

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, 24 August 2015.

PRESENT

Cllr E Ghent (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs N B Costin
P Downing
P A Duckett
C C Gomm

Cllrs Mrs S A Goodchild
Mrs D B Gurney
G Perham

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs P Hollick (Chairman)

Substitutes: Cllrs

Members in Attendance: Cllrs R D Berry
C F Chapman
C Hegley
M R Jones
Vice-Chairman of the Council
Executive Member for Social Care and Housing
Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health

Officers in Attendance: Mrs D Broadbent-Clarke – Director of Improvement and Corporate Services
Mr B Douglas – Tenant Involvement Leader
Mrs P Everitt – Scrutiny Policy Adviser
Ms S Few-Wiegratz – Tenant Involvement Officer
Mr P Groom – Head of Commissioning (Adult Social Care)
Mr N Murley – Assistant Director Resources
Mrs J Ogley – Director of Social Care, Health and Housing
Ms C Rooker – Head of Housing Management

Others in Attendance Mrs D Blackmun Chief Executive Officer, Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire
Ms S Hawley General Manager, East London Foundation Trust

SCHH/15/15. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 June 2015 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SCHH/15/16. **Members' Interests**

Cllr E Ghent declared an interest as the public speaker was an acquaintance.

SCHH/15/17. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

None.

SCHH/15/18. **Petitions**

None.

SCHH/15/19. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

The Committee was advised that a request to speak from a Member of the Public had been received. In accordance with the public participation procedure, the speaker and his companion were invited to speak. The speakers informed the Committee that the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group had reversed its original decision and decided to withdraw funding to provide neurological nurses in Bedfordshire for sufferers of Motor Neurone Disease (MND) and other serious neurological conditions. The speakers suggested that the provision of these nurses would ensure sufferers received the care they required and the number of unplanned hospital admissions would be reduced, therefore saving the NHS money.

A briefing note that outlined the case for investment in a specialist nurse post for people living with neurological conditions in Bedfordshire was circulated to Members of the Committee and would be made available on the Council website.

In response the Executive Member for Social Care and Housing agreed to raise this issue with the BCCG. The Executive Member for Health also agreed to contact the BCCG and report back to the next meeting of the Committee on this issue.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That the Committee lend its support for the appointment of a specialist nurse to realise the care needed for MND patients and the cost savings this post would bring to the NHS.**
- 2. That the Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health report back to the October meeting of the Committee on the provision of a specialist nurse for people living with neurological conditions in Bedfordshire.**

SCHH/15/20. **Call-In**

None.

SCHH/15/21. **Requested Items**

None.

SCHH/15/22. **Executive Member Update**

The Executive Member for Social Care and Housing advised the Committee of activities that were not included on the agenda, these included:-

- Attendance at various meetings including the Chartered Institute of Housing Conference. The overwhelming message from this event was the need to build more houses. A Member briefing on housing had been arranged for 11 November 2015 that would be delivered by Aragon Housing Association.
- A preview of accommodation at Priory View, Dunstable. All Members of the Council would be invited to view the new accommodation for older people.
- Attendance at an event to choose an architect to design accommodation and facilities for older people in Houghton Regis.
- An update on the progress to relocate Caddington Hall residents.
- Congratulations were extended to those homes inspected recently by the CQC that received a 'good' rating.

The Executive Member thanked those staff involved in the successful relocation of residents from the Old Village School, Marston Nursing Home that had been closed by the Care Quality Commission at very short notice.

In light of the update a Member requested an update on the provision of Aragon bungalows for the elderly in Potton.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Health advised Members that a Public Health Briefing would be presented to the October meeting of the Committee.

Members were advised that the Department of Health (DoH) had consulted on a 6.2% reduction in the public health budget. A formal response had been returned by the Council requesting reconsideration of this proposal.

