

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

27 FEBRUARY 2020

The meeting commenced at 3.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

Present:

Councillor: Sue Little (In the Chair)

Councillors: Amy Prince and Stephen Thomas.

Also present:

Frank Harrison and Gordon and Stella Johnston.

Officers: John Lovatt, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning
Neil Harrison, Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

48. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Brewer, Carl Richardson, Barbara Ward, and Mike Young.

49. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thomas declared a personal interest as an employee of Hartlepool Healthwatch and a member of the Sensory Impairment Joint Plan Working Group.

50. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2020

Received.

51. Care Homes for Older People (*Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

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

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning update the Committee on the recent developments in the residential home sector and reported that both West View Lodge and Warrior Park had moved from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good' on their CQC ratings. The Warrior Park change had been published since the agenda papers for the meeting had been issued. There now remained only one home, De Bruce Court, which had been inspected since the last report, but remained rated as 'Requires Improvement'. Officers were working with the home towards an improved rating. Details of all the ratings were shown on an appendix to the report.

The Assistant Director highlighted that work to finalise the Quality Standards Framework grades for the coming year had been completed and providers have been notified of their ratings. As in previous years, the grades were linked to fees, with Grade 1 providers receiving the highest rates. The majority of the grades are unchanged but it is positive to note that two homes have improved from Grade 2 to Grade 1. Unfortunately, one home had dropped a rating from Grade 2 to Grade 3 and there was a rapid improvement plan in place to improve standards, with evidence of improvement required within 3 months. Details of grades for each of the homes are attached in an appendix to the report.

The Chair and Members welcomed the report which showed a much improved position over that from only five years ago and congratulated officers on the work undertaken with homes to bring forward this improved position. The partnership approach developed with homes across the town was shown to be working very well as was the improved training of staff in homes, particularly around medication monitoring and record keeping.

A Member did express concerns at the number of vacancies shown in the report – 32 residential beds, 17 nursing only beds and 40 dual registered residential or nursing beds. The number did seem quite high and it was suggested that some work was needed to identify if there were any underlying issues in the local market. Members were concerned that some homes may be running too many vacancies which could potentially affect their long term viability. The Assistant Director acknowledged the concerns and indicated that officers would analyse the information provided by homes on vacancies and include an assessment in the next report to Members.

It was commented in the meeting that the demand for homes may potentially be affected by the increasing numbers of older people being cared for in their own homes through domiciliary care services. The Assistant Director supported this view and indicated it would be included in

the assessment of vacancies. A Member indicated that a holistic assessment of the care market for older people may be required as the increase in domiciliary care was also leading to older people moving to care homes with more complex needs than in the past.

Decision

1. That the report be noted and the partnership work of officers with the care sector be recognised for the much improved situation of care home standards in Hartlepool.
2. That the next update report to Members in six months include an analysis of the vacancies in care homes and the domiciliary care provision in the town and the inter-relationship between the two and whether this could potentially affect the viability of some care homes.

52. Deputyship Review by the Office of the Public Guardian (*Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report was to update the Adult Services Committee on the outcome of a recent visit from the Office of the Public Guardian to review practice in Hartlepool.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services reported that the User Property and Finance Team is a specialist team in Adult Services, which carries out the role of Deputyship for Property and Affairs on behalf of the Director of Adult and Community Based Services. A visitor from the Office of the Public Guardian met with the User Property and Finance Team on 8 January 2020 to review team practice and procedures relating to the Corporate Deputyship function, and to audit a number of Deputyship cases on behalf of the Court of Protection. This visit was part of a routine assurance process that is undertaken for all Local Authorities.

Following the visit, an outcomes report was produced. This highlighted some issues with staffing that the department had been aware of and a restructure of the team was underway which it was hoped would address those issues and provide for greater development opportunities for staff. Otherwise the report was very positive with the Office of the Public Guardian and the visitor commending the User Property and Finance team as follows:

“The Department’s management of Deputyship cases is outstanding and the officers we met today were also outstanding in terms of the knowledge they have of their own cases and their general approach, which is completely in-keeping with the ethos of the Mental Capacity Act and in line with the OPG’s Professional Deputy Standards”

The Chair stated that she was delighted to read the Assurance Visit Report and requested that the Committee's congratulations be shared with the User Property and Finance Team. Members echoed the Chair's comments.

