

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Monday, 10 June 2013.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs R J Drinkwater (Chairman)

Cllr N J Sheppard (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs R D Berry
Mrs G Clarke
P A Duckett

Cllrs Mrs S A Goodchild
Mrs D B Gurney
M A Smith

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs D Bowater
P Hollick

Substitutes: Cllrs Mrs R B Gammons

Members in Attendance: Cllrs P N Aldis
C C Gomm
A M Turner

Deputy Executive
Member for Social Care,
Health & Housing

Officers in Attendance:

Ms D Clarke	– Director of Improvement and Corporate Services
Mrs P Everitt	– Research and Business Support Officer
Ms C Harding	– Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity)
Mrs J Ogley	– Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
Mr J Partridge	– Scrutiny Policy Adviser
Mr B Queen	– Interim Head of Operations - Housing Service
Mr S Rees	– Assistant Director Adult Social Care
Ms E Saunders	– Assistant Director Commissioning
Mrs G Stanton	– Chief Communications Officer

Others in Attendance

Mr J Boswell

Ms R Featherstone

Dr D Gray

Ms B Moran

Bedfordshire Rural
Communities Charity
Chair - Healthwatch
Central Bedfordshire
Director of Strategy
and System Redesign
(Bedfordshire Clinical
Commissioning Group)
Arlesey Village Agent

SCHH/13/17 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 April 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SCHH/13/18 **Members' Interests**

- Cllr Mrs Clarke declared an interest as a family member worked for the Clinical Commissioning Group
- Cllr Mrs Goodchild declared an interest as a member of her family was a service user.

SCHH/13/19 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman announced that no comments had been received from Committee Members on the Annual Quality Accounts and a nil response had been sent.

The Chairman also drew the Committee's attention to a referral from the Audit Committee regarding strategic risks they had been asked to consider. The risks related to insufficient staff resources resulting in the under or mis-direction of investment in the transformation of adult social care services, and insufficient capacity, expertise and competency to deliver the Adult Social Care and Housing agenda. The Director of Social Care Health and Housing explained the process and steps taken to mitigate the risks. In light of the discussion the Committee agreed that they had received adequate assurances and no further action was necessary.

SCHH/13/20 **Petitions**

No petitions were received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Part D2 of the Constitution.

SCHH/13/21 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

The Committee were informed that one speaker had registered to speak. With the agreement of the speaker, the Chairman invited the person to speak at the start of agenda item 10.

SCHH/13/22 **Call-In**

The Panel was advised that no decisions of the Executive had been referred to the Panel under the Call-in Procedures set out in Appendix "A" to Rule No. S18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

SCHH/13/23 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/13/24 Executive Member Update

The Deputy Member for Social Care, Health and Housing updated the Committee on issues pertaining to their portfolio that were not included on the agenda, these included:-

- Attendance at the Developing Health Care meeting arranged by the Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Public Health Bedfordshire had been successfully awarded £400,000 in Government grant through the 'lets get moving' scheme. The Committee would be updated on the development of this scheme at a future meeting.

SCHH/13/25 Joint Community Bed Review

A Member of the Public expressed his thanks to the Committee that Biggleswade Hospital would remain open after months of campaigning. Thanks were also extended to the Biggleswade and Sandy Councillors for their support.

The Director of Strategy and System Redesign Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) introduced the Central Bedfordshire Health and Social Care Review – a review of Community Bed Provision in Central Bedfordshire and recommendations for improvement. The report draws out priorities for joint development between NHS Bedfordshire, CCG and CBC through:-

- Development of community bed based services in the north of Central Bedfordshire, by amending the admission criteria for Biggleswade Hospital.
- Development of urgent care pathways
- A single approach to commissioning care home services.

The Bedfordshire CCG had restructured its team and a Deputy Director had been appointed to work with Social Care officers. The recommended future model included:

- Ensuring that services were designed around the customer, so they had choice and access to high quality services.
- Developing a step up, step down facility for the North of Central Bedfordshire. A pilot scheme in Houghton Regis and Dunstable had proved successful, providing intensive support to help residents get back on their feet after a stay in hospital.

- Improving dementia care by establishing a quality accreditation scheme and rewarding high quality care homes.
- An investment programme of extra care and supported living, giving older resident with care needs a greater choice of accommodation locally.

The Committee discussed the contents of the review and a number of points were raised as follows:

- The importance of continuing negotiations with GPs to develop their surgeries following on from the successful of the Step Up, Step down facility in Houghton Regis.
- The importance of providing care at home and training carers so patients can stay in their own homes.
- Concern that a patient, family member or carer would find it difficult to navigate their way through the urgent care pathway and the importance of clear signposting for all. The Director of Strategy and System Redesign (BCCG) reassured the Committee this area was being developed and she would report back on the work undertaken.