SCHH/15/23. **Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire**

The Chief Executive Officer for Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire introduced their Annual Report 2014/15 and gave a presentation that outlined the purpose of Healthwatch and its priorities for 2015-16. Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire represent the consumer voice of children and adults on matters of health. Along with events held to promote their work, a new website had been launched where residents can add comments about the care they receive. Reports and evidence provided to Healthwatch was available on their website and sent to regulators for their information.

- Priorities for 2015-16 included raising awareness of emerging models of care
- Evidencing the journey of patients in a hospital setting and
- To gather evidence from domiciliary care service users.

In light of the update and clarification sought, Members raised the following concerns:-

- Whether Healthwatch was providing a signposting service to residents. In response the Chief Executive Officer advised the organisation provided many roles that included announced and unannounced inspection visits to

care homes, hospitals and other facilities as well as highlighting complaints they received to service providers.

- Concern there was a £9k gap in funding and whether, with such a small number of staff, Healthwatch had taken on too much. The Chief Executive Officer advised that work was mainly carried out by volunteers, however there was additional funding available for some projects that could be applied for. The deficit in budget would be met by reserves.

Healthwatch aimed to achieve a volunteer base of 60 people and would continue to raise awareness at patient participation groups and youth conferences.

NOTED the update.

SCHH/15/24. **Public Health Briefings**

The Assistant Director Public Health introduced Sharon Hawley, General Manager at the East London Foundation Trust (ELFT), who gave a presentation on the Substance Misuse Treatment Service. A new outcomes based contract had been awarded to ELFT that included extra payment for innovation. ELFT would ensure effective pathways existed between the drug and alcohol service and other statutory and third sector services. Outcomes included better support for families and access to treatment and service users that would see effective recovery and (re)integration of service users into their community for those currently experiencing harm caused by drugs and/or alcohol.

In light of the presentation and clarification sought, Members raised the following concerns:-

- Whether with the EU enforcing better controls on alcohol misuse and their practices be explored further. The Assistant Director Public Health advised that work with licensees was undertaken, a good example being the Best Bar None initiative, and a new the local alcohol licensing tasking group was being established to enable better sharing of information and evidence.
- Whether supermarkets selling cheap alcohol exacerbate the level of alcohol misuse, which had become a national problem. The Assistant Director Public Health advised that several initiatives existed to help those most in need of support but that a national agreement to implement a Minimum Price per Unit of alcohol would be welcomed and effective.

A Member congratulated officers on a robust preventative programme of work and asked how those affected by drugs or alcohol were referred to the service. In response the General Manager advised that referrals originated from several sources including, GP's, safeguarding services and word of mouth.

NOTED the update.

SCHH/15/25. **Tenant Scrutiny Panel report on Complaints**

The Head of Housing Services introduced a report prepared by the Tenant's Scrutiny Panel (TSP) on the complaints handling process in Housing Services. A restructure of the service had led to a dip in performance in handling

complaints and as a result better arrangements to provide an excellent service to customers were being implemented.

The Vice-Chairman of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) explained that complaints received by letter, telephone and email by the Housing Service had been included in the review and a number of improvements had been recommended to help performance in the service. Implementation of the changes had led to an improvement in performance with Team Leaders now taking ownership of complaints received in their area.

A large volume of MP's letters had been received by the service and steps to put information on common themes and Frequently Asked Questions on the Housing Service's webpages was planned. A sub group of the TSP to check on progress had been set up.

In light of the report and presentation, the following queries were raised by Members:-

- How Members of the Committee might help in managing expectations of residents. In response the Head of Housing proposed Members direct those residents with internet access to information available on the website. Officers would help with any enquiries or complaints received by Members at their surgeries.
- Why details regarding residents' satisfaction had not been reported. The Head of Housing Services advised that data would be collated, however, this was not available yet. In future complainants would be advised when they could expect to receive a response and Team Leaders would take ownership to ensure a response was sent.
- Which complaints were most prevalent in nature. The Head of Housing Services advised that trends of complaints were not part of the remit, work to date had concerned the process. However, complaints were generally about the level of service or a failure/error made in service, which were used to improve performance.
- Whether the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing would share best practice with other areas of the directorate. The director advised that each complaint received was a gift and an opportunity to improve services and details would be shared.

