

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 9 March 2020.

PRESENT

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

Dr. P. Bremner CC  
Ms. L. Broadley CC  
Mr. B. Crooks CC  
Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC

Mr. J. Miah CC  
Mr T. Parton CC  
Mrs B. Seaton CC  
Mrs. M. Wright CC

In attendance

Mr. R. Blunt CC – Cabinet Lead Member for Adults and Communities  
Mrs. C. M. Radford CC – Cabinet Support Member  
Mr Mukesh Barot – Healthwatch Leicester and Leicestershire

62. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2020 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

63. Question Time.

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

64. 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).

65. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

66. 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.

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

There were no declarations of the party whip.

68. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

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

69. Residential and Nursing Care for Older People.

The Committee considered a presentation of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided information on residential and nursing care for older people in Leicestershire. A copy of the slides is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion and questions the following points were made:

- (i) The reason for placing older people out of county was normally in response to their preferential choice; for example, if a person wished to live closer to family members in another part of the country, the Council, in line with its rates, would pay the out of county care home fee to support the move. Where the cost went above the rate threshold, the service user could choose to go ahead with the placement by topping up the remaining amount.
- (ii) Insufficient capacity was not currently an issue or a reason for placing older people requiring residential or nursing care (including older people with a learning disability) out of county. There was a significant number of residential care home vacancies (over 300) in Leicestershire and the Council currently held contracts with a total number of 119 Leicestershire based care homes which specialised in providing care for people aged 65 and over.
- (iii) In response to a query it was clarified that the data collected by the Council to inform the Care Quality Commission's key lines of enquiry did include data based on the protected characteristics under the Equality Act, although not all of the data collected was reported nationally.
- (iv) The Department had seen lower numbers of admissions to residential care homes in recent months as a result of the Target Operating Model and it was expected that the downward trend would continue once the new Home Care Service had been implemented. Providing the right care and support to enable people to live at home for longer was a primary aim, however, there would continue to be residential care provisions available to those in need such as those assessed as being too frail to live in their own home.
- (v) Officers undertook to provide the Committee with the average cost of domiciliary care. However, it was important to note that this could be misleading as there was no upper limit to the support paid by the County Council to enable people to stay at home.
- (vi) The Committee thanked Officers for the presentation and the level of insight this provided and welcomed presentations of this kind at future meetings on topics which the Director considered to be appropriate.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation on Residential and Nursing Care for Older People be noted.

70. Progress on the Decommissioning of the CareOnline Service.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update on the progress following the decision to decommission the CareOnline Service in 2019 and the consequent activity undertaken by the Enrych Connect Service. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9', is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Ms Miriam McKee, Chair of Trustees from Enrych, to the meeting.

Arising from discussion and questions, the following points were raised:

- (i) The Connect Service was one of a number of services the Enrych charity organisation ran to support disabled people to live independent and active lives. Options of sustainable future funding were currently being explored, including with the Big Lottery fund and discussions with a corporate organisation who had expressed an interest in supporting the work of the Service.
- (ii) In terms of the types of support the service provided, each client was assigned a voluntary support worker from the moment they joined the service in which they could seek advice from as required. An extensive amount of engagement work had taken place when Enrych initially took over the Connect Service and new initiatives were also being developed to target specific cohorts of people that could potentially benefit from using the service. This included a group support offer which was in the early development stages; discussions had started to take place with a number of district councils in this regard, to determine the level of support that could be provided to local residents and particularly for those living in sheltered/supported accommodation.
- (iii) The Committee offered its thanks to Ms McKee and her colleagues at Enrych for the work they had undertaken to enable services to continue. A member also commented that a number of their constituents had provided positive feedback on the transition between the CareOnline and Connect services, which they had found to be a seamless process.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the progress following the decision to decommission the CareOnline Service in 2019 and the consequent activity undertaken by the Enrych Connect Service be welcomed.

71. Use of Resources in Adult Social Care.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which presented the outcome of the Local Government Association's report on the Use of Resources in Adult Social Care. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the Director highlighted that the outcomes provided in the Local Government Association's (LGA) Use of Resources in Adult Social Care report did not include details of the efficiencies and effectiveness of services and were based on

finance and activity data relating to 2018-19. Further information on the use of resources in 2019-20 was expected to be published in November 2020.

Regarding Leicestershire's response to requests that ended in no services being provided, it was queried whether this meant that people requesting services were being turned away. The Director confirmed that this was not the case and that there would have been some form of resolution, usually through the provision of information and signposting. He explained that the reporting process would only allow information to be recorded in a certain way, so if the follow up to a request resolved in no service being required, this would be reported as "no services provided". Another consideration for this area of reporting was that as new strength and asset-based approaches progressed nationally, it was expected that fewer people would require formal services.

The report had provided reassurance that the Council was largely providing services which corresponded with levels of need. The low level of spend per person in Leicestershire in comparison to other authorities was reflective of the overall funding received by the Council.

RESOLVED:

That the outcome of the Local Government Association's report on the Use of Resources in Adult Social Care be noted.

72. Smart Libraries - Performance Review.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update on the performance of SMART libraries following implementation in April 2019. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion and questions, the following points were raised:

- (i) It was queried why SMART libraries were not currently open on Sundays which was regarded as a leisure day for many people, particularly those with children, it was explained that the initial stages of the programme had mainly focussed on the establishment of the SMART technology systems and the operational processes, but there would be opportunity at the next stage for Sunday and bank holiday opening hours to be reviewed to test viability and cost effectiveness. Additional costs, including the requirement of CCTV monitoring, would likely be substantial.
- (ii) It was suggested the final stage of the SMART library induction process for new users be made available online rather than requiring the person registering to physically visit a library to complete the process. Officers acknowledged this could be inconvenient for some and advised that the Department was already looking at ways to improve this process to ensure it was as seamless and convenient for service users as possible.
- (iii) It was pleasing to note that the incidents that had occurred during the reporting period had been low level and that the number of formal complaints received had been minimal. The live CCTV system allowed for close monitoring of all sites to be carried out from one central location. In response to a query about the consequences for a person that persistently misused SMART library facilities, it

was confirmed that in this event, individual access rights could be removed entirely if necessary.

RESOLVED:

That the update on the performance of SMART libraries following implementation in April 2019 be noted.

73. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 8 June 2020 at 2.00pm.

2.00 – 3.36pm  
9 March 2020

CHAIRMAN