of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adult Board (LRSAB) presenting the draft Annual Report of the Board for 2018/19. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 13', is filed with these minutes.

A Member queried if there was a particular reason why no representatives from the National Probation Service and Care and Voluntary Sectors had attended any of the LRSAB meetings in 2018/19 and how often the representatives were required to attend. The Independent Chair of the LRSAB advised that it was acceptable for them to attend some rather than all meetings, but that the reason for their non-attendance was unclear at this time. It was thought that conflicting priorities could play a part. It was confirmed that this matter was being followed up with the relevant organisations to ascertain the reason for the lack of representation and to establish a way forward to ensure these organisations were appropriately represented at future meetings.

In response to a question around how people trafficking is monitored in Leicestershire, it was confirmed that this was captured by the Police and then reported to national bodies. However, as the issue, which continued to grow in prevalence, affected multiple areas including Safeguarding, it was the intention of the Independent Chair of the LRSAB to work together with organisations, especially Healthwatch, to assist in the strategic join-up of services.

It was noted that Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire was keen to ensure that the public voice was heard in relation to adult safeguarding matters and would work with the Independent Chair of LRSAB on this issue.

The Committee was assured that, regardless of funding arrangements for the LRSAB, statutory reviews would always be carried out. The statutory partners on the LRSAB had a pragmatic approach in this regard.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board be noted.

27. Domiciliary Care Service Post November 2020.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which outlined the proposed way forward on the re-procurement of a new Domiciliary Care Service. The Committee's views were sought on the approach outlined within the report which could then be considered in the service design prior to finalisation in November. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following comments were made:

- i) In response to a query around contingency planning, it was confirmed that each service provider would be expected to follow its own contingency and business continuity plans. However, it was normal practice when procuring a new service, for details of these to be agreed between the Council and the service provider(s) at the contract stage and outlined within the service specification.
- ii) Assurance was given to the Committee that lessons learnt from the implementation of the Help to Live at Home Service were being used to improve and shape the procurement process. Business continuity and service continuity would be emphasised as a top priority particularly at the implementation stage which would be phased to ensure minimal service level disruptions. It was recognised that supporting and retaining care staff through the process was key to a successful implementation and to future service delivery.
- iii) A member suggested that officers consider the options for contract duration. The current contract had been for a three-year period, with an option to extend for up to two years. A longer-term contract may have the potential to provide greater service stability.
- iv) It was agreed that a progress report would be submitted to the Committee in November which would include an early draft of the plans for implementation.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed way forward regarding the re-procurement of domiciliary care services be noted.

28. Carers' Support Update.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Adults and Communities, the Director of Public Health and the Director of Children and Family Services, which provided an update on the progress made in the delivery of the Joint Carers' Strategy 2018-21, Implementation Plan and priorities over the next 12 months. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Hack, Spokesperson of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the meeting for this item.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were raised:

- i) With regard to other Leicestershire organisations and District Councils signing up to the Employers for Carers' Scheme, it was confirmed that this was a voluntary process but that the County Council was encouraging as many organisations as possible to take part. The Director undertook outside of the meeting to provide the Committee with details of the organisations that had already signed up to the Scheme and information on how it was promoted.
- ii) It was suggested that it would be helpful for a timescale to be provided for actions which were still to be developed. Assurance was provided that actions were progressing in line with the three-year period that had been set to deliver the Strategy. A Lead Commissioner had recently been appointed to the Department to lead on the Carers' Strategy work and would be instrumental in driving this forward. It was also highlighted that the information on implementation contained within the report was only an outline of the associated actions as opposed to the full-scale plan, which contained a much higher level of detail.
- iii) A proportion of the funding used to support carers' services was provided through the Improved Better Care Fund (IBCF), which was non-recurrent and due to end in March 2020. In response to a question around future funds and the continuation of support for carers, the Director responded that the use of temporary funding was always a concern and that the Council was awaiting direction from the government with regard to longer term funding. However, it would continue to invest in support for carers which was key to keeping pace with demand.
- iv) The Committee was reminded that the NHS was a partner in delivering the Carers' Strategy and Implementation Plan and would focus on work to ensure the health and wellbeing of carers. Actions assigned to the Clinical Commissioning Groups included the role of primary care in providing the right information and advice and social prescribing. Aggregated data was not collected regarding the overall health of carers; however, this would be known at individual care plan level. It was recognised that the majority of carers were older people and likely to have long term conditions of their own. Supporting carers in these circumstances was a matter for GPs who would need to plan any admission or discharge from hospital for the carer to take account of their caring responsibilities. It was noted that discussions were taking place with the University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust to develop a support pack for carers whilst in hospital and upon discharge; officers would see if this could be expedited.
- v) The County Council commissioned a service to support young carers from Barnardo's. The majority of activity was delivered through this service. There was also a transition process in place to support young carers to become adult carers. Officers undertook to provide the Committee clarity regarding the coverage of the County Council's service offer and that of Barnardo's.
- vi) Where it was recognised that carers would benefit from financial and benefits advice, they would be signposted to the appropriate organisation. A carers support service was commissioned from the voluntary sector which could assist members in navigating the system and filling forms in. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Carers Delivery Group would also be undertaking an audit of information, advice and guidance to ensure that there was consistency across the public sector.

