

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

15 JUNE 2023

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

Present:

Councillor: Bob Buchan (In the Chair)

Councillors: Gary Allen, Rob Darby, Ged Hall, Sue Little, Carole Thompson and Mike Young.

Also present: Evelyn Leck, Stephen Thomas, HealthWatch

Officers: Jill Harrison, Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning
Sarah Scarr, Head of Service - Heritage and Open Spaces
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023

Received.

4. The Role and Remit of the Adults and Community Based Services Committee *(Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide background on the Committee's role and remit to Committee Members.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services gave a presentation to the Committee outlining the role and remit of the Adult and Community Based Services Committee as set out in the Council Constitution and the service areas that fell under its management. The presentation also included a brief overview of the Council's current budget position. The presentation outlined Members' role and the specific service issues for Adult Social Care, Preventative and Community Based Services, and Commissioned Services and the challenges and priorities the services faced in the immediate future.

The Vice-Chair commented that it was pleasing to hear that the services being provided by the department were being shortlisted for national awards which reflected the hard work of all the staff involved. The Chair echoed the comments.

Decision

That the presentation be noted.

5. Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report – 2022/23 *(Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key Decision.

Purpose of report

To present to members the first Annual Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report covering the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services reported that the recent White Paper: People at the Heart of Care introduced, along with a range of other measures, a duty for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to independently review and assess local authority performance in respect of its duties under the Care Act. The assurance framework for adult social care was currently being used within a number of pilot sites nationally and would then be rolled out across all Councils from October 2023. It was anticipated that a baseline assessment of all Local Authorities would be completed within a two year period.

The Executive Director also indicated that there had been a significant amount of work undertaken regionally through the North East Branch of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NE ADASS) to support preparation for assurance, as well as work within individual local authorities. The North East Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (NE ADASS) commissioned Dr Carol Tozer, a former DASS, to complete annual conversations with the 12 North East Local Authorities to support Councils in their preparation for CQC Assurance. Conversations took place between September 2022 and February 2023 and involved a significant amount of data being reviewed and triangulated prior to a half day conversation involving the adult social care senior management team. The process was very robust and challenging and produced feedback on areas of good practice and areas for further development.

The Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report submitted to the Committee provided an overview of the work undertaken within adult social care during 2022/23 relating to quality assurance. 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.

Members welcomed the report, in particular, how well Hartlepool had performed with 10 out of the 25 measures used being ranked in the top 10 local authorities nationally. A Member questioned how local authority social care was integrated with other social care providers, including the voluntary and not-for-profit sector, and the Community Hubs and how people were accessing services and how information was being shared.

The Executive Director commented that a presentation later on the agenda would highlight the services available to people accessing the Community Hubs with direct feedback from those people. There was a lot of joint working with the VCS sector and there was a clear information sharing policy to protect users. People often came into the Community Hubs looking for one particular service and ended up linking with a whole range of services they often didn't know were there.

The Executive Director reported that there was a lot of joint working with other agencies and groups and Mental Health Services, for example, held an online 'virtual huddle' with partner agencies when talking through which services were best placed to address a person's needs.

Members questioned the supervision of social workers and their workloads. The Executive Director stated that all staff and managers had regular supervision built into their working practices. Team Managers also regularly met to liaise. In terms of workloads, staff had reported in the recent 'assurance visit' that the number of cases each individual social worker managed was busy but manageable. The Executive Director commented that while there hadn't been a significant rise in the number of people being referred for support over the last five years, the complexity of

the issues Social Workers were dealing with had increased significantly which creates some challenges.

Members also commented on the administrative workload of social workers and if this could be alleviated. The Executive Director stated that one of the key deliverables of community led support was reduced bureaucracy; recording only what needed to be recorded. A lot of work had been undertaken to reduce administrative workloads and to ensure teams had an appropriate skill mix to function effectively. The department had also not made any cuts to the administrative support to social work teams.

Comment was also made by a member of the public at the withdrawal of the free tea and coffee at the Central Community Hub.

Decision

That the Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Report be approved and the work that had been undertaken to ensure the quality of practice and to understand the views of people with lived experience and the workforce be noted.

