

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Monday, 7 September 2020.

PRESENT

Ms. L. Broadley CC
Mr. B. Crooks CC
Mr. T. Gillard CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC
Mr. J. Poland CC

Mr. T. J. Richardson CC
Mr. S. D. Sheahan CC
Mrs. A. Wright 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

1. Appointment of Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. T. J. Richardson CC be appointed Chairman for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2021.

Mr. T. J. Richardson in the Chair

2. Election of Vice Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. D. Harrison CC be elected Vice Chairman for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2021.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2020 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

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.

Mr. D. Harrison CC declared a personal interest in agenda items 10, 11, 13 and 15 (Covid 19 Recovery Update, Adults and Communities Department Strategy 2020 – 2024, Adults and Communities Department Performance for Quarter 1 2020/21 and Year-End 2019/20, and Annual Adult Social Care Annual Complaints and Compliments Report for 2019/20) as his wife was in receipt of support services (minutes 10, 11, 13 and 15 refer).

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

There were no declarations of the party whip.

9. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 35.

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

10. Covid-19 Recovery Update.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided a detailed update on progress made within the Adults and Communities Department in implementing its interim recovery plans following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and set out initial proposals for longer term recovery planning and strategic change in accordance with the Council's Recovery Strategy. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10', is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the Director advised the Committee of recent revisions made to national guidance in respect of hospital discharge pathways. Members noted that since the beginning of the pandemic the NHS had been required to provide for all new or additional packages of care. However, from 1 September 2020 the funding arrangements had changed and would now only cover the costs of the first six weeks of care. As a result, financial assessments would be required for any packages of care needed beyond this point to determine if these costs would be met by the NHS, the County Council or the patient. The Director also reported of a change made to the assessment process for determining continued healthcare needs which now meant that assessments previously carried out on hospital wards or, most recently by virtual means, were now able to be carried out in a patient's home.

Arising from discussion and questions the following points arose:

- (i) Regarding the new process of assessing hospital discharge packages for patients with continuing healthcare needs at home, it was confirmed that determining the level of need and the most suitable care package remained the highest priority. In terms of assessment waiting times assurance was provided that Home First

services continued to be immediately available upon discharge and would be for as long as necessary until the appropriate care package had been put in place.

- (ii) In terms of ensuring sufficient supplies of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) over the winter period, a number of controls had been put in place. For example, a central procurement hub had been established internally to better understand the stock levels required and to strategically manage orders to maintain supplies across all service areas. Processes had also been implemented to regularly monitor the external provider position so that any sourcing issues could be quickly identified and resolved.
- (iii) The Lightbulb Service continued to be operational but in a limited way. Assessments that would ordinarily be carried out in a person's home were currently being carried out online to identify and prioritise those service users with an urgent need. It was noted that future consideration would be given in due course to the restart of any preventative services associated with the Lightbulb Service that were currently paused due to the national restrictions.
- (iv) Members noted that the impact of the pandemic on residential care homes had been severe and requested that a report specifically focussed on this sector be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

In concluding the item, the Director stated that the Department's ability to manage the impact of the pandemic could only be credited to the hard work and dedication of its staff, who, over the past few months, had been working tirelessly to keep services running despite the significant challenges they had faced and would continue to face over the coming months. Due to the national restrictions staff had experienced a whole series of changes to their workplace arrangements and practices. One of the key challenges for the majority of the workforce had been the switch to remote working, where much of the usual face to face communication had been limited and required to be carried out digitally. A number of staff had also been re-deployed to other service areas. However, some were now beginning to return to their substantive posts. With regard to health and wellbeing, staff were being encouraged to take annual leave wherever possible to rest and re-energise.

The Committee also expressed its thanks to all staff in the Adults and Communities Department for all of their efforts made over recent months to respond to and manage the impacts of the Covid-19 crisis and commended the professional approach that had been undertaken to enable services to continue.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on progress made within the Adults and Communities Department in implementing its interim recovery plans following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the initial proposals for longer term recovery planning and strategic change in accordance with the Council's Recovery Strategy, be noted;
- (b) That at the next meeting of the Committee a report be provided regarding the Care Home Sector.

11. Adults and Communities Department Strategy 2020-2024 - Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update on the outcomes of the consultation on 'Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire: Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020–2024' and sought the Committee's views on the revised draft Strategy which would be presented to the Cabinet for final approval on 18th September. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 11', is filed with these minutes.

Members praised the service users that had agreed to tell their personal stories to help inform the Strategy; it was felt these provided a much deeper level of insight which was invaluable in shaping new, and improving existing, services.

The Committee commended officers for the work that had been undertaken to produce a wide-reaching Strategy and confirmed its support for its implementation across the Department with no further amendment.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the outcomes of the consultation on 'Delivering Wellbeing and Opportunity in Leicestershire: Adults and Communities Department Ambitions and Strategy for 2020–2024', and the update now provided be noted;
- (b) That the comments now made by the Committee be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration.

