

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 NOVEMBER 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold on Thursday, 14 November 2019

PRESENT: Councillor Hilary McGuill (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Paul Cunningham, Jean Davies, Rob Davies, Andy Dunbobbin, Carol Ellis, Gladys Healey, Cindy Hinds, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Ian Smith, Martin White, and David Wisinger

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services; Chief Officer (Social Services), Senior Manager Children and Workforce, Senior Manager, Integrated Services Lead Adults, Strategic Finance Manager, Locality Team Manager, Senior Cluster Co-ordinator and Partnership Lead, Service Manager, Social Services and Marketing and Recruitment Officer.

IN ATTENDANCE: Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officer

Before the start of the meeting, the Social & Health Care Facilitator read out a statement on the restrictions over discussions at meetings during the current pre-Election period.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

30. VARIATION IN ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair explained that there would be a change in the order of the agenda and the item on Rota Visits would be brought forward.

31. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2019 were submitted.

Councillor Dave Mackie moved that the minutes be approved as a correct record and this was seconded by Councillor Andy Dunbobbin.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

32. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND ACTION TRACKING

The Facilitator presented the Forward Work Programme and drew attention to the items to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 16 December (which had been moved from 12 December due to the General Election on the same day). She referred to a presentation on the North East Wales Community Equipment Store (NEWCES) to be provided at the meeting on 30 January 2020, and said that the meeting would be held at NEWCES. The Facilitator also advised that the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 26 March 2020 would be held at Hwb Cyfle. She invited Members to contact her or the Chair with any items they wished to add to the Forward Work Programme.

The Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator presented the progress report on actions arising from previous meetings. She explained that all actions had been completed.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft Forward Work programme as submitted be approved;
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee be authorised to vary the forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises; and
- (c) That the progress made in completing the outstanding actions be noted.

33. ROTA VISITS

Councillor Mike Allport reported on his visit to Woodlee Learning Disabilities Home. He said the visit had been positive and enjoyable and there were no matters to report.

RESOLVED:

That the information be noted.

34. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY: COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2020/21

The Finance Manager Strategy Accounting and Systems, introduced a report to provide the latest budget position for 2020/21 and any specific proposals for the Portfolio. She advised that the report sets out the current financial forecast and the projected 'gap' in the Council's budget funding requirement for 2020/21. The full gap ahead of the budget solutions outlined in the report, and ahead of the Welsh Government Budget for 2020/21, stands at £16.2m. A summary of the forecast and the changes to the forecast position previously reported was set out in the report.

The Finance Manager Strategy Accounting and Systems continued that the report provided an update on the national position and the Council's strategy to achieve a safe and balanced budget for 2020/21. The Welsh Government (WG) required a much-improved funding Settlement, and Flintshire was dependent on a significant uplift in its annual Revenue Support Grant (RSG) contribution if it was to be in a position to set a safe and legal balanced budget. The report presented all of the proposed budget efficiencies and the costs pressures to be included in the budget for 2020/21. The report highlighted the specific efficiencies and cost pressures for Social Services for consideration by the Committee as part of its portfolio responsibilities. This was an interim budget closure report pending the completion of ongoing work on corporate finance options and resolution of the WG budget.

The Finance Manager Strategy Accounting and Systems referred to the main considerations, as detailed in the report, and drew specific attention to the information provided on Social Care pressures and Social Care efficiencies.

The Cabinet Member for Finance expressed thanks to the Corporate Finance Manager and his Team for their work and comprehensive update ahead of the WG Budget for 2020/21.

Referring to Social Care pressures Members raised questions around the cost of out-of-county placements. Councillor Gladys Healey asked what financial contributions were received from the Health Board. The Senior Manager – Children and Workforce, explained that detailed monitoring was carried out on the financial contributions received from the Health Board.

In response to a question from Councillor Andy Dunbobbin regarding the split budget between Social Services and Education Services for out-of-county placements, it was confirmed as £1.860 million Social Services, £638,000 Education Services.

Councillor Carol Ellis emphasised the need to highlight the out-of-county placements pressure as an area of great concern. The Finance Manager Strategy Accounting and Systems confirmed that the out-of-county placements budget position was monitored on a monthly basis by the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Andy Dunbobbin and seconded by Councillor David Wisinger.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee endorses the Social Services efficiency proposals for 2020/21; and
- (b) That the Committee endorses the Social Services cost pressures recommended for inclusion in the budget for 2020/21

35. INNOVATION TO REDUCE RELIANCE ON OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS

The Senior Manager Children and Workforce introduced a report to review the work to reduce reliance on long term residential care for looked after children. He explained that the report provided an overview of the innovation being driven forward to secure transformational change in delivering the Service's Support and Placement Strategy. The work was summarised in the appendix to the report.

