



Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 5 June 2018.

PRESENT

Mr. B. Crooks CC
Mrs. H. J. Fryer CC
Mr. D. Harrison CC
Mr. J. Kaufman CC

Mr. W. Liquorish JP CC
Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mr. T. J. Richardson CC
Mr. T. Gillard CC

In attendance

Mr. R. Blunt CC, Lead Member for Adults and Communities
Mr. L. Breckon CC, Cabinet Support Member

1. Appointment of Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Mr. T. J. Richardson CC as Chairman of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2019 be noted.

Mr. T. Richardson CC – in the Chair

2. Election of Deputy Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. W. Liquorish CC be elected Deputy Chairman of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2019.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018.

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chairman reported that questions had been received from Mr Robinson, Ms Mays and Ms Louis under Standing Order 35. As the questions related to items for discussion elsewhere on the agenda (Minutes 10 and 11 refer), he proposed to deal with the questions under those items.

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.

No declarations were made.

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 36.

The Chairman reported that three petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

As the petitions related to items for discussion elsewhere on the agenda (Minutes 10 and 11 refer), he proposed to deal with the petitions under those items.

10. Reconfiguration of In-House Learning Disability Residential Accommodation

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities advising of the outcomes of the public and resident consultation exercise on proposals to reconfigure the County Council's in-house learning disability residential accommodation and recommending changes to provision of these services. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the Director of Adults and Communities highlighted the extensive consultation that had taken place and the strong opposition received to the original proposals. In light of the feedback, a range of other options were considered. The recommended proposals were due to be presented for approval to the Cabinet at its meeting on 12 June 2018.

Under Standing Order 35, questions had been received from Mr Robinson, which the Chairman had agreed would be dealt with as part of this item. A copy of the questions and the response provided by the Chairman was tabled at the meeting and is attached to these minutes (marked 'A'). The Chairman invited Mr Robinson to ask a supplementary question. No supplementary question was asked.

Mr Robinson was then invited to present the petition, containing 4,046 signatures, objecting to the proposed changes to The Trees in Hinckley. In presenting the petition, he stated that, after months of uncertainty, the news of the new proposal for The Trees was welcomed by all. He did, however, query why the original proposal had been suggested and allowed to go to consultation, which he said had caused a great deal of anxiety and stress for the families and individuals concerned. Mr Robinson thanked officers and members for reading the representations submitted

by himself and others during the process, and the support received from a variety of sources.

The Lead Member for Adults and Communities thanked Mr Robinson for the work he had undertaken. In response to Mr Robinson's query, the Lead Member explained that the County Council had to undertake formal consultation. The majority of service users supported by the Department used the independent sector and the proposals were seeking to make greater use of the independent sector. The savings that would result would accrue from the building costs and not from a reduced service to existing clients, who would have their needs met in line with their agreed care plans. However, whilst undertaking the consultation, it had become apparent that the overwhelming response was that people were happy with the service provided by the County Council and wished for it to continue. As a result of this, the decision had been taken to change the recommendation and the Lead Member stated that he was very pleased with the outcome.

The Committee welcomed the revised proposals contained within the report, but arising from the discussion, the following comments were raised:-

- (i) Noting that the majority of service users were supported by the independent sector, concern was expressed about the increased risk of failure in that sector and the quality of some service providers. The Director responded by stating that although a small number of private care homes were under scrutiny from the CQC, the County Council, the CQC and the independent providers worked together to address these issues. Where an independent provider was failing, mechanisms were in place to support them, and the County Council had a team dedicated to moving in to failing establishments to provide the necessary help and expertise.
- (ii) The decision to consult was necessary as the County Council had a duty of care to residents and staff, and as such it was important to ensure that facilities were not kept open if they did not meet the required standard.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet be advised that this Committee welcomes and supports the proposals.

11. Care OnLine Service.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities providing an update on the consultation with regard to the proposal to decommission the CareOnLine Service and giving an indicative position pending the finalisation of the report for the Cabinet on 6 July 2018. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 11' is filed with these minutes.

The Director reported that at the close of the consultation period on 22 May 2018, 117 responses had been received along with a small number of individual responses and two petitions. A representation had also been received from Mrs Lynda Jones, a CareOnLine user, a copy of which was circulated at the meeting.

The Chairman invited Mr Ian Retson to present his petition, containing 61 signatures, objecting to the decommissioning of the CareOnLine Service. In presenting the petition, Mr Retson stated that CareOnLine was a unique service providing a 'one stop shop' for the most vulnerable and isolated residents, and stressed that the alternative services suggested by the Council would not be able to provide anything like the support required by CareOnLine users. Mr Retson also said that the long term benefits of CareOnLine had been proven in that a large number of users had said that they would not have connected to the internet without the Service and that it had had a positive impact on their daily lives. He felt that the short term savings would be more than offset by the savings through giving greater independence and communication skills to users and asked the Committee and Lead Member for Adults and Communities to speak with some CareOnLine service users before making a decision.

Under Standing Order 35, questions had been received from Ms Ruth Mays MBE and Ms Kay Louis, which the Chairman had agreed would be dealt with as part of this item. A copy of the questions and the responses provided by the Chairman were tabled at the meeting and are attached to these minutes (marked 'B'). The Chairman invited Ms Mays and Ms Louis to ask a supplementary question.

Ms Mays queried how any transition to different providers would be managed and whether these new providers would have an opportunity to speak with CareOnLine staff to obtain a better understanding of what was available to service users through the CareOnLine Service?