A Member indicated that he had wished to see some reference in the report to the equality and diversity considerations the team provided to the most vulnerable residents of Hartlepool. Members with experience of the support provide by the team also spoke very highly of the service they provided. A Member was concerned that the report gave the inference that the annual visits to clients would end with only a paper office review being undertaken. The Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services stated that the client's social worker would continue their regular visits and should the social worker feel that the annual review of benefits required a visit by a Deputy, that would still happen. The approach would be proportionate to the needs of individual clients. Members also discussed the lengthy training required for Deputies and how a full knowledge of the benefits system was required for the role.

The meeting also discussed the further delay to the new Mental Capacity Act and the potential impacts of the new regulations particularly on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). The Assistant Director indicated that the new Act had now been put back until April 2021 at the earliest. It was understood there would be a range of impacts from the new Act and the government had advised local authorities not to make any changes to practices or training until the new regulations and code of practice were issued. Preparations were taking place within the authority to prepare for this, for example it was strongly anticipated that increased numbers of advocates would be required and discussions on how to provide those had already started. Further reports would be brought to Members as and when more information came forward.

Decision

That the excellent outcome of the recent visit from the Office of Public Guardian to review the service provided within Adult Services be noted and that the staff in the User Property and Finance Team be congratulated on such a positive review.

53. Sensory Impairment Joint Plan (*Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide an update to Adult and Community Based Services Committee on progress against the Sensory Impairment Joint Plan and to present the

information to be shared with key stakeholders and members of the public at a launch event on 23 April 2020.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services reported that in the spring of 2019 the Council commissioned Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment Support UK (Hi-Vis UK) a Charitable Incorporated Organisation to support the development of a sensory loss strategy. Throughout 2019 Hi-Vis UK had engaged and consulted with key stakeholders, people with lived experience, carers groups and local organisations. The organisation had held workshops, conducted surveys and questionnaires and consulted with local commissioners. The initial findings and action plan that had been developed would be presented at a launch event on 23 April 2020 at the Centre for Independent Living. The Head of Safeguarding and Specialist Services outlined the key points in a presentation to Members.

Members welcomed the strategy and commended the work of HI-Vis UK. A Member involved in the process indicated that the raising of awareness of these issues both in the authority and with partners was a continuing process. The statistics showed the level of hearing and visual impairment in the wider population and those engaging with services now were only the 'tip of the iceberg'. It was imperative to identify those suffering these impairments, particularly the elderly with dual sensory loss, as this would help with any continuing care they may be receiving or need. Linking with other groups, such as The Bridge, would also help in tackling those living with a dementia and sensory loss of some kind.

Members welcomed the work being done and considered that Hartlepool was again leading in the provision of such services. Members were keen to see increased support throughout the community and also in everyday life to help people with a visual or hearing impairment lead as full a life as possible. Simple issues such as assuring there were both touch and audible warnings at road crossings were something the local authority could do to help.

The Chair indicated that she hoped as many elected Members as possible attended the launch event on 23 April 2020 at the Centre for Independent Living and sought assurance that invitations (including electronic calendar invitations) be sent to all Members.

Decision

That the report be noted.

54. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

The Chair informed the Committee that she had recently visited Carlton Camp in North Yorkshire in her role as lead Member for Community Based Services. The Chair noted that there would be some significant decisions

to be made in relation to Carlton Camp in the forthcoming Municipal Year and she considered, therefore, it would be appropriate for as many Members of the Committee as possible to visit Carlton Camp and assess the facilities before any decisions were made. The Chair suggested that such a visit should be also open to the Members of the Children's Services Committee and the Finance and Policy Committee.

Officers indicated they would be happy to facilitate such a visit and would liaise with the Chair on a suitable date.

The meeting concluded at 3.45 pm.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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