The Senior Manager Children and Workforce advised that without investment in innovation and new approaches to service delivery the number of children requiring residential and Independent Fostering Agency placements would continue to grow at an unsustainable rate with untenable financial consequences. He drew attention to the work and initiatives, as detailed in the appendix to the report, to effect change. Referring to the Mockingbird Model of fostering he introduced the Marketing and Recruitment Officer and invited her to give an overview and presentation on the Mockingbird Model. The main points of the presentation were:

- challenges
- 7 year forecast
- keep children in Local Authority care
- Carer retention
- Out of County placements
- prevention of placement breakdown
- themes from disruption meetings
- savings based on minimum targets
- stabilise future out of county placements

The Senior Manager Children and Workforce explained that the ambition was to develop up to 5 hubs over 3 years supporting 80 children. An interest free loan of £1.1m had been made available from the Welsh Government for the Scheme which was to be repaid over 7 years.

Members spoke in support of the Mockingbird model and expressed thanks to the Chief Officer and his team for their work to reduce reliance on out of county placements.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Martin White and seconded by Councillor Gladys Healey.

RESOLVED

That the programme of innovation aimed at reducing reliance on out of county placements be noted.

36. HOSPITAL AVOIDANCE

The Senior Manager, Integrated Services Lead Adults, introduced a report to provide an update on work being undertaken to avoid hospital admittance. She provided background information and invited the Locality Team Manager to present the report.

The Locality Team Manager, explained that all new requests for support from Social Services come via Single Point of Access and are taken from members of the public and any health professional involved with a person or family. She advised that there were a number of teams within Social Services whose aim was to support people to remain living in their own homes and cited social work teams, occupational therapy teams, reablement teams and reviewing teams, as examples. These teams are able to identify people who are experiencing a short term period of illness. Where possible, if safe to do so, and with consent, support services will be put in to enable the person to remain at home. The Locality Team Manager highlighted the work of the Community Resource Team, Reablement Team, and Social Work and Occupational Therapy teams.

The Chair asked if GPs were aware of and promoted the Community Resource Service. The Locality Team Manager confirmed that the service was being well used.

Members spoke in support of the reablement service and thanked the Senior Manager, Integrated Services Lead Adults, and her team for their work to support people at home and avoid the need for hospital admission. . Councillor Dave Mackie suggested that there was a need for greater publicity of the excellent range of support services available.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Carol Ellis and seconded by Councillor Dave Mackie.

RESOLUTION:

That the work undertaken to support people and their families at home, avoiding hospital admissions, be endorsed.

37. SUPPORT BUILDING RESILIENCE IN COMMUNITIES BY DEVELOPING THE SOCIAL PRESCRIBER ROLE WITHIN SINGLE POINT OF ACCESS (SPOA)

The Senior Manager, Integrated Services Lead Adults. introduced a report to provide an update on work being undertaken on a Social Prescribing Service operating from Flintshire's Single Point of Access (SPOA). She introduced the Senior Cluster Co-ordinator and Partnership Lead, and Ann Woods, Chief Officer Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, to the meeting.

The Senior Cluster Co-ordinator and Partnership Lead presented the report. She provided background information and explained that delivered in partnership with the Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, the service provides practical and emotional support to individuals so that they can be assisted to

achieve “What Matters” to them where the solutions lie within the community or through development of their own skills or confidence. In addition to the service being available for self-referral, referrals can be made by anyone else who has contact with an individual. A specific area of current and future development is to encourage GPs to refer into the service to support patients presenting to them with concerns which are non-clinical.

The Chief Officer Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, gave an overview of the Social Prescribing Service through the Single Point of Access and explained the role of a Social Prescriber and how the service works in Flintshire.

Members congratulated the Chief Officer and his team on the success of the Service. The Chief Officer commented on the positive feedback on how the quality of life for individuals had been greatly improved by the Service.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Paul Shotton and seconded by Councillor Gladys Healey.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the impact that Social Prescribing can have on the promotion of independence and well-being be supported; and
- (b) That Members signpost Flintshire residents to the service.

38. ADAPTATIONS TO FOSTER CARERS HOMES POLICY

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced the report on proposals to introduce the ‘Adaptation to Foster Carer Homes Policy’ to give Flintshire and the children it is responsible for more choice and options for placements which can offer better value for money for the Authority.

