

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Room 15, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Monday, 24 October 2011.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs R J Drinkwater (Chairman)

Cllr N J Sheppard (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs A L Dodwell
Mrs R B Gammons
Mrs S A Goodchild

Cllrs K Janes
I A MacKilligan
M A Smith

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Mrs D B Gurney

Members in Attendance: Cllrs Mrs C Hegley
D Jones
Executive Member for
Social Care, Health and
Housing

Officers in Attendance: Ms C Gurney – Private Sector Housing Team
Manager
Mr T Keaveney – Assistant Director, Housing
Services
Mr N Murley – Assistant Director, Business and
Performance
Mrs J Ogley – Director of Social Care, Health and
Housing
Ms C Rooker – Head of Housing Management
Mr P Storey – Committee Services Officer
Ms E White – Safeguarding Manager

Others in Attendance Mr M Coleman Chairman, Bedfordshire LINK
Mrs R Featherstone Chair, Older People's Reference
Group
Mr J Rooke Managing Director, Bedfordshire
Clinical Commissioning Group
Mrs C Shoheit Assistant Director of Public Health,
NHS Bedfordshire

SCHH/11/33 Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1 August 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SCHH/11/34 Members' Interests

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

None.

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**

None.

(c) **Any political whip in relation to any agenda item:-**

None.

SCHH/11/35 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman informed the Committee that she hoped Members had enjoyed the sites visits held on 12 September 2011, which had been very informative. More visits could be arranged if Members wished.

The Chairman stated that it was highly probable that the Housing Briefing for Members would be held on 30 November 2011 at Priory House, probably at 6pm.

SCHH/11/36 **Petitions**

The Chairman announced that no petitions had been received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

SCHH/11/37 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

The Chairman announced that no questions, statements or deputations from members of the public had been received in accordance with Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

SCHH/11/38 **Call-In**

No decisions from the Executive were referred to the Committee for review in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.10 of Part D2.

SCHH/11/39 **Requested Items**

No items were referred to the Committee for consideration at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

SCHH/11/40 **Executive Member Update**

Councillor Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing informed the Committee of several issues, including:

- attending a recent national Children's and Adult Social Care conference and attending a discussion about Dillnot around the future funding of adult social care. She stated that many of the exhibitors at the conference were promoting products and services that would help deliver on efficiencies and savings;

- visits to a residential home and talking to residents there as part of Celebrating Older People's Activities;
- attending an elderly ladies' group later in the day (24 October 2011) with a particular focus on Telecare;
- the work underway on preparing the budget for 2012/13;
- attending a training day on the Health and Wellbeing Board, which required new ways of approaching issues;
- the proposed Housing Briefing, in light of the many developments taking place in the housing field.

SCHH/11/41 **LINK Update**

Mr Max Coleman, Chairman of Bedfordshire Local Involvement Network (LINK), circulated notes on the recent work of LINK in Central Bedfordshire. He drew particular attention to the need to progress the Autism Strategy for Bedfordshire and stated that LINK was concerned at the number of respite beds in Bedfordshire for people with mental health issues, which LINK understood to be two (which were in Luton). He also thanked the organisers of the LINK stakeholders' conference which had recently been held in Central Bedfordshire.

RECOMMENDATION: That the update be noted.

SCHH/11/42 **Implications of Health Reforms for Central Bedfordshire**

Celia Shohet, Assistant Director Public Health and John Rooke, Managing Director, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group gave a presentation on the implications for Central Bedfordshire of the health reforms proposed under the Health and Social Care Bill, which were expected to be in place by April 2013. This would give local authorities responsibilities across all three domains of public health (health improvement, health protection and population healthcare) and they would be expected to:

- Deliver certain public health services, likely to include tobacco control, substance misuse, obesity and several others set out in the report); and
- Commission local healthwatch organisations which would replace the current Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) by April 2012.

The whole system would be brought together through the Health and Wellbeing Boards, which would be critical in making the new system work.