The Executive Member for Social Care and Housing advised she would be looking into the number of MP letters of complaints that were received. It was evident that many complaints coming through this route had not been sent to officers to resolve in the first instance. The Executive Member would circulate the Housing scorecard on performance once the MP letter process had been streamlined.

Acknowledged and supported the Action Plan of recommendations to improve customer service delivery.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That the Committee recognised the work of the TSP and acknowledged and supported the recommendations for improvement in the complaint process.**

2. **That the Committee acknowledged and supported the Action Plan of recommendations to improve customer service delivery.**
3. **That the Committee acknowledged that the TSP was supportive of the directorate's response to their report and looked forward to working with the service in terms of delivery.**

SCHH/15/26. **Central Bedfordshire's Five-Year Plan: 2015-20**

The Director of Improvement and Corporate Services introduced a report and presentation on the proposed vision and 5 Year Plan. Members' views were sought on the positioning of each element in the plan. In light of the presentation Members highlighted the following:-

- The need to ensure jargon words and acronyms were not used in the plan, which should reflect language that all residents would understand.
- The need to consider the external influences involved in some priority areas, (such as the NHS and Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charities) and consider whether the Council really had the influence to be able to deliver improved outcomes.
- The need to take into consideration where the actions of our partners would lead us to reconsider the services that we needed to deliver.
- The need to consider the importance of prevention as a means of influencing health for residents in the future rather than taking a purely reactive approach.

RECOMMENDED that the comments of the Committee be taken into account by the Executive.

SCHH/15/27. **Learning Disabilities NHS Campus Reprovision end of Project Report**

The Head of Contracts introduced a report that gave an overview of the history of the Campus Reprovision Programme and had involved care home residents that were moved out of care homes and long-stay hospitals to their own homes.

The project had been completed in January 2015 and lessons had been learnt to ensure good accommodation was provided in the heart of the community. Some residents had reported they felt isolated and lonely, so steps had been taken to ensure socialising opportunities were made available.

Some residents with learning disabilities had been placed in out of county accommodation and officers planned to find new accommodation for them in Central Bedfordshire.

In light of the presentation and detailed discussion Members raised the following:-

- When the outstanding balance of £700K capital monies would be available for reinvestment? The Head of Contracts advised that work was ongoing with the BCCG to ensure the capital was returned from NHS Propco.

- The need to ensure communities and the voluntary sector continued to make a difference with social events, help and encouraging the use of social networks by service users.

The Executive Member for Social Care and Housing referred to a video called "My Place - Supported Living" that showed interviews with service users and how they felt about their new homes. A link to the video would be circulated to the Committee.

The scale of the project and improved quality of care was noted and officers congratulated.

NOTED the report.

SCHH/15/28. **Quarter 4 and Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring Report**

The Committee received a presentation that set out the outturn figures for 2014/15 and the projected outturn for 2015/16. An overspend of £1.57m was forecast and the pressures on the budget were explained. Public Health had contributed in some areas and would also continue to support other directorates where needed.

NOTED the update.

SCHH/15/29. **Quarter 4 Performance Report**

The Assistant Director Resources gave a presentation that set out the performance for the Social Care Health and Housing Director for Quarter 4 2014/15 against the Medium Term Financial plan. In addition to the report officers commented that performance was in a strong position. Personal Budgets remained below the local performance target, however, was close to achieving the national target.

NOTED the update.

SCHH/15/30. **Work Programme 2015/16 and Executive Forward Plan**

The Committee considered the current work programme.

RECOMMENDED that the work programme be approved.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 1.29 p.m.)

Signed.....
Date