

PUBLIC

MINUTES of a meeting of **the IMPROVEMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – PEOPLE** held on 10 February 2021

PRESENT

Councillor G Musson (in the Chair)

Councillors J Coyle, C Dale, R Flatley, J Frudd, R George, R Iliffe, D Taylor and J Twigg.

Also in attendance – Councillors S Swann, J Wharmby, and D Cohen.

No apologies for absence had been received.

01/21 **MINUTES RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 04 November 2020 be confirmed as a correct record.

02/21 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS** There were no public questions.

03/21 **DISCUSSION WITH CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT CARE - COUNCILLOR JEAN WHARMBY** Councillor J Wharmby gave an update on the Better Lives programme. The first year of the four year transformation programme had been successfully completed. Significant progress had been made on ambitions to improve outcomes for people and make more efficient use of resources.

All targets had been achieved or extended within the programme. All of the new ways of working had been designed by front line colleagues and had now either been rolled out or were in the process of being rolled out across the department.

The programme had so far focused on:

- Supporting people on discharge from hospital, ensuring, when possible that people returned to their homes.
- Improving the short term home care offer across departments and assisting those to regain independence.
- Supporting frontline practitioners to further develop their practice to support local people to remain at home.
- Reduce admissions to residential care which had been successfully reduced by a third.
- Supporting those with learning difficulties and/or Autism to move to supported living houses rather than residential units.
- Supporting those with learning difficulties and/or Autism to access employment and meaningful activities or volunteering in the community.

04/21 ENGAGEMENT RE. DEVELOPING CARE AND ACCOMMODATION IN DERBYSHIRE

It had been agreed that Derbyshire County Council (DCC) would update their current market position statement. In 2020, it had been intended to do a large scale engagement programme and a consultation asking for views on housing accommodation and support to help inform discussions or how work was done with the wider market.

This had been put on pause due to the Covid-19 pandemic, although it had still been planned to update the current market position statement with data coming through at present. This would be an interim market position statement which was predicted to last 12 months with the detailed engagement process planned to continue later in 2021.

A letter had been distributed asking for views on accommodation, housing and support along with a survey. That information would be used to inform the market position statement. Those who were currently adult social care recipients and their family carers had been targeted as these would be the individuals living at home and considering their future.

The survey closed on 08 February 2021, the engagement team had been actively involved, following up with phone calls and being available to speak to individuals. 1000 people had been contacted and 106 surveys had been completed and returned. The results would then be analysed and updated and would be available for the Committee.

05/21 SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP PROGRESS REPORT - NEXT STEPS IN RELATION TO DIRECT CARE HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Following the Cabinet meeting on 4th June 2020, the People Improvement and Scrutiny Committee had been invited to deliberate on the next steps in relation to seven of Derbyshire County Council's direct care homes. The potential closure of these homes, together with the proposed refurbishment of three, had been the subject of a consultation conducted earlier in the year. After considering the consultation outcomes, Cabinet agreed that "none of the homes proposed for closure will close unless a local care home or alternative provision is available to replace it".

The Cabinet report invited the Scrutiny Committee to adopt an overseeing role to ensure transparency of decision making and it had been suggested that the focus should be on the need for, and type of local provision required.

The Committee submitted an interim report to Cabinet on 19 November 2020. The report stated that the Committee was assured that the mitigation measures in place were sufficiently robust and durable to address the increased risk associated with the properties identified as needing rewiring in the near future. The report indicated that work would continue to pursue the remaining key lines of enquiry.

On 10 December 2020 the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health submitted a report to Cabinet providing an update on actions relating to direct care homes for older people and a prospective timetable for future actions.

