

ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

15 September 2016

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

Present:

Councillor: Steve Thomas (In the Chair)

Councillors: George Morris, Carl Richardson, Kaylee Sirs, Sylvia Tempest and John Tennant

Also present:

Judy Gray, Stella and Gordon Johnson - Healthwatch Representatives

Frank Harrison – Years Ahead Forum

Members of the Public – Sue Little and Evelyn Leck

Officers: Sally Robinson, Director of Child and Adult Services
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Services
Jeanette Willis, Head of Strategic Commissioning
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Prior to the commencement of the main business, the Chair referred in terms of regret to the recent death of Health Watch Representative Maureen Lockwood who regularly attended the Committee and was also a former employee of the Council. Members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

20. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Lesley Hamilton

21. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Steve Thomas declared a personal interest in Minutes 24, 25 and 26 as an employee of Healthwatch.

22. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 July 2016

Received.

23. Matters arising from the Minutes

Minute 13 – Access to Transport for People with a Disability - the Chair reported that following a referral made by this Committee, the Audit and Governance Committee had completed their investigation and a final report would be submitted to their next meeting, feedback from which would be received by this Committee in November.

Minute 14 – Service Provision at the New Centre for Independent Living – Members were advised that there had been a slight delay in the scheduled opening of the CIL and it anticipated this would now take place in early December. It was therefore envisaged that the site visit would be held in November prior to the opening of the centre. Officers would be in touch with Members and other attendees in due course.

Min 16 – Quality Ratings for Commissioned Services – In response to clarification sought as to when a report would be submitted on the Unison Ethical Care Charter, the Chair advised that discussion had commenced in this regard and a report would be presented to Committee in the near future.

Decision

That the information given be noted.

24. Services for Older People: Future Service Delivery Models *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

No decision required – for information

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Adult Services Committee with an update on work that is underway to explore future service delivery models for services for older people.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director reported on the background to the decision taken by the Committee in March that further work be undertaken by officers to explore alternative delivery models for services for older people.

A small Task and Finish Group had been established which researched models developed elsewhere and produced a summary of alternative delivery models that could be considered further, a summary of which was set out in the report. The Task and Finish Group concluded that a full feasibility study and options appraisal should be undertaken which takes into account the continuum of care needs for older people including domiciliary care but also focusing on residential care. A service specification had been developed outlining the requirement for external expertise to complete this work which was expected to take approximately six months to complete. This would be advertised and an appropriate provider selected through the relevant procurement process.

In response to concerns raised regarding the timescales for completion of this work, the Assistant Director advised that such timescales were required given the views expressed that there was a need to obtain external expertise and undertake a procurement process.

A Member expressed disappointment that there had not been an opportunity for Elected Member input in the Task and Finish Group. The Assistant Director outlined that the decision taken by this Committee was to establish a small officer group and there would be an opportunity, following completion of the commissioning process, for a small Governance Group to be established to bring together officers and Elected Members.

The Assistant Director responded to further issues raised in relation to the report and the background to discussions that had taken place in determining the need for external expertise.

In concluding the debate, the Chair provided assurances that the views of Members would be taken on board in moving forward and whilst concerns were shared in terms of the timescales for completion of the work, the importance of this issue receiving adequate consideration to ensure a robust model of care was emphasised given the current financial risks facing the Council. The Chair highlighted that it was essential that any decisions made in relation to future service delivery models did not further increase the significant financial pressures that were already being faced within Adult Services and across the Council as a whole.

Decision

The Committee noted the work underway to explore alternative delivery models and that a further report be received following the completion of the feasibility study/option appraisal.

25. Update: Care Homes for Older People (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

No decision required – for information

Purpose of report

To provide the Adult Services Committee with an update in relation to care home provision for older people.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information in relation to the meeting on 12 October 2015, when representatives from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees Clinical Commissioning Group had provided a presentation to the Committee in relation to care home provision.

The Committee was referred to an update of CQC ratings of the care home sector in Hartlepool, attached as an appendix to the report. There had been further CQC reports published since an update was last provided, details of which were outlined in the report. A range of actions were being taken to support and improve standards within care homes, details of which were provided.