In response the Director of Social Care Health and Housing confirmed there was a close working relationship with BCCG to provide a new framework agreement and a single commissioning arrangement. Bearing in mind the complexity of there being no district hospital, the need to ensure Central Bedfordshire residents were not overlooked and had the same options available to them as those in Luton and Bedford was paramount.

The Committee thanked the Director of Strategy and System Redesign (BCCG) for a very welcome report that provided a clear vision for the future.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That the model of care as set out in the paper at Section 4 be endorsed.**
- 2. That the three priorities for joint development as set out in the paper at Section 5 be endorsed.**
- 3. That the Director of Strategy and System Redesign (BCCG) develop clear guidance for patients, carers and family members to negotiate the urgent care pathway and update the Committee at a future meeting.**

SCHH/13/26 Arlesey Village Agent

The Assistant Director Adult Social Care and the Deputy Chief Executive, Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity (BRCC) delivered a joint presentation which provided Members with an overview of the village agent scheme. The presentation specifically covered:-

- How to building local support networks
- Acting as a facilitator to provide information, advice, guidance and provide access to a wide range of services
- The employment and management of the Arlesey Village Agent

- Referrals handled by the Arlesey Village Agent, which came mainly from vulnerable residents
- Outcomes and key findings and recommendations.

In light of the presentation, the Committee discussed the following issues in detail.

- Whether funding of the pilot scheme could continue until September. The Director of SCH&H confirmed funds were available and future funding would be discussed during the budget setting process.
- Whether the agent's role duplicated the work of ward Members. The Deputy Director of BRCC commented he would not recommend this role to every Town and Parish Council. The village agent complements Councillors work rather than duplicated it.
- Members were supportive of the proactive nature of the Arlesey Village Agent's work. During discussion it was accepted that Members did not have all the necessary skills and knowledge to provide a full village agent service.
- The need for clear pathways to information and services and the building of relationships with the voluntary sector services was key to identify gaps and prevent emergencies.
- The need to share case studies of good practice.

The Committee wished to formally thank Assistant Director of Adult Social Care who was retiring from the Council.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That the Village Agent role in Arlesey be continued until the end of the pilot in September.**
- 2. That future funding arrangements for the Village Agent Scheme be discussed during the budget setting process.**

SCHH/13/27 Homelessness Strategy

The Interim Head of Operations delivered a presentation on the Homelessness Strategy, which provided members with an update on the current strategy and the need for a mid-term review.

In light of the presentation, the Committee discussed the following issues in detail:-

- The current Lets Rent scheme and how it was working. It was confirmed that the scheme would be reviewed with the possibility of inviting all estate agents to take part.
- The issue of homelessness at home with the additional pressure on the Council emanating from the Government's Welfare Reforms and the need to find housing for 18-20 year olds. It was confirmed this would be a key factor of the review
- The threat of mortgage repossessions and the importance of evidence to support a claim. The Interim Head of Operations confirmed the Council worked hard with its partners to avoid repossessions where possible.

- The need to match homelessness facilities in the north of the district to that available in the south.

Members of the Committee were reminded that a Seminar on Housing Allocations was due to take place on Friday 14 June in the Chamber at Priory House and all Members are invited to attend.

RECOMMENDATION

- **That the information contained in the presentation be noted.**
- **A progress report be received in January 2014 on the areas highlighted in the presentation.**

SCHH/13/28 Equality and Diversity Strategy

The Director of Improvement and Corporate Services introduced the Equality and Diversity Strategy to the Committee. In response to the Strategy and the further clarification provided by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services Members of the Committee discussed the following:-

- The Strategy should include references to the Big Society.
- The need for the Disability Guide for Councillors to be updated and reference made to the Equality and Diversity Strategy. Members also commented on the high levels of abuse on disabled people highlighted in the presentation. The Corporate Policy Adviser (Equality and Diversity) confirmed the Community Safety Partnership Executive had picked up on these findings and an improved approach was being discussed.
- Whether complaints received by the public and staff had informed the strategy. The Corporate Policy Adviser explained that although complaints were not referred to specifically in the Strategy, they had informed it and case studies were used in equality training.

RECOMMENDED

That the Strategy be supported and the comments of the Committee be considered by the Director of Improvement and Corporate Services. In addition to incorporating a reference to the Big Society.

SCHH/13/29 Work Programme 2013/14 and Executive Forward Plan

The Committee considered its current work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan and were informed that the following items had been added to the work programme.

1. Sheltered Housing (29 July 2013)
2. Winterbourne View (9 September 2013)

RESOLVED that the Committee's Work Programme be approved subject to the amendments as detailed in the Minute above.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.40 p.m.)