RESOLVED that the Committee agreed that an interim report was submitted to Cabinet stating that: (a) due to the revised timetable the Committee would not be able to deliver against all of the key lines of enquiry in the timeframe anticipated; (b) the Committee had considered the proposed methodology to determine what was “local” and “suitable” alternative provision; (c) When determining what was “local”, as well as considering the distance, a high priority should be placed on a person’s connectedness to an area, location of family and friends and accessibility to transport routes; (d) when determining what was “suitable”, ongoing affordability for individual service users of CQC rated “good” or above provision, was of paramount importance; (e) the Committee recognised that in the current pandemic climate occupancy levels had been significantly reduced and the operating costs were temporarily well above the norm. The situation was unlikely to change in any significant way in the immediate term, but measures were being put in place, both nationally and locally, to improve the situation in the more medium term. The Committee understood the need to delay the development of the Market Position Statement and thought it sensible to delay decisions on long term strategies until such a time that future service needs, and the state of the market were more predictable; and (f) when the Committee conducted pre-decision scrutiny deliberations in relation to the future of the seven care homes, Members would require demand and the supply data for residential care that could be viewed with a high degree of certainty.

06/21 DERBYSHIRE HEALTHWATCH CARE HOME REPORT

HWD decided to gather information to try to understand how the Covid-19 pandemic had affected the wellbeing of care home residents and their relatives and to examine what measures had been introduced to combat these issues. The pandemic had been a particularly difficult time for residents, their friends and family and care home staff. At the same time, HWD were aware of some amazing examples of care and innovation by care homes. The aim of the project was to allow HWD to identify and share these good practice initiatives and helpful ideas across the care home community in Derbyshire.

Between 26th October and 16th November 2020, an online survey was shared with residents of Derbyshire. The survey asked about how the mental and physical wellbeing of care home residents had been affected during the pandemic and about any steps the homes had taken to address these challenges. The survey also asked about contact between relatives and their loved ones and communication between the relatives and the care homes themselves. Respondents were encouraged to share ideas and best practice.

HWD had received 90 responses. Those responses received shared the experiences of spouses, children, extended family and friends of care home residents thus offering a diverse perspective.

The report would be shared with The Strategic Care Home Group which provided guidance and support for the COVID Care Homes Cell on matters such as infection control, agreeing on local interventions needed and to ensure a good quality, safe and effective care home sector in Derbyshire that meets the needs of the local population. Copies would also be provided to the Directors of Public Health for Derbyshire and Derby City, and to the Association of Directors of Public Health nationally. The report would also be shared with Healthwatch England and used to inform national policy.

The findings of the survey had been outlined within the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the report.

07/21 CHILDREN SERVICES COMPLAINTS REPORT

Monitoring customer feedback provided valuable insight into where Children's Services could improve service provision and/or delivery. The department had developed a culture of listening and learning in order to drive improvement in services.

The report provided information about statutory and corporate compliments, complaints and representations received during the 12 months from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

In the period between April 2019 and March 2020, the complaints team received 139 compliments in relation to children's services. This had been a slight decrease on the 143 recorded during the previous year. Of these, 41 were corporate compliments and 98 were statutory; in comparison with 70 corporate and 73 statutory compliments recorded in 2018-2019.

From April 2019 to March 2020, 239 representations had been received, 159 of these were corporate, and 80 were statutory. This was a 4% increase from the 229 representations received in 2018/19. Of the 80 statutory representations, only 9 were responded to within agreed timescales, meaning that 71 took longer than 10 days to receive a response, which represented 89% of representations receiving late replies during 2019-2020. This was a substantial decrease in effective response times compared to the previous year, where 52% of representations were responded to within timescale.

Of the 233 statutory complaints received, 166 were acknowledged within timescales (71%). This represented a significant decrease on the previous year, when 93% of statutory complaints were acknowledged within timescale. Performance improved throughout the year, as the process was changed to complaints being acknowledged centrally rather than locally. For

the majority of quarter 3 and all of quarter 4, performance against this target had been around 100%.

Of the 233 complaints received, 32 (14%) fell outside the remit of children's services statutory complaints procedures. These included complaints from people without parental responsibility for the children receiving a service or being identified as having significant interest, some complaints were redirected to adult social care, others were considered historic complaints and some were complaints for other local authorities, district councils or services. All received responses where appropriate or were signposted to the correct point of contact for their complaint. 7 complainants rescinded their complaint before it went to formal investigation. 36 complaints were resolved by mediation or by local action/resolution without proceeding to the formal complaints process. This was by means of additional visits, phone calls or other area actions which satisfied the complainant and their concerns. This represented 15% of all statutory stage 1 complaints received being resolved informally.

RESOLVED that the Committee note the report.