The Chief Officer explained that in some circumstances the home environment of foster carers can limit placement opportunities. The Policy seeks to introduce a grant scheme which offers foster carers financial support to make adaptations to their existing home, or financial assistance towards the purchase of a new larger or more suitable property (up to the value of £36,000 for adaptations or £20,000 for relocation to a new property). The grant would be subject to the terms and conditions outlined in a Financial Assistance Agreement and clawback would be applicable under certain conditions to protect public funding.

The Chair asked if Foster Carers who took up the scheme would be able to buy insurance cover to safeguard repayment costs if necessary. The Senior Manager Children and Workforce drew attention to the information provided on Grant Funding for Adaptation in the proposed Policy which was appended to the report. He advised that Flintshire had the discretion to waiver up to £10,000 of grant funding, dependent on the financial assessment of the foster carer and/or property owner and the proposed child placement arrangements. He said that Foster Carers were encouraged and financially supported to seek independent financial advice before joining the scheme. The Senior Manager

emphasised that the aim of the scheme was to assist Foster Carers with the cost of making adaptations to their home to provide adequate space for children and young people to live and thrive in their care. The funding aimed to complement the range of support services provided to Foster Carers.

Councillor David Mackie suggested that the word 'clawback' be removed from the policy as he felt the word 'repayable' was more appropriate. He also referred to the terms and conditions attached to the provision of funding through Disabled Facility Grants (DFGs) and suggested that consideration be given to applying the same process to grant funding for adaptations.

The Chair referred to DFGs and suggested that members of the Committee be invited to attend a meeting of the Community & Enterprise Overview & Scrutiny Committee. This was agreed by the Committee

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Gladys Healey and seconded by Councillor Dave Mackie.

RESOLVED:

That the Adaptations to Foster Carers Homes be supported.

39. COUNCIL PLAN 2019/20 – MID-YEAR MONITORING REPORT

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced the report which presented a summary of performance at the mid-year point of 2019/20 for the Council Plan priorities 'Caring Council', and 'Safe and Clean Council' and 'Safe and Clean Council' relevant to the Committee. He advised that the mid-year monitoring report for the 2019/20 Council Plan was a positive report, with 88% of activities making good progress and 90% likely to achieve their planned outcomes. 77% of the performance indicators had met or exceeded their targets. Risks were being managed with a minority of 14% being assessed as major. The Chief Officer referred to the two major risks identified for the Committee as detailed in the report.

Councillor Dave Mackie drew attention to page 115 (CP1.1.4MO2) and said there was no data on performance indicator trend and page 116 (CP1.2.2MO1) and (CP1.2.2.MO2) and said the period targets were missing. Officers provided an explanation around the analysis presented.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Dave Mackie and seconded by Councillor Paul Cunningham.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

40. REGULATED SERVICES ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The Senior Manager, Integrated Services Lead Adults, introduced a report to consider the draft consultation. She provided background information and advised that the processes described in the report were co-produced with people who used the services and was designed to be inclusive, robust and sustainable, meet regulatory requirements, and also provide the information needed to ensure that the Authority's services are of high quality and continue to meet the needs of the individuals who are supported.

The engagement processes discussed in the report covered in-house older people's residential care, extra care, domiciliary care and supported living and short-term care for people with learning disabilities. The overall objective was to implement the quality review process across the whole service and share learning across the sector regarding what's worked well and any lessons or reflections on improvements. The Senior Manager invited the Service Manager, Social Services, to present the report.

The Service Manager advised that under the new Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) there was a requirement of the Responsible Individual to engage and consult with individuals who used the Authority's services in a regular and effective way. Regulation 76 of the RISCA sets out the requirements, as detailed in the report. He referred to the engagement work which had taken place and the methodology underpinning the work which was based on a 'story telling' approach. A communication plan was delivered to underpin the whole process. The Service Manager explained that RISCA placed service quality and improvement at the heart of regulation. This approach would evidence that the Council's care and support services had a culture of quality improvement, using methods of co-production, focusing on outcomes and experience for the individual and by listening introduced positive change.

Members supported the process for engagement and consultation and thanked the Senior Manager and Service Manager for their work.

The recommendations in the report were moved by Councillor Martin White and seconded by Councillor Gladys Healey.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the process for engagement and consultation to meet the needs of the Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016 (RISCA) be endorsed; and
- (b) That the progress and the upcoming phase 2 of the work which will form part of the responsible individual's annual report, be noted.

41. **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 2.00 pm and ended at 4.05 am)

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Chair