Following a request from a Member, an update on the latest position on the former Admiral Court site was provided.

In response to a request for clarification in terms of the powers available to the Council to ensure advice and standards were being met, the Head of Strategic Commissioning reported that whilst the Council had no enforcement powers as such, unless there was a breach of contract, there was a contractual requirement for care home providers to sign up to the quality standards framework. It was noted that generally care homes were responsive to the advice of the Council and relationships were positive, despite challenging financial circumstances.

A query was raised as to whether the minutes of meetings with care homes were available to this Committee. In response, Members were advised that the minutes were confidential in their current format. However, arrangements could be made to provide a summary if required.

Officers responded to further issues raised. Clarification was provided regarding the fee structures in place in relation to care home charges, the budget process in terms of reserves and the timescales for completion of CQC inspections. It was noted that a report would be presented to the next meeting of this Committee in relation to the current financial position which would include more detailed information on the use of reserves.

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of sufficient care home places for older people and the continuing need for out of borough placements. The Assistant Director advised that the report identified that there were significant risks associated with the availability of sufficient care home places for older people which was also a national problem. Work was ongoing with a view to increasing the current level of provision and encouraging new providers to enter the local market.

The Chair commented on the continuing financial pressures facing the Council in relation to adult social care. The Chair reiterated concerns previously expressed in terms of the lack of nursing care beds available in Hartlepool and was disappointed to note that this issue was at a crisis point. The Chair requested that the CCG, as the commissioner for nursing bed provision, investigate this issue as a matter of urgency given that this was a continuing all year pressure and that the pending winter months would add to the problem.

The Chair was pleased to report examples of effective joint working. Reference was made to the positive results around pharmacy support as a result of the Council working effectively with the CCG to address some of the issues and the Chair was keen to see similar work of this type around care planning. The need for the CCG to explore development work that was currently taking place with care homes through CCG's in other parts of the region on a regular basis was suggested. Whilst the excellent work of the Council's Adult Services was acknowledged in terms of supporting care homes through the Quality Standards Framework, it was considered that further work was needed to continue to raise standards across the care sector.

Decision

- (i) That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted and further updates be received on a regular basis.
- (ii) That the CCG, as the commissioner for nursing bed provision, be asked to investigate this issue of lack of nursing care beds as a matter of urgency.

26. Implementation of the Care Act (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

No decision required – for information

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Adult Services Committee with an update on the implementation of the Care Act.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information in relation to the Care Act and set out progress towards implementing the Care Act. The impact for Local Authorities of implementing the Care Act, the approach taken in Hartlepool as well as the National Care Act Stock Take was also included in the report. There had been six stock takes and the sixth stock take in July 2016 indicated no major concerns in relation to the Care Act implementation. Whilst a number of risks had been highlighted in relation to the proposed introduction of financial reforms from April 2016, implementation of financial reforms had now been delayed until 2020.

The Committee was referred to the financial implications of implementing the Care Act, as set out in the report. It was noted that the Care Act had now been implemented and embedded in every day practices.

In the discussion that followed presentation of the report a Member expressed some concerns in relation to the additional financial burden placed on local authorities by Central Government in terms of implementing legislation of this type. A query was raised as to whether there were any workforce or recruitment issues with regard to training carers or in relation to age profile issues. The Assistant Director advised that whilst there were no issues in relation to recruitment within the local authority, as highlighted during previous discussions, care homes often faced difficulties recruiting nursing staff due to the NHS offering more attractive terms and conditions of employment.

The Chair paid tribute to the fantastic work of the thousands of unpaid carers within the care sector.

Decision

The Committee noted progress in relation to implementation of the Care Act and feedback from the latest national stocktake.

27. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

The Chairman ruled that the following item of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

28. Any Other Business – World Mental Health Day Event

The Chair advised Members of a World Mental Health Day Event to be held on 10 October at 1.00 pm in the Borough Hall to which all Members and attendees were encouraged to attend. There would be a tea dance, various mental health related activities together with light refreshments.

29. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was reported that the next meeting would be held on 6th October at 10.00 am.

The meeting concluded at 11.00 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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