12. Status on Support for Community Managed Libraries.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities which provided an update on the impact of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic on Community Managed Libraries (CMLs) and their medium-term sustainability, and which proposed amendments to the current support package on offer. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 12', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:

- (i) It was clarified that the Click and Collect Service enabled registered library members to request a selection of books online by genre or author; once library staff had collected the books a suitable pick up time could then be arranged. Library members that did not have access to online services could make a request to their local CML by phone. In terms of collections made by library members, it was acknowledged that with the social distancing measures currently in place there were limitations to the number of people that could physically make a visit. However, monitoring would continue going forward to ensure the best offer was in place for service delivery.
- (ii) It was confirmed that the mobile library service continued to be paused as a result of the pandemic. However, an extension to the Click and Collect Service was being considered to keep pace with service demand. In response to a member's request, officers undertook to give further consideration to the mobile service options available to residents of the Barwell community in light of its size.

- (iii) Part of scaling up the current baseline offer would include the County Council putting forward an additional support offer that CMLs could choose to buy into which focussed on the management of soft facilities. In response to a question it was confirmed that due to the scale, it was intended that the provision of book stock and ICT equipment would remain the property of the County Council and that the usual book swapping arrangements between the CMLs involved would be able to continue.
- (iv) Members commended the respectable level of contingency which was there to provide additional support to CMLs in unforeseen circumstances such as an emergency roof or boiler failure. The introduction of an additional one-off grant payment for 2020/21 that CMLs could apply for to support running costs where there had been a shortfall of income due to Covid-19 was welcomed.
- (v) Looking to the future, it was suggested there could be opportunities arising from the Covid-19 pandemic for CMLs to move to more cost-efficient premises. The Committee requested that officers continue to take proactive action in exploring further possible options to support CMLs beyond 2021-22, including exploring with them any potential alternative premises arrangements.
- (vi) Members noted the good practice examples of work outlined in the report and asked officers to take appropriate measures to ensure these were shared across the library network.
- (vii) The Committee confirmed its support for the service proposals, subject to the comments raised, and welcomed further updates at future meetings.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on the status of support for Community Managed Libraries be noted;
- (b) That the Committee's comments on the proposed amendments to the current support package on offer to Community Managed Libraries be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration;
- (c) That the Director of Adults and Communities be requested to take appropriate measures to ensure that the good practice examples of work outlined in the report is shared across the library network;
- (d) That the Director of Adults and Communities be requested to give further consideration to the mobile service options available to residents of the Barwell area.

13. Performance Report for Quarter 1 2020/21 (April-June) and Year-End 2019/20.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and Director of Adults and Communities, the purpose of which was to present the Committee with an update of the Adults and Communities Department's performance for the period April to June 2020, and to reflect on performance during 2019/20. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 13', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the Adults and Communities Department's performance position in 2019/20, and the update of the Department's performance for the period April to June 2020 be noted.

14. Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2019/20, Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and Business Plan 2020/21

The Committee considered a report of the Independent Chair of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board presenting the draft Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adult Board (LRSAB) for 2019/20, the Strategic Plan of the LRSAB and Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) for 2020-2025, and the Business Plan of the LRSAB for 2020/21. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14', is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the Independent Chair of the LRSAB highlighted that much of the consultation and engagement work undertaken during the annual reporting period had included engagement with representatives of the prison service. Members were also informed that join up with the Community Safety Partnership would remain a key focus over the coming year.

The understanding and application of the Mental Capacity Act required a multiagency approach; the delay in national guidance, now confirmed by the Department of Health and Social Care, around Liberty Protection Safeguards had greatly influenced some of the approaches being undertaken by organisations such as hospitals and local authorities, who had been working hard to prepare for the increased role they would be undertaking under the new arrangement. In terms of the approaches being undertaken to identify and address mental capacity issues it was confirmed that focus would be given to a number of key areas such as staff training, feedback on case reviews and analysis of audit findings. It was also stated that gathering enough qualitative data was a key challenge that would be worked on.

RESOLVED:

That the Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adult Board (LRSAB) for 2019/20, the Business Plan of the LRSAB for 2020/21 and the Strategic Plan of the LRSAB and Leicester Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) for 2020-2025, be noted.

15. Annual Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments Report 2019/20.

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 2019-20. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 15', is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points arose:

- (i) It had been the first time in several years that the number of complaints pertaining to residential care had risen above the number pertaining to domiciliary care. Assurance was provided that work would be undertaken with the relevant providers to address the issues identified.

- (ii) The annual report took into account the complaints and compliments received in respect of all adult social care services whether commissioned or provided directly by the Department, including domiciliary care and hospital discharge services. In response to a suggestion made by a member, the Director undertook to consider including in the next annual report details of impacts from changes to the hospital discharge assessment and planning process as a result of Covid-19.
- (iii) Members thanked officers for the additional details that had been provided in this years' annual report including the extra indicator that showed complaint responses within 40 working days and the details of complaints mapped to each district. Members were pleased to note that this detail would continue to be provided in future reports.

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 2019/20, be noted;
- (b) That the Director of Adults and Communities be requested to consider including further detail in the next annual report details of impacts arising from changes to the hospital discharge assessment and planning process as a result of Covid-19.

16. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 2 November 2020 at 2.00pm.

10.00 – 11.40am
7 September 2020

CHAIRMAN