Member's questions and the answers received on those issues are summarised below:

- The reforms would bring new responsibilities for local authorities but also new opportunities;
- The NHS was undertaking a study of its expenditure which would help to formulate the budget for local authorities to take on their new public health responsibilities. The budget would be ring-fenced and would be the responsibility of the local authority Chief Executives;

- It was envisaged that the new Health and Wellbeing Boards would be committees of councils and operate in a similar way to local authority executives. They would be scrutinised in the same way by local authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- The proposed membership of the Central Bedfordshire Board was indicated in the report. The Board would be Chaired by Councillor Mrs Turner and the Executive Members for Social Care, Health and Housing and Children's Services would also be members of the Board;
- Officers were asked to request the Director of Public Health to submit this report to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee as it also affected that area.

Members asked that this item be kept on the Committee's agenda and that progress reports be made as appropriate. Mr John Rooke, Managing Director, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group undertook to provide Members with off-agenda briefings as required.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the responsibilities of the Council with regards to public health, the health and wellbeing board and the establishment of local healthwatch be noted.**
- 2. That the proposed configuration and arrangements for the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group be noted.**

SCHH/11/43 Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy

The Private Sector Housing Team Manager presented a report on the Renewals Policy, which was required under The Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance)(England and Wales) Order 2002. The existing Renewals Policy had not been extensively tested due to a delay in funding allocation in 2010/11. Financial pressures in particular now required that the Renewals Policy be reviewed and changed in 2011/12, largely in relation to a move away from grants and towards loan assistance.

Members were concerned at the effects of fuel poverty and the vulnerability of people in park homes and welcomed the information that the draft policy would be revised to show an increase to available grant amount for mobile homes and houseboats to £2,500 in line with current policy. Efforts were being made to help people move to more suitable property and potential relocation assistance was available. Officers encouraged people to move to different types and sizes of accommodation where it would be more appropriate for them to do so and to be independent in their own homes.

There would be further consultation on the policy and officers undertook to consult the Disability Resources Centre at the suggestion of Members.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the contents of the report be noted and the contents of the attached draft Renewals Policy, in particular the proposed forms of assistance in section 4.**
- 2. That it be agreed that the draft Renewals Policy should proceed to consultation, subject to any amendments required.**

SCHH/11/44 Introductory Tenancies

The Head of Housing Management presented a report proposing that the Council commenced the use of introductory tenancies for all new tenants, as an effective preventative tool for dealing with potential nuisance and anti social behaviour from new tenants. Following a successful twelve month period the introductory tenancy would automatically become a secure tenancy, unless it had been extended or an application for possession through the courts had already been made. In addition it was proposed that the current conditions of tenancy for secure tenants also be revised at the same time, to ensure that the Council could effectively deal with nuisance and anti social behaviour

In answer to a Member's question regarding access to tenants' properties to check gas supplies the Head of Housing Management stated that there was an annual rolling programme for checking supplies. The majority of tenants supported the programme on grounds of safety. A small minority of tenants objected and the Council could require access if necessary. An item would be included in the tenants' newsletter to inform tenants of the need for access to check gas supplies in their homes.

RECOMMENDATION: That the adoption of introductory tenancies for all new tenants and the review of the existing conditions of tenancy for secure tenants be supported in principle.

SCHH/11/45 Safeguarding Annual Report

The Director of Social Care, Health and Housing introduced the fourth Annual Report of the Adult Safeguarding Board, covering the second year of operation of Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire as unitary authorities.

The report detailed the progress made between April 2010 and March 2011, when a comprehensive improvement programme initiated in 2009/10 had been pursued plus other learning from practice and audits undertaken throughout the year. The Council would continue to focus on the areas identified by the Care Quality Commission in November 2009, as set out in the report. Also, having focused closely on the safeguarding procedures, the focus in the twelve months to March 2012 would be on areas of prevention of abuse and significant harm, empowerment and proportionality to ensure improved outcomes for all vulnerable adults engaged in a safeguarding incident.

Legislation to be introduced in 2012 would establish a duty to promote co-operation with other relevant organisations.

The Director of Social Care, Health and Housing stated that safeguarding would remain high on the Council's agenda and that the Council had been particularly active in ensuring that the Luton and Dunstable Hospital had made staff more aware of the issues and had developed robust safeguarding procedures. It was agreed that hospital representatives be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to give a presentation on their safeguarding procedures.

It was noted that the Safeguarding Board met quarterly but that monitoring reports were received monthly by the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing and shared with the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing

RECOMMENDATION: That the Annual Report of Bedford and Central Bedfordshire Adult Safeguarding Board as presented to the Committee be agreed.

