

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room, County Hall, Lewes on 19 March 2015.

PRESENT: Councillors Peter Pragnell (Chair), John Barnes, Charles Clark, Michael Ensor, John Ungar, Trevor Webb (Vice Chair)

Officers:

Keith Hinkley, Director of Adult Social Care and Health;
Samantha Williams, Assistant Director, Planning, Performance and Engagement
Vicky Smith, Head of Policy and Service Development
Barry Atkins, Head of Strategic Commissioning – Older People and Carers
Martin Jenks, Scrutiny Lead Officer
Harvey Winder, Democratic Services Officer

Also present:

Peter Sutcliffe, Hailsham Trust (for Item 6)
Jan Cutting, Rother Voluntary Action (for Item 6)
Councillor David Elkin, Lead Member for Resources
Councillor Kathryn Field

31 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2014

31.1. RESOLVED to confirm as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 13 November 2014.

32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

31.1. Apologies were received from Councillor Angharad Davies (substitute Councillor Michael Ensor) and Cllr Peter Charlton.

33 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

33.1. None declared.

34 URGENT ITEMS

34.1. None notified.

35 REPORTS

35.1. Copies of the reports referred to below are included in the minute book.

36 RPPR SAVINGS PLAN: CARE PACKAGE REDUCTIONS

36.1. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care and Health updating it on the impact of reductions to individual care packages of (on average) 30%; a saving that was agreed through the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process as part of the Department's savings plan for 2013/14 to 2015/16.

36.2. The following additional points were made in response to questions from the Committee about the Carer Survey:

- Benchmarking data for the results of the Carer Survey at a South East and national level should be available by November 2015.
- In East Sussex, 77.4% of known carers receive a service from East Sussex County Council's Adult Social Care Department (ASC), compared to 100% in many other local authorities. This is because ASC defines "information, advice and signposting" provided to carers as information, advice and signposting tailored to the specific needs of a carer, whereas other local authorities define it as general information provided to a carer; for example, leaflets posted to their address (which ASC also provides). The Care Act 2014, which comes into force on 1 April 2015, will require all local authorities to provide this personalised and tailored information and advice.
- The proportion of carers who report that they have been included or consulted in discussions about the person they care for has fallen between 2012/13 and 2014/15. However, this figure is expected to rise to 100% at the time of the next Carer Survey because the Care Act 2014 contains a provision that entitles carers to their own assessment irrespective of the needs of the cared for person, meaning that they will be consulted individually.
- In response to a reduction in the proportion of carers who find it easy to find information about services, ASC conducted an internet survey to discover how people access information online. Most carers search for information via Google (rather than starting their search from the East Sussex County Council website homepage) and the information that ASC provides is being streamlined and optimised to reflect carers' searching habits.
- Negative responses in the Carers Survey are not treated as a formal complaint against ASC, which are handled through a specific formal complaints process. Therefore, individual "dissatisfied" respondents to the Carers Survey will generally not receive a direct response from ASC (as they would with a formal complaint), but their data will be used to help inform the Department about how it can improve services for carers. However, if any responses to the survey raise safeguarding issues, ASC will make contact with the individual.
- Whilst there has been a 30% reduction in care packages, ASC community care budget is demand led. This affects the pace at which savings can be made by the Department as it has to continue to meet the level of need for those who are eligible for care in East Sussex, regardless of its savings commitments. The new eligibility criteria due to published in the Care Act 2014 guidelines in October 2015 are likely to have an impact on demand for the service (as they will do nationally) and this could affect the Department's ability to make future savings.

36.3. The Committee RESOLVED to request that:

- 1) the updated Equality Impact Assessment is emailed to the Committee;

- 2) the benchmarking data for the Carer Survey is emailed to the Committee when available;
- 3) a report is brought to the 12 November 2015 meeting of the Committee containing an update on the continued impact of the reduction of care packages; a 6 month review of how the Care Act has been implemented; and how the Act has affected demand on services.

37 STRENGTHENING LOCAL COMMUNITIES FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH

37.1. The Committee considered a report and presentation by the Director of Adult Social Care and Health informing it of the progress to date of the Building Stronger Bridges pilot project and the work with the national charity Pub is the Hub, both of which are part of the Strengthening Local Communities work programme.

