

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of **the IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PEOPLE** held on 22 July 2020.

PRESENT

Councillor G Musson (in the Chair)

Councillors J Coyle, R Flatley, J Frudd, R George, K Gillott (substitute Member), R Iliffe, D Taylor and J Twigg.

Also in attendance - S Stevens.

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor C Dale and D Turner

8/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillor K Gillott declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 as a member of the Derby and Derbyshire Children's Safeguarding Board.

9/20 DEBORAH TURNER The Chairman reported that Deborah Turner, a Trade Union representative on the Committee would no longer be attending these meetings. On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman wished to thank Ms Turner for her input to proceedings and wished her all the best for the future.

10/20 MINUTES RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

11/20 PUBLIC QUESTIONS There were no public questions.

12/20 UPDATE ON HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE Simon Stevens, Deputy Director Adult Care provided Members with an update on the proposed closures, following the conclusion of the public consultation on 24 April 2020.

At the meeting of Cabinet on 4 June 2020, Members were asked to consider the outcome of the consultation on the future of ten of the Council's homes for older people.

The Council had taken account of the feedback received during the consultation and had determined that none of the homes should close at this time unless a direct alternative in the local community could be provided. If there were no direct alternatives in the local community the intention would be to develop these prior to considering the future of the seven homes originally proposed for closure.

Whilst the Council understood the distress and anxiety which had been caused during the consultation to residents, their relatives and staff working at these homes it was however essential that their views were sought on the future of the homes given the condition of the buildings, the urgent need for major refurbishment and repair, the disruption which this would cause to residents and the potential cost of these repairs as well as concerns that they were not fit for purpose and not needed in the longer term.

The Council would now be devising a plan for the future of the seven homes which had been proposed for closure and would be developing a new approach to develop local alternatives before consulting again on any individual home closure and/or setting aside funding where necessary to undertake works on the homes.

In respect of the consultation on the plan to refurbish the three homes the feedback received during the consultation was positive and in agreement with the proposal. A further report setting out the next stage in this process would be presented to Cabinet in due course.

This was followed by in-depth discussions and many questions from Members to Mr Stevens.

The Chairman pointed out that this would be included in the Committee's work programme and overseeing the next steps (with particular reference to the need for and type of local provision required) was key to ensure transparency of decision-making and to make any recommendations to Cabinet or elsewhere that might arise as a result of such scrutiny.

13/20 DERBYSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS (DSAB) BOARD UPDATE Andy Searle, the Independent Chair of DSAB and Natalie Gee, the DSAB Project Manager, attended the meeting to provide Members with an update of the work the Board had undertaken.

The Derbyshire Safeguarding Adults Board (DSAB) was a multi-agency strategic partnership, which ensured and oversaw the effectiveness of arrangements made by individual agencies to safeguard adults who had care and support needs or were experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, abuse or neglect.

Members were provided with a brief summary of the work of Safeguarding Adults Board and outlined the statutory duties and six safeguarding principles. Mr Searle reported on the impact the Covid-19 Pandemic had had on the service and highlighted the measures that had been put in place to mitigate these issues.

Members were afforded the opportunity to ask questions which were duly answered or noted.

The Chairman thanked Andy Searle and Natalie Gee for their most informative presentation.

14/20 DERBY AND DERBYSHIRE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP (DDCSP) UPDATE Steve Atkinson, the Independent Chair of DDCSP attended the meeting to provide an update of the work the Partnership had undertaken.

The Derbyshire and Derby Safeguarding Children Boards were merged by voluntary agreement in September 2019. Therefore, this was the first update to the Committee from the DDSCP. Members had received the Annual Report for the Derbyshire LSCB for 2018-19 and accordingly, the first full report for the new Partnership would cover the period April 2019 to March 2021. This report will be shared with the Committee, once it had been completed.

Mr Atkinson highlighted the progress that had been made against the 2018-2021 priorities and the challenges the Partnership had faced since March 2020.

The Chairman thanked Mr Atkinson for attending the meeting and providing details of the work of the Partnership.

15/20 REVIEW OF DERBYSHIRE CARE LEAVERS OFFER Members were informed of the outcomes of the scrutiny review of the Derbyshire Care Leaver's Offer.

The review had focussed on three discrete aspects of the Derbyshire Care Leaver's Offer: Council Tax, Accommodation and Financial support. During the review a series of working group meetings had been held to ensure that Members were kept informed about partnership working undertaken by the Young People's Department to develop a more consistent offer throughout Derbyshire. The information gathered at these meetings was presented.

Councillor Musson and Councillor George had met with two care leavers (Adam aged 21 and Ben 20) to ask them about their experiences of the Leaving Care Service. This was an informal meeting held online and their Leaving Care Support Worker (Claire) was present. Whilst the conversation focussed on issues relating to accommodation and financial independence, there was an open invitation to raise any issue and to share suggestions about how the service might be improved.

The Committee acknowledged the significant progress that had been made in the development of the Derbyshire Care Leavers' Offer. Members welcomed the fact that there was now an equitable approach that ensured that all Derbyshire care leavers would receive 100% Council Tax discount up to the age of 25 and that their local connection (when applying for a council

tenancy) would be deemed to be Derbyshire rather than an individual district. However, the Committee felt that there were still opportunities to develop the offer further. The Committee would also support work to identify ways of ensuring that each young person had the opportunity to build a bond with an additional support worker so that they felt comfortable raising issues and seeking support should their designated support worker not be available. Enabling access to guidance or mentoring beyond the age of 21 was another area of work that Members felt would be beneficial to care leavers.

Members raised various observations and comments and these would be incorporated into the final document.

RESOLVED that (1) the Committee commends the partnership working that had led to the countywide improvements to the Derbyshire Care Leavers' Offer. The agreement of all District and Borough Councils within Derbyshire to provide Council Tax discount would bring significant benefits to care leavers up to the age of 25 and would help their transition to independent living. The removal of the local connection from the districts to the whole of Derbyshire would open-up opportunities for care leavers when setting up home and seeking employment or training;

(2) publicity regarding Council Tax discount for care leavers, that was delayed as a result of the Covid19 pandemic, should be progressed as soon as practicable;

(3) Children's services work in partnership with District and Borough Councils to identify an approach that would enable a care leaver to make an "expression of interest" for a property in sufficient time to allow them to move in when they reached the age of 18;

(4) in addition to allocating each young person a designated Leaving Care Support Worker, the service explored the feasibility of identifying a second point of contact within the service. This would provide each young person the opportunity to get to know and feel comfortable with another member of staff who would be available for them in the event of their designated support worker being on leave or leaving the Derbyshire service; and

(5) the Leaving Care Service explored mechanisms that would facilitate care leavers having access to ongoing guidance or mentoring with a person that they knew, beyond the age of 21.

16/20 **HEALTHWATCH DERBYSHIRE ANNUAL REPORT** Members received the Healthwatch Derbyshire Annual Report. On behalf of the Committee the Chairman thanked Healthwatch Derbyshire for the continued work they did.

RESOLVED to note the report.

