

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

18 July 2024

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Gary Allen (In the Chair)

Councillors: Moss Boddy, Bob Buchan , Fiona Cook, Ged Hall, Sue Little, and Aaron Roy

Also present: Councillor Rachel Creevy

Officers: Jill Harrison, Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services
John Lovatt, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services and Legal Support Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2024

Received.

4. Introduction to Adult and Community Based Services Committee (*Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To set out the role and remit of the Adult and Community Based Services Committee.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services provided the Committee with a comprehensive presentation which included the role of the Committee and Elected Members and details of the Leadership Team of the Department.

Further details were provided of the Adult Social Care Team, including Commissioned Services and the Preventative and Community Based Services Team. The service provision of each area was presented along with a summary of the performance for each Team.

The Council's overall budget for 2024/25 to 2027/28 was outlined including the current use of reserves, the significant budget gap over the coming years and the main pressures faced by the Council including social care. Further detailed updates on the Council's overall budget would be presented to Finance and Policy Committee. There were a number of significant challenges to be faced by the Adult and Community Based Services Department including the financial pressures and impact of budget cuts, health and social inequalities and an increasing demand for services. The priorities of the Council Plan were provided in the presentation alongside the Departmental priorities which included good outcomes for people, tackling poverty and income maximisation and the sustainability of the care market.

The Executive Director outlined an overview of the CQC Assurance process highlighting that Adult Social Care had been reintroduced to the programme commencing with pilot sites in 2023. All assessment were to be complete over two years and reports being published on the CQC website. It was noted that there had been a mock 'assurance visit' in May 2023 and to support this a Continuous Improvement Group had been established with briefings for staff, partners and providers taking place. It was expected that a CQC Assurance visit would take place in the last quarter of 2024.

The Chair commented that the presentation had provided a good overview of the Department including the challenges to be faced but was confident

that the forthcoming CQC Inspection was an opportunity for the Department to showcase examples of best practice across Adult Social Care.

A Member highlighted that the recent 'swimsafe' sessions delivered by the Department had been a great success and that everyone had enjoyed them.

In response to a question from a Member, the Executive Director confirmed that there was an annual process in place with providers in relation to their fees and an agreed model used that took into account issues such as national living wage, energy and food costs and calculated a percentage fee uplift. The process worked well and the Department worked closely with providers and it was noted that when benchmarked against other local authorities, Hartlepool was around mid-table in relation to fees.

The Department was commended by Members on the work and preparation undertaken in preparation for the CQC Inspection and on the drive for continuous improvement.

Decision

The presentation was noted and the Department were commended for the work and dedication taken for continuous improvement within the service.

5. Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report – 2023/24 *(Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

Non key

Purpose of report

To present Members the Annual Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services presented the Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report, which was attached at Appendix 1 and provided an overview of the quality assurance activity undertaken within adult social care during 2023/24. Areas of work covered in the report included: feedback from carers and people who use services; case audits; peer review; and feedback from the workforce.

The Executive Director concluded that there was a huge amount of quality assurance activity being undertaken within the Department including annual survey feedback and an annual practice month.

A discussion took place during which a Member sought clarification on how the successes of the Department were celebrated with the workforce. The Executive Director confirmed that supervision was undertaken on an individual basis and was a supportive process. In addition, where compliments were received they were always shared with the member of staff involved. There were also regular staff departmental briefings where feedback was shared as well as on an individual and team basis. In response to a suggestion from a Member, the Executive Director added that there was an annual social work day, and Occupational Therapy week and newsletters were regularly circulated to staff sharing staff achievements and updates on performance. The Executive Director confirmed that in general, sickness within the Department was in line with the rest of the Council. Members were asked to note that whilst lots of other local authorities had difficulty recruiting and retaining social care staff, Hartlepool was fortunate to be perceived as a good place to work and there were no problems filling any vacancies when they do arise.

A discussion ensued on the audit of 15 minute home care calls which had been undertaken. Members were reassured that all care packages involving 15 minute calls had been audited to ensure these were being used appropriately.

Decision

The Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report 2023/24 was approved and the work undertaken to ensure the quality of practice was noted along with the processes in place to understand the views of people with lived experience and the workforce.

6. Annual Reports of Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2023/24 *(Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To present to Members the Annual Report of Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2023/24.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning Services presented the report which provided an analysis of complaints and compliments received and demonstrated learning that had occurred from complaints, and actions implemented as a result.

It was highlighted that during 2023/24, 47 compliments relating to Adult Social Care had been received. In addition to this, 26 complaints had been received, 1 was resolved within 24 hours and 9 were not considered further leaving 16 that were investigated. Members were asked to note that 15 had been concluded within 1 remaining ongoing. The Chair commented that it was good to note that complaints received were listened to and dealt with effectively.

In response to a query from a Member, the Assistant Director confirmed that early resolution was always the aim for any reported issues to enable a quick and efficient outcome. A Member highlighted that given the number of individuals receiving support from adult social care, the level of complaints received was very low.

A lengthy discussion ensued on seeking feedback from service users on a regular basis. The Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services confirmed that the majority of long term support was provided through external commissioned providers who have their own complaints process and procedures for capturing feedback. In the case of the direct care and support service and reablement services which are delivered in-house, feedback is routinely sought. In response to a question, the Executive Director informed Members that the number of complaints received by providers was monitored and where issues could not be resolved, complaints were escalated to the Department. Members were reassured that anyone receiving long term social care support had an allocated social worker who would inform that individual of the process that could be followed if any complaints/issues were not resolved with the provider. In response to concerns raised by a Member, the Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning stated that all providers should communicate the full complaints process and procedure to all individuals receiving care including the process for escalating complaints to the Department. This has recently been re-emphasised with all care providers.

In conclusion, Members indicated their support for the Department and the process for dealing with any issues that arise. The Assistant Director, Adult Social Care added that some very valid comments had been raised adding that systems and communications can always be improved but the key to success was ensuring individuals were listened to and communicated with effectively. There were several measures being looked at to improve how the Department worked alongside care providers and with the individuals receiving care including improved engagement with care providers. The Executive Director confirmed that all systems in

place were subject to regular review to ensure a quality service was provided with continuous improvement always a key driver.

Decision

Members noted the Annual Report of Complaints and Compliments 2023/24 and that the report would be published online.

7. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The meeting concluded at 11.05am

H MARTIN

DIRECTOR OF LEGAL, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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