

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 20 January 2020.

PRESENT

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

Dr. P. Bremner CC
Mr. B. Crooks CC
Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC

Mr. J. Miah CC
Mr. L. Phillimore CC
Mrs. M. Wright CC

In attendance

Mr. R. Blunt CC – Cabinet Lead Member
Mrs. C. M. Radford – Cabinet Support Member
Micheal Smith – Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire

51. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

52. Question Time.

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

53. 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).

54. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

55. 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.

Mr D Harrison CC declared a personal interest in the report on the Adults and Communities Department Performance 2019/20 as he was a carer for his wife (minute 60 refers).

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

There were no declarations of the party whip.

57. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

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

58. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 - 2023/24

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Adults and Communities and the Director of Corporate Resources which provided information on the proposed 2020/21 to 2023/24 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as it related to the Adults and Communities Department. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item '8' is filed with these minutes.

The Committee also noted a question that had been received from Dr Eynon relating to the acquisition of the Thomas Cook archive by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Records Office, and the response provided by the Director. A copy of the question and response is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mr R Blunt CC, Cabinet Lead Member, to the meeting for this item.

Arising from the comments and questions raised, the Committee was advised as follows:

Service Transformation

The Service Transformation details were noted.

Proposed Revenue Budget

- i) The revenue budget took demographic growth and known budget pressures into account. Cost and price pressures for 2020/22 onwards had not been factored in but would be provided for centrally.
- ii) Whilst the Adult Social Care Precept monies helped with financial pressures in the short-term, it was felt this was not a sustainable solution for the long-term.

Growth

- iii) Some disappointment was expressed that more growth was not provided to support communities. However, the details reported related only to the work the Adults and Communities Department held responsibility for. The Director advised that work was also being carried out in other departments such as Public Health and the Chief Executive's Department and suggested a joint report could be presented to the Commission at a future meeting to provide an overview of the work the Council had been undertaking with respect of Communities, as a whole.

Adult Social Care – Savings

- iv) AC4 – Place to Live – The forecasted social care saving of £50,000 per annum associated with the “Place to Live” Brookfield development project was included in the Adults and Communities MTFs. The estimated net rental income of £150,000 pa which the project was also expected to deliver would form part of the savings for the Corporate Resources Department.
- v) AC5 Implementation of revised Target Operating Model (TOM) – The Programme was currently in the early stages of implementation and was on track to achieve the savings predicted. It was not yet possible to assess whether the Programme would over-achieve against the savings target. The Committee praised the work of all involved, noted the significant positive impact the TOM was expected to make and asked to receive regular updates on progress.

Communities and Wellbeing – Savings

- vi) Restructure of Communities and Wellbeing Service – Approximately £410,000 savings had been identified, which was nearly 10% of the total budget for the service. It was confirmed that the level of restructure required would be significant and a reduction in the number of posts was to be expected. A Human Resources action plan was in the process of being finalised which would confirm the detail.
- vii) Collections Hub – Timescales for the development of the Collections Hub (Phase 2) on the County Hall campus were dependent on the success and completion of (Phase 1) the relocation of the Record Office.

Savings Under Development

- viii) Social Care Investment Plan (SCIP) – Although the overall strategic aim was to reduce the number of people placed in residential care and increase the number supported in community settings, it was acknowledged there would always be a need for residential and nursing care provision, particularly where night time needs were concerned. In recognition of this, the Department had identified several specialised services as part of its upcoming Home Care Services procurement, which included a service that specifically focussed on providing night time support.
- ix) Digital Technology – With consideration to the review of the use of assistive technology and the Department’s digital offer to local residents, a range of initiatives were being tried and tested. In response to comments raised, the Director provided assurance that not all equipment being considered relied on an individual having to operate it. For example, monitoring equipment was available which could work in the background to provide updates on a service user’s condition. It would be key to strike a balance to ensure that personalisation of service was not replaced with technology as this would increase levels of social isolation.

Health and Social Care Integration

- x) Better Care Fund (BCF) – The current BCF was expected to rollover for another 12 months. Work would be taking place at a national level over the next few months to review outcomes and governance arrangements. It was anticipated that there would be a further three-year programme, but this had not yet been confirmed.

Other External Influences and Other Funding Sources

- xi) In terms of Government funding for the Department in the long-term, it was confirmed that, whilst funding up to March 2021 was certain, there was a lack of clarity regarding funding arrangements for future years.
- xii) Care Act 2014 - Changes in Social Care Legislation – Changes that were originally set take effect in April 2016 had been postponed to 2020. Concern was raised around the proposals to cap the costs of care and accommodation and the impact this could have on the Department and the local care market. The Director confirmed that the Department had previously (in 2015) undertaken an analysis of the care market and the level of provision required to manage the changes. The analysis at that time concluded that the changes would significantly increase costs for local authorities and reduce costs for self-funders. The changes would also be resource intensive as they would result in triple the number of assessments currently carried out. If the changes were implemented, a further analysis would need to be undertaken to reflect current market prices.
- xiii) It was noted that the increases to the Living Wage would have a significant impact on the Adults and Communities Department. It would be important to ensure that the budget for central items contained sufficient contingency to be able to respond to the increase. This point would be drawn to the attention of the Scrutiny Commission.