37.2. The following additional information was provided by the Director of Adult Social Care and Health and a representative of the Hailsham Trust in response to questions regarding the Building Stronger Bridges (BSB) pilot project and Pub is the Hub:

- Under the Care Act 2014 (which comes into force on 1 April 2015), local authorities have a general duty to help prevent people developing care and support needs. This will mean that local authorities will have to consider what facilities and resources are available locally. The work of the BSB pilot project (and the Strengthening Local Communities work programme in general) will help to ensure that East Sussex County Council is proactively meeting this responsibility.
- The BSB pilot aims to increase the number of clients who are referred by ASC Service Placement Teams to voluntary groups by facilitating the establishment of Good Neighbour Groups around the county. The BSB pilot project has commissioned six organisations, including the Hailsham Trust, to establish Good Neighbour Groups across the county.
- The Hailsham Trust confirmed that it did not contact local district or county councillors during its recruitment drives for volunteers for Good Neighbour Groups; instead it took a 'bottom up' approach to recruitment by holding its own neighbourhood meetings and leafleting local areas.
- The Hailsham Trust clarified that it now has three operational Good Neighbour Groups with 50 volunteers and between 50 and 60 clients.
- Anyone who volunteers to befriend someone through the Good Neighbour Groups, including those from existing voluntary organisations, must pass a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and receive safeguarding training.
- The vast majority of clients referred to the Good Neighbour Groups have been happy for people to befriend them.
- The Pub in the Hub scheme is offered to ASC clients who have been referred to the Building Stronger Bridges scheme; and who have a pub in their local community that has signed up to it.

37.3 The Committee RESOLVED: 1) to endorse the Building Stronger Bridges pilot project and the work with the national charity, Pub is the Hub;

2) Request that, in future, district and county council elected members are informed, as a matter of course, about any proposed Good Neighbour Groups in their ward or division so that they may offer their local expertise in helping to recruit volunteers.

38 OLDER PEOPLE'S DIRECTLY PROVIDED DAY SERVICES

38.1. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care and Health which provided an update on the progress of transferring the services provided at the Isabel Blackman Centre, Phoenix Centre and Charter Centre to the Sussex Community Development Agency (SCDA) following the conclusion of a tendering process.

38.2. The following information was provided in response to questions regarding the new provider of day services:

- The current value of the day centres is not indicative of their potential value to the new provider. The service specification permits SCDA to promote the existing service to self-funding clients or personal budget holding clients; as well as expand the range of services offered at the day centres to attract more clients, for example, lunch clubs designed to reduce isolation. SCDA would have already calculated the potential of the market before making its bid.
- In order to accommodate new services at the Centres, SCDA and the Council will need to agree how the transport needs of clients wishing to attend new services can be accommodated by the transport providers.
- The Council retains the head lease for the buildings but the overhead cost of setting up the new service is met by the SCDA. The Council's liability for the service is the same as it would be for most contracted services: if the provider fails, the Council would meet the needs of clients using the service by making alternative arrangements, but would not bail out the failing provider.
- The Transfer of Undertakings – Protection of Employment (TUPE) negotiations between the Council and SCDA are ongoing and will not be completed by the planned date of the end of April. There are several reasons for this:
 - the TUPE process is always complex and relies more on individual circumstances, rather than a formulaic process;
 - TUPE is a process that the SCDA may not have undertaken before;
 - the TUPE process could not begin until after it was known who was the provider (this was made clear in the Cabinet papers);
 - the ongoing TUPE discussions are around managing liabilities associated with pensions, which is very complex, and made more complex by the fact that current employees are from three different providers: the Council, AGE UK and Appetito.
- There will be costs associated with the amount of time it has taken to implement TUPE but these are covered in the contingency budget and will be offset by savings that will be achieved by taking more time to ensure that the agreed TUPE is sustainable for both partners.
- The terms and conditions and employment status of staff remain identical after a TUPE and would not be renegotiated.

38.3. RESOLVED: to request a presentation at the 12 November meeting from the Sussex Community Development Agency on how they are planning to provide the older people's day services going forward.

39 RECONCILING POLICY, PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES (RPPR) 2015/16

39.1. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Adult Social Care and Health that provided an opportunity for it to review its input into the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process during 2014/15 and to identify lessons for the 2015/16 process.

39.2. In order to have more effective and greater input into the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) for 2015/16, the Committee agreed that:

- Scrutiny will have more impact the earlier on it is involved in the RPPR process.
- Scrutiny will be able to make better savings recommendations if it is given more information about the potential impact of savings.
- An away day should be held with the Director of Adult Social Care and Health before detailed proposals are developed to discuss scrutiny's involvement in the RPPR process.

39.3. RESOLVED: to request an away day before detailed savings proposals are developed in order to begin the RPPR process.

40 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

40.1. The Committee considered its work programme for the forthcoming year.

40.2. The committee requested an update at the 17 September committee meeting on the current position of the adult mental health service and the effect on the service from the Health and Wellbeing Board mental health crisis concordat and the East Sussex Better Together programme.

41 FORWARD PLAN

41.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period to 30 June 2015.

41.2 RESOLVED to note the Forward Plan.

The meeting ended at 1.13 pm