

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, 3 March 2014.

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs R J Drinkwater (Chairman)

Cllr N J Sheppard (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs Mrs G Clarke
P A Duckett
Mrs S A Goodchild

Cllrs Mrs D B Gurney
M A Smith

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs Mrs A Barker
R D Berry

Substitutes: Cllrs C C Gomm (In place of R D Berry)

Members in Attendance: Cllrs C Hegley Executive Member for
Social Care, Health &
Housing
A M Turner Deputy Executive
Member for Social Care,
Health & Housing

Officers in Attendance: Mrs P Coker – Head of Service, Partnerships -
Social Care, Health & Housing
Mr N Costin – Head of Housing Solutions
Mrs P Everitt – Scrutiny Policy Adviser
Ms C Gurney – Public Sector Housing Manager
Mr S Mitchelmore – Assistant Director, Adult Social
Care
Mrs J Ogley – Director of Social Care, Health and
Housing
Mrs E Saunders – Assistant Director Commissioning

Others in Attendance Dr D Bell Director of Strategy and System
Redesign (Bedfordshire Clinical
Commissioning Group)
Ms R Featherstone Chair - Healthwatch Central
Bedfordshire
Mrs H Smart Director Integrated Adult Services &
Lead Nurse, SEPT Integrated
Services

SCHH/13/117 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Social Care Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 27 January 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

SCHH/13/118 Members' Interests

There were no disclosures of interest.

SCHH/13/119 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman made announcements relating to the following:-

- Cllr Angela Barker had been appointed as a Member of the Committee. Cllr Barker would report back to Children's Services OSC, of which she is the Chairman, on any health related issues that impact on children.
- That the Housing Asset Management Strategy item be deferred as there were no significant changes to the strategy to report.
- A recent Centre for Public Scrutiny Regional Health event in Chelmsford that the Chairman attended. Of particular interest was the undertaking announced by the CQC representative to work more closely with scrutiny committees in the future.
- A recent meeting of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee for which a full summary would be given at next month's meeting.

SCHH/13/120 Petitions

None

SCHH/13/121 Requested Items

None.

SCHH/13/122 Questions, Statements or Deputations

None.

SCHH/13/123 Call-In

None.

SCHH/13/124 Executive Member Update

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

- Attendance at a recent performance meeting.
- Attendance at a regional public health event at which examples of good practice on preventative measures and approaches were highlighted.

SCHH/13/125 **Biggleswade Hospital Monitoring Information**

The Chairman welcomed Helen Smart, Director Integrated Adult Services and Lead Nurse (SEPT) who provided an update to Members on usage of beds at Biggleswade Hospital. Ms H Smart advised there had been little change in the number of patients on the wards since the previous meeting. However, the beds were open for use and were currently no delays in discharge. An Emergency Care Intensive Support Team (ECIST) had recently carried out a positive review of service provision from SEPT.

In light of the update, Members discussed the following:-

- Whether SEPT were actively encouraging male and female patients to attend the hospital. Ms H Smart advised that there had been no demand for male patients' beds. 19 female patients had attended the hospital recently.
- Where Members or GPs could review the criteria for admissions to Biggleswade Hospital. Diane Bell, Director of Strategy and System Redesign at Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group advised that the criteria would be made available to Members and, that the criteria had been expanded due to the receipt of money provided by the Government to respond to winter pressures.

In light of the issues that were discussed a number of Members identified specific incidents where local residents that had been informed by SEPT staff why they could not be cared for at Biggleswade Hospital. Ms H Smart commented that generally patients who were treated in their own homes would achieve better outcomes. Members were requested to forward any examples of problems regarding access to Stuart Mitchelmore, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care, who would discuss them with SEPT.

RECOMMENDED

- 1. That Members be provided with the admissions criteria for Biggleswade Hospital.**
- 2. That SEPT provide a report to the next meeting of the Committee that included evidence of better outcomes for patients treated at home.**
- 3. That SEPT also provide a breakdown of the numbers of patients cared for at Biggleswade Hospital and at home.**

SCHH/13/126 **Better Care Fund**

The Director of Social Care Health and Housing delivered a presentation and provided a report on the Better Care Fund (formally Integration Transformation Fund) that was being provided by the Government to support the delivery of the Care Bill. Access to funding in 2015/16 was dependent on the agreement of a local 2-year Better Care Plan. The Health and Wellbeing Board had submitted the first stage of the Better Care Plan template on 14 February 2014 and work was in progress to complete the second stage submission by 04 April 2014.

The Better Care Fund would be made up of a pooled budget that would include NHS and CCG funding to the sum of £15m for Central Bedfordshire. The Committee were informed, that this was not new money.

In light of the presentation and report and further clarification provided by officers present, Members discussed the following issues in detail:-

- The need for a better understanding of the proposed reforms. The Executive Member agreed to schedule a briefing session for all Members of the Council on the Care Bill and the Better Care Fund proposals.
- That reliable information was of paramount importance during the transformation of services and must be available to everyone associated with the provision or in receipt of care.
- That transformation of the workforce was required to deliver the proposed care services. The Director SCHH advised there was a huge challenge for the Council that would require a cultural change to move to 7 day working to support patients. There was not, however, enough fully trained staff to meet the level of need. It was discussed that there was a short period of time to educate residents on the cultural change required to deliver services effectively. The Director of SCHH advised that the Joint Health OSC review of Health Services in Bedfordshire would help to deliver cultural change.

RECOMMENDED

That an all Member briefing be arranged on the Care Bill and Better Care Fund before the 04 April deadline of the second stage submission of the Better Care Fund and that a further report be submitted to the Committee in May.

SCHH/13/127 Empty Homes Performance

The Head of Housing Solutions introduced the Empty Homes Review of Performance report and presentation. The Empty Homes strategy had been approved in 2010 and had been instrumental in bringing good quality accommodation back into the housing market to help meet housing need. The Head of Housing Solutions explained the process that had seen 28 empty homes returned to use in 2012/13 and to date 32 priority homes returned to use in 2013/14.

In light of the presentation and report Members discussed future enforcement action on dwellings left unoccupied for 12 months or more and those identified by officers. Council Tax data had provided evidence of empty homes and further clarification was sought on e-home loans and how the Council ensured it received payment. The Head of Housing Solutions advised that the Council would pay a loan on completion of works carried out to a property to bring it back into use and it would become a charge on the property. Members were able to identify empty properties in their wards and the Public Sector Housing Manager would investigate all properties reported to the team. The Empty Homes Agency also provided an 'app' to report an empty home. A Member comments on the shortage of rentable properties in the north of Central Bedfordshire and nationally, and supported efforts to bring empty dwellings back into use.

NOTED the report and thanked officers present for the excellent service provided.

SCHH/13/128 Housing Asset Management Strategy

This item was deferred to a future meeting as there were no specific information to report to the Committee at this time.

SCHH/13/129 Work Programme 2013/14 & Executive Forward Plan

The Committee considered its current work programme which would be updated to include the two items detailed in the body of the Minutes.

RECOMMENDED that the work programme be approved subject to the addition of two items detailed in the body of the Minutes.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 11.50 a.m.)

Chairman

Date