- vii) Where carers were themselves vulnerable, or a number of people in the same household required care from a variety of family members, a joint assessment which looked at the needs of multiple parties would be carried out.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress made in the delivery of the Joint Carers' Strategy 2018-21 be noted and that the Committee continue to receive regular updates;
- (b) That Officers be requested to provide members of the Committee with details of the organisations signed up to the Employers Scheme, and how this is encouraged, for information;
- (c) That Officers be requested to provide members of the Committee with details of the coverage of the group work offer for young carers and the scope of the service provided by Barnardo's for information.

29. Record Office Business Case.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update on Phase One of the Collections and Learning Hub Project, the re-siting of the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR) to the County Hall campus, and, as part of forthcoming stakeholder engagement, presented an opportunity for the Committee to shape the design brief. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Adults and Communities, Mr R Blunt CC, confirmed that he supported the two-phase approach to the Collections and Learning Hub project. He recognised the need to relocate the records officer, in order to keep records safe and was comfortable with the proposal to relocate to County Hall, which was a broadly central location.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were raised:

- i) A Member expressed concern that as the world of digitalisation progresses, hard copy records may no longer be kept. It was felt important, particularly in terms of social history, that future generations were still able to access and refer to local documents.
- ii) In response to a question, it was confirmed that timescales for starting the build of the Record Office were indicative at this stage and would be adapted around the project as it evolved. The visit to the Hereford Record Office, which was an example of a modern archive, had provided useful insight and information that had helped shape the process.
- iii) It was noted that Wigston residents were disappointed that the Records Office was being relocated. They felt that the current records offices were well used, with a town centre location and access to car parking. Concern was also expressed regarding use of the existing site once the relocation had taken place. It was confirmed there were currently no plans for the existing site, but that information would be available at the appropriate time. The Cabinet Lead Member suggested

this could be an opportunity for local members and their constituents to make suggestions on ways to maximise the use of the old site.

- iv) The consideration of a Changing Places facility as part of the design brief for the new records office was welcomed.
- v) It was confirmed that a project to digitalise existing records was underway, particularly focused on popular records. Although the number of people physically searching for documents had reduced, there had been an increase in people accessing records remotely. As a result, those who came to the records office were generally more well informed. It was seen as a positive that routes of access were broadening and changing rather than there being a decline in service users.
- vi) It was noted that the requirement for the new records office to have sufficient storage for the next 25 years was an approximation based on the knowledge of archivists. There was a risk that, after 25 years, more storage space would be required; however, it was expected that the increase in digital records would offset this risk.
- vii) A member queried why the original proposal of a Collections and Learning Hub on the same site was no longer being pursued. It was confirmed that the project had been scaled back to make it affordable. Phase 2 of the project would see the Creative Learning Service Collections and the Museum Collections, which were currently scattered around the county, brought together in the Eastern Annexe. The separate teams had already been brought together under one management service to maximise opportunities for collaborative working. It was not expected that schools would visit the collections hub; rather they bought into the service so that they could receive artefacts in their schools. The timescale for the development of the Collections Hub was not known but the Committee would continue to receive regular programme reports.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on Phase One of the Collections and Learning Hub Project be noted;
- (b) That members of the Committee be requested to put forward suggestions for consideration that they or their constituents may have with regard to maximising the use of the old site once the relocation has taken place.

30. Next Steps in Library Provision.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update on progress with library services and an opportunity for the Committee to comment on options in shaping the future direction of the service as part of its forthcoming strategy refresh. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were noted:

- i) Members praised a number of community managed libraries, which were thriving and embodied a positive community spirit. Some community managed libraries,

such as in Earl Shilton, were also being innovative in finding new funding streams. This approach was welcomed.