In response, the Director stressed that if the proposal to decommission the Service went ahead, the Council would work with service users on a case by case basis to identify the best solution for their individual needs. It was also stated that the Council had been clear throughout the consultation that any suggested alternative organisations would not exactly replicate the CareOnLine Service, but it was necessary to ensure that transitions were available. Consideration was being given to whether there would be a small amount of transition money available so that, if any additional training or support was required, organisations would then be in a better position to help current service users.

Ms Louis explained the contribution of CareOnLine in helping people contribute to society and preventing social isolation. She stressed that these were very vulnerable people who needed the continued support of the CareOnLine Service and expressed concern that the alternative providers would be unable to meet the needs of the current users. Ms Louis asked whether CareOnLine could be transferred to Adult Social Care to enable it to continue?

The Director of Adults and Communities explained that it was not possible for Adult Social Care to support the service as not all users were eligible for Social Care support. Alternative services were available to help broker a service for those who were not assessed as requiring support from Adult Social Care.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were raised:-

- (i) Concern was raised that the alternative providers would not offer the continuity of support that some users required, and it was suggested that the Lead Member for Adults and Communities should consider what provision would be missing if CareOnLine was decommissioned and

whether the alternative providers could fill the gaps before taking the report to the Cabinet on 6 July. The perceived gap was the bespoke service offered by CareOnLine and the dedicated time given to users. A range of organisations offered a variety of services, but the gap was the offer of ongoing support over a longer period of time, which the County Council felt it could no longer sustain. Some organisations were looking to develop their services and the Council would remain in conversation with these, should the decision be taken to decommission CareOnLine, to look for any opportunities where, through alternative funding sources, they could develop aspects of the service which could bridge the gap. It was stressed that, throughout the consultation period, it was made clear that the alternative providers did not exactly replicate CareOnLine, but the Council had to look at how to provide non-statutory services differently. Individual service users would be contacted to discuss what would be offered by the new providers.

- (ii) Social interaction had been highlighted as very important throughout the consultation responses, but it was noted that the purpose of CareOnLine was to enable people to become digitally active and other services were available to assist with social isolation.

The Lead Member for Adults and Communities assured the Committee that he would consider the gaps in service provision prior to the final report being submitted to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

12. Delayed Transfers of Care: Year End Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities providing the end of year performance up to March 2018 in relation to Delayed Transfers of Care (DTC). The report detailed the specific improvement actions that had been undertaken and their impact on the patient journey, including the implications of new national requirements imposed by NHS England, as part of the Better Care Fund Policy. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 12' is filed with these minutes.

It was highlighted that, within the report, the table detailing the average days delayed per day per 100,000 population contained an error – the total variance in column 3 should state 'increased'.

A query was raised around why the NHS was finding it increasingly difficult to discharge patients, where the blockage points were and what the County Council could do. In response, the Director of Adults and Communities stated that the NHS was a huge organisation. Lots of positive work had been undertaken, but there were complexities within the University Hospitals of Leicester (UHL), for example the high number of wards and the turnover of staff, so embedding any change had to be undertaken incrementally. Although significant progress had been made in reducing the number of delays, the biggest challenge locally remained UHL.

The Lead Member for Adults and Communities expressed his thanks to the officers who had worked to improve the DTOC, and emphasised the importance of continuing to work with the NHS.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

13. Century Theatre, Coalville: Proposed Transfer to Leicestershire Traded Services.

The Committee considered a report of the Directors of Adults and Communities and Corporate Resources advising of the work undertaken to explore alternative management options for the Century Theatre in Coalville and to seek approval for its transfer to Leicestershire Traded Services. The report also proposed the de-accession of the Theatre from the Museum Collection, to support its future operation and sustainability as an arts venue and to authorise the Director of Adults and Communities to make disposals from the Museum Collection on behalf of the governing body. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 13' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were raised:-

- (i) In response to a query as to why the theatre was not moved around the county, it was stated that the Theatre had come to the end of its life as a travelling theatre. The Theatre provided a valuable heritage asset for the area.
- (ii) The theatre would continue to be an asset of the County Council but it was recognised that there could be significant maintenance costs going forward. The proposals now put forward were aimed at ensuring that the theatre would break even. The Council had invested £250,000 to improve the area around the theatre and the car park, including a new café, to make it more attractive to visitors. If the theatre did not transfer to Leicestershire Traded Services, it would not be possible for the Adults and Communities department to maintain the theatre at a loss, but it was hoped that the proposals within the report would be the best way to safeguard its future.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet be advised that this Committee welcomes and supports the proposals.

14. Safeguarding Adults Board Business Plan 2018/19.

The Committee considered a report of the Independent Chairman of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board presenting the Business Plan for 2018/19 for the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Adults Board. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 14', is filed with these minutes.

With regard to the priority around Engagement, there would not be a specific lead as it had been acknowledged by the Board that engagement featured in a lot of work across the priorities. The Board was linking in with work being undertaken by

Leicester City Safeguarding Adult Board and this would be led by the County Council's Safeguarding Board Business Office.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

15. Provisional Performance Report 2017/18.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Adults and Communities providing an update of the Adults and Communities Department's performance for the year 2017/18. A copy of the report, marked 'Agenda Item 15' is filed with these minutes.

It was queried whether restricted opening hours had had an impact on the reduction in the number of visits to libraries. In response, the Director advised that there could be a number of reasons for the reduction, including the opening hours. However, the Council was looking to extend opening hours through the introduction of SMART libraries. In general, the number of visits tended to plateau when users became more aware of revised opening hours. It was also noted that there was now greater access to books and information online, and this could be downloaded for free.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

16. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 11 September 2018 at 2.00pm.

2.00 – 3.48pm
05 June 2018

CHAIRMAN

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