Capital Programme

- xiv) The Trees Refurbishment was currently in the development phase. Residents had been moved into alternative accommodation to allow for the building works to commence. It was anticipated that the refurbishment would be complete towards the end of the summer 2020.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Scrutiny Commission be recommended to consider a report on how the Council supports communities at a future meeting;
- b) That the report and information now provided be noted;
- c) That the Committee's comments be submitted to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 27 January 2020.

59. Commissioning and Procurement of Home Care Services: Post November 2020

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update and recommendation for the re-procurement of home care services, post November 2020. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

In his introduction to the report, the Director explained there had been some revisions made to the milestones tabled in paragraph 44 of the report; additional flexibility had been built into the procurement and implementation dates to ensure that preparations

were fully robust and tested. There had also been changes to the NHS CCGs (Clinical Commissioning Groups) governance, which had now been factored in.

A revised table of milestones would be circulated to members of the Committee after the meeting for information.

The Cabinet Lead Member for Adults and Communities, Mr. R. Blunt CC, confirmed his support for the service proposals and said that due to the nature of the service, there would always be a significant level of risk. However, it was pleasing to see that every effort was being made to learn from past experiences and find pragmatic solutions to design a new and improved service. He was hopeful that the future service would be successful.

Arising from discussion and questions, the following points arose:

- i) The Committee was pleased to note that consideration was being given to carers receiving the appropriate remuneration for non-contact time such as travel. Discussions would be held with providers to determine sustainability in this regard. The Department was in consultation with the Council's Internal Audit Team to determine how the remuneration could be effectively measured and monitored.
- ii) It was anticipated that a level of stabilisation would be required between each phase of the implementation period. The actual phasing and level of stabilisation required would be determined following the procurement, using a risk-based approach dependent on the number of existing providers bidding successfully for the new contract or exiting the market. The Committee supported the phased approach to implementation.
- iii) Members welcomed the introduction of four pricing levels (urban, fringe, rural and isolated) for the new service, which had been developed following a comprehensive benchmarking analysis. The Department had brought in an independent consultancy company called Care Analytics, which specialised in cost and pricing models for care and support services and had undertaken the same exercise in several areas of the Country. A substantial amount of work with existing providers had been completed as part of the benchmarking process.
- iv) The new Home Care Service contract would provide for the joint commissioning of services between the Council and the NHS, which was expected to align better future costs for core home care services where there had previously been disparity. However, there would still be elements of provision, such as the development or establishment of specialist services, which may need to be separately undertaken.
- v) Provider performance would continue to be managed under existing processes. The Department's Quality Improvement Team monitored and worked closely with providers especially where there were performance issues. Flexibility had been built in to the new service agreement so that other providers could be brought in to meet capacity requirements if a provider contract could no longer be sustained, for example due to consistent underperformance. Providers could move between "prime" or "supplementary" status depending on the quality of their service.
- vi) It was expected that all providers would have the ability to take on "high dependency" service users as required. Support and training would continue to be available to providers from the Council wherever necessary.

- vii) Members felt assured that lessons learnt from the previous procurement were being used to strengthen and shape future plans and practices. The Committee commended officers on what it felt was an excellent report and confirmed its support for the service proposals.

RESOLVED:

- a) That a revised timetable of milestones be circulated to Committee members for information;
- b) That the update on the Home Care service proposals be noted as part of the forthcoming re-procurement;
- c) That the Committee's comments on the Home Care service proposals be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration.

60. National Performance Benchmarking 2018/19 and Performance Report 2019/20 - Position at November 2019

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Adults and Communities, which highlighted the Adults and Communities Department's performance position in 2018/19 through national benchmarking, and which also provided an update of the Department's performance at the end of November 2019. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

With regard to Smart Libraries, it was the intention that the Committee would receive further reports as the transition progressed. A member suggested that when the figures on the number of visits were available, officers consider making the distinction in future reports between the number of web visits and the number of people that had physically visited a library.

The survey results under the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) where the Council had fallen below the national average did not necessarily mean that the Council's performance was poor, but rather that it required improvement in comparison to other high performing authorities. It was recognised that surveys, for many reasons, did not always provide an accurate reflection and unfortunately the Council had no control over the metrics as these were set nationally. A dedicated officer had been appointed to work on addressing the lower performing areas. Discussions were also taking place with Healthwatch to see how it could be of support to improve the process.

A member queried if the public received feedback on the results, it was confirmed that the survey, which was written by Central Government, did include an option to enable survey respondents to request feedback if they so wished. Headline results were also published online, and the next round of results was due to be available in early February 2020.

RESOLVED

That the Adults and Communities Department's performance position in 2018/19, and the update of the Department's performance at the end of November 2019 be noted.

61. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 9 March 2020 at 2.00pm.

2.00-3.32pm
20 January 2020

CHAIRMAN