SCHH/11/46 **2012/13 Base Budget Review**

The Assistant Director Business & Performance presented the proposed 2012/13 standstill budget for Social Care Health and Housing following a Base Budget Review of the 2011/12 budget. The Base Budget Review had been based on the August 2011/12 Corporate forecast position of an £0.509m overspend.

The main areas of pressure had been identified as demographic increases for Older People and Adults with Physical and Learning Disabilities. Combined with the projected under spend in Commissioning this means a combined total pressure of £1m will need to be included in the General Fund draft budget preparations for 2012/13.

A new "Self Financing" regime would be implemented for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) from April 2012 which would considerably change the revenue and capital position of the HRA and a report would be made on this to the Committee in December 2011.

The results of the Base Budget Review would be fed into the 2012/13 Draft Budget, which would be considered by the Executive on 6 December and by the Committee on 12 December 2011.

RECOMMENDATION: That the proposed standstill budget for Social Care, Health and Housing for 2012/13 at £58.972m be noted.

SCHH/11/47 Revenue Budget Management Report for the Period Ended 30 June 2011 for Social Care, health and Housing

The Assistant Director Business & Performance presented the Revenue Budget Management report for Quarter 1 of 2011/12. The full year forecast outturn as at the end of Quarter 1 for the General Fund was £0.096m (0.17%) over budget, as set out in the report. As described at minute 46 above the main cause was due to pressures in Adult Social Care.

The Quarter 1 outturn for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) requires a contribution from the HRA reserve of £0.272m and is a reduction of £0.123m from the budget set at the start of the financial year.

The Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing thanked the officers for their management of the budget. She stated that monthly meetings had been established between the Social Care, Health and Housing Assistant Directors and the Executive Member and Deputy Executive Members for Social Care, Health and Housing to discuss budget and performance issues.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the General Fund outturn of £57.381m and £0.096m over spend be noted.**
- 2. That the Housing Revenue Account financial position be noted.**

SCHH/11/48 Capital Budget Management 2011/12

The Assistant Director Business & Performance presented the Capital Budget management report for the period ended 30 June 2011, showing a full year forecast variance of £0.909m. The latest positions for both the General Fund programme and the Housing Revenue Account programme were detailed in the report.

It was noted that there was potential demand within the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) programme for an overspend of between £0.7m and £1m due to the increasing pressure there. This would be considered as part of the Capital Programme Review by the Executive on 15 November 2011.

In answer to a member's question the Assistant Director, Housing Services stated it usually took less than twenty weeks from application for a disabled adaption to approval, which included drawing up the requested scheme. Installation of an item depended on the timescales which the contractor could provide.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the capital position at 30 June 2011 be noted.**
- 2. That the Committee supported an application for additional Disabled Fund grant in 2012/13.**

SCHH/11/49 **Quarter 1 Performance Report**

The Assistant Director Business & Performance presented the performance report for Quarter 1 2011/12, stating that the position had remained static for the quarter. There were two performance indicators within the Social Care, Health and Housing directorate with a “red status, but improving”. These were:

- The percentage of self-directed support – progress was being made through setting a demanding target for 2011/12 to be on track to meet the national target of 100% by 2013; and
- The percentage of Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults investigations completed within 35 days. Performance in the quarter was 67.2%, up from the 2010/11 outturn figure of 59%. Overall performance had been reduced by the time needed to deal with a number of complex cases.

Good progress was being made in the Housing area and it was expected targets would be met by the end of 2011/12.

RECOMMENDATION: That the report be noted.

SCHH/11/50 **Work Programme 2011-12 and Executive Forward Plan**

Members considered the Committee’s draft work programme for 2011/12 and the Executive Forward Plan. The Chairman said she would liaise with the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing on the following issues:

- A date for a presentation by representatives from Luton and Dunstable Hospital on their safeguarding arrangements (minute 45 above refers);
- Final items for the December 2011 Committee meeting;
- Arranging a briefing on the role of the NHS and the Council in the forthcoming health reforms; and
- Arranging a members’ briefing on personalisation.

RESOLVED: That the draft work programme be approved, subject to the issues above.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.22 p.m.)

Chairman:
Date: