

ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

5 January 2015

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

Present:

Councillor: Carl Richardson (In the Chair)

Councillors: Geoff Lilley, Kaylee Sirs, George Springer and Stephen Thomas

Also Present:

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii) Councillor Marjorie James was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Paul Beck

Frank Harrison, Years Ahead Forum
Members of the Public – Stella and Gordon Johnson and Evelyn Leck

Officers: Gill Alexander, Director of Child and Adult Services
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Services
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

47. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Paul Beck and Brenda Loynes

48. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thomas declared a personal interest in Minutes 50 and 53 as an employee of Healthwatch.

49. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2014

Received.

50. Matters arising from the Minutes

In relation to Minute 40 – Development of a New Centre for Independent Living, the Committee requested that regular update reports be provided in relation to progress made on the development of a New Centre for Independent Living.

Decision

That regular update reports be provided to this Committee in relation to progress made on the development of a New Centre for Independent Living.

51. Agenda Documentation

In response to comments raised by a member of the public regarding the unavailability of paper copies of the agenda documentation for members of the public prior to the meeting, the Chair requested that paper copies of the agenda documentation be provided by external mail to those members of the public who regularly attended the Adult Services Committee.

Decision

That paper copies of agenda documentation be provided by external mail to those members of the public who regularly attended the Adult Services Committee.

52. Promoting Change, Transforming Lives Project *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To inform Members of a funding application to the Big Lottery Fund which would be submitted by Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) on behalf of Waverley Allotment Group (WAG) for the Promoting Change, Transforming Lives Project.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided background information in relation to the Waverley Terrace Allotment Project Group. Over the past six months the Council had been working closely together to consider how the Waverley Allotments site could be transformed into a financially sustainable enterprise. As part of this work, a feasibility study had been produced, the key elements of which were included in the report. The feasibility study identified that the Waverley Terrace Allotment Project required a dedicated Business Co-ordinator as well as a Volunteer Co-ordinator. On behalf of the Waverley Allotment Group (WAG), the Council had completed a Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities Application to support the development of the Promoting Change, Transforming Lives Project which would incorporate therapeutic services, employment and training services and commercial services.

With regard to funding, the overall cost of the project would be £475,000 to cover five years with £400,000 being requested from the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities Programme and a £75,000 in-kind contribution from the Council. Details of the project costs were provided as detailed in the report. The Council was due to submit the application in late December 2014 or early January 2015. If the funding application was successful an additional report would be submitted to this Committee detailing all of the implications in the delivery of the project.

In the discussion that followed the Director of Child and Adult Services and Assistant Director responded to issues raised by Members in relation to the project. Whilst the Committee welcomed the proposals, some concerns were raised in terms of the financial sustainability of the project should funding not be secured. The Assistant Director advised that in the event that funding was not successful, the project would continue. However, alternative options would need to be explored. The Chair was keen to seek the views of services users in relation to how the project should be taken forward in future and suggested that service users be invited to a future meeting of this Committee to explore this issue.

With regard to the proposal to recruit a Business Co-ordinator and Volunteer Co-ordinator should the funding application be successful, Members were of the view that the Director of Child and Adult Services should be involved in the recruitment process and form part of the Interview Panel.

In response to comments made regarding the risks associated with projects of this type, the Director of Child and Adult Services provided assurances of her experience and understanding of community enterprise projects to ensure success. The benefits of this particular project were outlined and the Committee was advised that the risks would be fully examined in a detailed business case at stage two of the process.

Decision

- (i) That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted.
- (ii) That a further report be submitted to the Adult Services Committee once a decision had been made on the Council's funding application.
- (iii) With regard to the proposal to recruit a Business Co-ordinator and Volunteer Co-ordinator should the funding application be successful, the Director of Child and Adult Services be involved in the recruitment process and form part of the Interview Panel.
- (iv) That service users be invited to a future meeting of this Committee to seek their views and explore how the project should be taken forward.

53. Nursing Beds Provision – Verbal Update (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director made reference to a request from this Committee for an update in relation to nursing beds provision following issues raised at an earlier meeting that provision had been provided outside of Hartlepool. Members were advised that weekly assessments were undertaken and the latest figures as at 22 December 2014 showed a total of 105 vacancies across both residential/nursing home settings. It was highlighted that 25 nursing beds were available during that period which showed a significant improvement from the position earlier in the year. Whilst it was noted that overall sufficient places were available to meet the level of demand, some of the more popular homes were full which could potentially impact upon the hospital discharge process. The Trust was currently examining the policy around patient choice and the impact on hospital discharges. Data for the Christmas period would be submitted once available.

In the lengthy discussion that followed a number of concerns were raised in relation to the impact of continuing reductions in Government funding on social care provision and inaccurate recent media reports that delays in hospital discharges were as a result of social care packages not being in place. Disappointment was also expressed regarding the waiting times experienced by some individuals to secure a place in homes of their choice. The Director of Child and Adult Services clarified that the reasons for delayed discharge were usually not as a result of social care packages but as a result of delays in health care assessments which needed to be carried out prior to discharge or as a result of patient choice issues. Assurances were provided that Hartlepool's performance in terms of nursing bed provision was very good and the Council was working with the Trust to

resolve any delays in hospital discharges.

A Member commented on the benefits of regularly publicising nursing home availability data on the Council's website and suggested that information of this type as well as information/guidance to assist individuals with who to contact and what to do at the point of discharge be publicised.

Given the Committee's concerns that the implications of continued reductions in Government funding was not widely recognised, Members requested that the severity and implications of these cuts be shared with the public.

Whilst a Member complimented the excellent work being undertaken by NHS staff under extreme pressures, that Member was of the view that overcrowding and the increasing number of individuals flooding into the country was contributing to these increasing pressures. Members disagreed with the comments made and a number of views followed in terms of the potential reasons for such pressures. A Member highlighted objections to the comments made indicating that such comments were objectionable. It was requested that it be placed on record that that Member be more considerate of comments made in the public domain in future

Decision

- (i) That the information given be noted.
- (ii) That the severity of Government cuts and the impact on social care be shared with the public.
- (iii) That regular updates of nursing home availability data and information/guidance to assist individuals following discharge from hospital be publicised.

54. Verbal Update on Government Finance (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Child and Adult Services reported that following the recent announcement of the budget position immediately before the Christmas break, the Chief Finance Officer's initial analysis indicated that the settlement figure should be broadly as expected with the possibility of a slightly larger allocation in relation to the Care Act. A more detailed report would be presented to a future meeting of this Committee once the detailed analysis had been completed by the Chief Finance Officer

Decision

- (i) That the information given be noted.
- (ii) That a more detailed report on the financial position be presented to a future meeting of this Committee once a detailed analysis of the budget settlement had been completed by the Chief Finance Officer.

55. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was reported that the next meeting would be held on 9 February 2015 at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre.

The meeting concluded at 11.10 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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