6. Parks and Open Spaces: Place-Based Plans *(Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key Decision.

Purpose of report

To provide the Committee with information on the management plans that have been developed for the four parks within the borough and to seek approval to consult with the public on those plans.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Head of Service - Heritage and Open Spaces gave a presentation to the Committee outlining the background to the development of the place-based management plans for Burn Valley Gardens, Rossmere Park, Seaton Park and Ward Jackson Park. The aim was that the plans would enable a more proactive approach to review the strengths, challenges, opportunities and risks within each site. Sitting alongside these documents was a summary document to provide strategic aims and objectives for all of the sites, which together with the plans for the four parks, was submitted as appendices to the report. The documents were in draft form and would be taken out to public consultation prior to their adoption.

The Head of Service reported that the public consultation would be carried out over the summer, with plans to host an online consultation via 'Your Say, Our Future', on-site drop in sessions at the parks, and engagement with active volunteers and residents groups. The consultation would ensure that the plans are reflective of the needs and aspirations of the wider community.

A Member referred to some of the other open spaces widely used by the public and commented on the facilities at the Rift House Recreation Ground. The Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services commented that these facilities were covered by the Indoor Facilities & Playing Pitch Strategy and officers were aware of the issues.

A Member commented on the provision of waste bins in the parks, particularly Burn Valley Gardens which were often too small and emptied too infrequently. Larger bins would resolve the problem. The Head of Service stated she would pass the request on to the Cleansing Team, but it was this type of feedback that the team were looking to hear from park users.

A Member was concerned that the parks Green Flag award could be at jeopardy due to some of the issues of vandalism. The Head of Service commented that anti-social behaviour was an issue at all park sites and officers did liaise with Police regularly. Residents were also encouraged to report any anti-social behaviour to the Community Safety Team. The Assistant Director added that the Green Flag scheme was a national award scheme, so those undertaking the assessments knew the problems faced in managing parks and open spaces. Unfortunately anti-social behaviour and vandalism were widespread problems and it's important that we manage the risks as far as possible.

The Vice-Chair commented that many of the anti-social behaviour problems experienced in Seaton Park were resolved through bringing in volunteers and the sports participation team in during the school holidays to encourage young people to be involved in informal sport and play in the park but it did take time and effort to make that change.

In relation to a question around North Cemetery as a 'park space', the Head of Service stated that currently this was still a working cemetery. Members also referred to the use of CCTV in the parks. The Assistant Director assured Members that the cameras did work and were monitored.

Decision

That the proposal to engage in public consultation on the place based plans for parks be approved.

7. Community Hubs Update (*Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to update members on the development of Community Hubs following approval of the Community Hubs Strategy 2023 – 2028 in January 2023.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Executive Director gave a presentation and showed a video to the Committee outlining the services provided through the Community Hubs together with feedback from partner organisations and service users. Members welcomed the report and the services provided through the hubs that received such support from the public. In response to Members questions, the Executive Director stated that there had been a number of contacts from other authorities to view the model of community hubs here in Hartlepool.

Decision

That the report and the presentation be noted.

8. Tall Ships Races 2023 – Update (*Executive Director of Adult and Community Based Services*)

Type of decision

For Information.

Purpose of report

To update members regarding plans for the Tall Ships Races, which will be hosted in Hartlepool from 6 – 9 July 2023.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services gave a presentation to the Committee updating Members on the final arrangements for the Tall Ships event. The presentation outlined the supporting entertainment and commercial events arranged for the event and the education work undertaken with local schools, many of which had adopted individual sails ships for the event. The Assistant Director also

highlighted the volunteering opportunities and the Sail Trainees involvement in the event.

Members welcomed the presentation and recorded their thanks to all the officers involved in the preparation for the event. Members also particularly noted the work undertaken to make the event as inclusive as possible including the provision of disabled changing facilities.

Decision

That the presentation and report be noted and the thanks of the Committee be shared with all those involved in the preparation for the event.

9. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 7 September, 2023 commencing at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre.

The meeting concluded at 12.30 pm.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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