- ii) Just over one million books were loaned from Leicestershire's libraries during the previous year, although this did not reflect the number of individual visitors. This data would be difficult to capture, as would details of the other reasons why people chose to visit a library. Officers were developing a qualitative measure around library usage which would be included in future performance reports to this Committee. In the meantime, members were reminded of the need to promote the use of libraries in their local areas.
- iii) In response to a query, the Director advised that he had commissioned a review of the challenges that community managed libraries would face once the tapered funding from the County Council ended. Some libraries had done sufficient work to ensure that they were sustainable; others would face challenges. A report outlining the findings of the review would be submitted to this Committee in due course.
- iv) Members supported the suggestion to review the mobile library service. Officers confirmed that any decision would be subject to the usual consultation process. Currently 843 people used the service, of which approximately 600 people only accessed libraries through the mobile library. However, more than half of mobile library users lived within three miles of a static library.
- v) It was suggested the guidance on how to use smart libraries should be made available within the library buildings. Officers acknowledged this but advised that there had been roadshows to explain how smart libraries worked and information and video clips were available on the County Council's website.
- vi) The County Council was part of a consortium with other local authorities for purchasing library supplies. Content was monitored to ensure that it was effective. It was noted that some community managed libraries had introduced a book swap, although this could affect the quality of the library stock.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the progress with library services be noted;
- (b) That the Committee's comments on options in shaping the future direction of the service be taken into account as part of the forthcoming strategy refresh.

31. Deprivation of Liberty Protection Safeguards.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities, the purpose of which was to provide an update on how the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) service manages the assessment and authorisation process for individuals that require DoLS authorisation. The report also outlined the key changes regarding the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards which are due to replace the current DoLS on 1 October 2020. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes

The Committee welcomed the work that had been undertaken by officers with regard to the DoLS backlog figure, which had decreased significantly from 1,316 to 436.

With regard to appealing an LPS authorisation it was noted that free legal aid would continue to be available. It was confirmed that the County Council had concluded a total of 80 appeals and that 36 appeals were currently live. The numbers were not expected to increase significantly as a result of the new legislation.

RESOLVED:

That the current position with regard to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and key changes regarding the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards be noted.

32. Annual Complaints and Compliments Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided a summary of the complaints and compliments for Adults Social Care services commissioned or provided by the Adults and Communities Department in 2018-19. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14' is filed with these minutes.

It was felt that it could be useful to analyse complaints by geographic area. If particular areas were receiving more complaints than others, then this type of analysis could potentially assist with area specific action being taken in order to prevent future complaints. Assurance was provided that the data was analysed to identify themes, which were then reported to departments on a quarterly basis. Officers were not aware of any geographic disparity in services but would seek to include this in future reports.

A question was raised with respect of the County Council being found at fault by the Ombudsman for five out of the thirteen complaint cases it had made decisions on during 2018-19 and whether these cases had been reviewed by Senior Officers as part of the process. It was confirmed that the review by Senior Officers had only been introduced part way through the year; however, all future cases would be reviewed at a senior level prior to Ombudsman involvement. The complaints that had been upheld tended to relate to the strength and clarity of information provided and remedies had included fact sheets and plain English guides.

Members queried why some complaints took between 20 and 65 days to be resolved. It was confirmed that there was a mix of reasons, some could be delayed because officers were trying to arrange a resolution meeting, sometimes information was needed for partners and some delays were caused by annual leave of critical staff members. The Committee was assured that the majority of complaints were resolved in closer to 20 days than 65. Officers undertook to include an additional marker of 35 days in future reports to give the Committee a better sense of response times.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the summary of the complaints and compliments for adult social care services commissioned or provided by the Adults and Communities Department in 2018-19 be noted;
- (b) That the Director be requested to include further detail regarding the length of time for responding to complaints in future reports.

33. April - June 2019 Performance Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update of the Adults and Communities Department's performance for the period of April to June 2019. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 15' is filed with these minutes.

A Member asked whether the number of voluntary hours for community managed libraries could be recorded and reported at a future meeting. The Director responded that this suggestion would be considered, however, as these libraries were not owned or managed by the County Council it would depend on whether or not the relevant organisations agreed to share this information.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Adults and Communities Department's performance for the period April to June 2019 be noted;
- (b) That Officers be requested to consider whether the number of voluntary hours for Community Managed Libraries could be recorded and reported to a future meeting.

34. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 11 November 2019 at 2.00pm.

2.00-4.20pm
2 September 2019

CHAIRMAN