

COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3 APRIL 2019

Present: Councillor McGarry(Chairperson)
Councillors Ahmed, Jenkins, Lent and Molik

74 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carter and Goddard.

75 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

76 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

77 : 2018/19 QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE - PERFORMANCE MONITORING SCRUTINY OF QUARTER THREE PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Lynda Thorne (Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities); Councillor Susan Elsmore (Cabinet Member Social Care, Health & Well Being) Sarah McGill (Corporate Director, People and Communities), Claire Marchant (Director of Social Services) and Louise Barry (Assistant Director Adult Services) to the meeting.

Members were advised that they would consider the Quarter 3 Performance during two parts:

The first part would consider the relevant performance from the People & Communities Directorate and the second part would consider performance from the Social Services – Adult Services Directorate

The Chairperson invited Councillor Thorne to make a statement in which she said that she was pleased to see that Phase 1 of the Cardiff Living Scheme was progressing well, with handovers of new properties taking place, in addition, phases 2 and 3 of the scheme are in discussions following a high level review of the phases.

The numbers needing support with Universal Credit has far exceeded the targets set by the Department of Work and pensions, however staff have worked hard to ensure the demand is met across the city. More than 3,600 people have been supported with their claims for Universal Credit between April and December.

It was notable that so far this year 115 interventions have supported rough sleepers into accommodation, although this is slightly below target the excellent multiagency work to reduce tents around the city centre, engaging those individuals with support and bringing them into accommodation continues.

Since April 72% of threatened with homelessness have been successfully prevented from becoming homeless, exceeding the target for the year.

Councillor Thorne added that she was pleased to see the progression of the Community Wellbeing Hub work, the associated restructure was completed during Quarter 3, in addition the Welsh Government grant funding was approved in quarter for Butetown Youth Hub, a further development of the Hub model.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Elsmore to make a statement in which she said that she was pleased with the joint working that was taking place; the Chair and Vice Chair of the Health Board had been invited to the ARC and she was pleased that there were positive targets being met, noting that there was always more to be done.

Members were provided with a presentation on the Quarter 3 Performance after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members;

People & Communities Directorate

Members asked for more information on Children First and were advised that this ensures early intervention to build resilience, its replicating what has been done in Adult Services with shifting the balance of care.

Members considered it was a very good report but it did lack information on the timeline and monitoring. Officers advised that they wanted the strategy in place first, then an action plan for all partners would be developed. A Board had been developed with partners and the action plans would be developed through this board to ensure buy-in.

Members discussed targets and asked how they were set. Officers advised that the targets are set each year by the Corporate Plan, then through the service delivery plan the targets are reported quarterly. Members consider it would be good to see equalities reporting to ensure services are provided appropriately across the City. Members also considered it would be useful if the narrative referred to the performance report itself.

Members referred to the Rough Sleepers Strategy and the successful pilot of Housing First asking if this would now be rolled out. Officers stated that they were evaluating the pilot and all but 1 placements had been sustained which was a huge success. The scheme has lots of merit but the key issue is having the right accommodation with the level of intensive support and it needs to be established how this will be achieved. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities added that currently they use the private rented sector and they need more landlords on board with social housing, it was a balancing act as it was important to consider those on the waiting lists, there was also the added pressure of those people wanting to downsize.

Members referred to Male Domestic Abuse and asked why there has been a delay on this. It was explained that there was lots of work to do on this, the service had been focussed on women and children and there was a lack of parity which needed to be addressed; Bridgend Council were keen to work with Cardiff on this and Members were assured that they would see proposals that are comprehensive and meet the needs of the communities.

With reference to Voids, Members asked if there was a new contractor was in place and were advised that there was and performance had improved slightly; it was noted

that this was a very challenging area and they were currently building up an in-house service as well as being in discussions with another contractor too as they are very focussed on Voids as an issue.

Members noted that the re-let time was 89 days and the quick let time was over 30 days; and considered this was a long time. Members asked if any benchmarking had been done with regard to this. Officers advised that some properties require a lot of work before they can be re-let, but they agreed that in terms of performance these times were not good enough and work needed to be done to address this. Housing Associations perform much better. Members considered this an important issues to address both in terms of the monetary issue and because of all the people on the waiting list.

Social Services – Adult Services Directorate

Members were provided with a presentation on the Social Services – Adult Services Directorate performance after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members;

Members discussed contracts with voluntary organisations and asked for examples of these. Members were concerned that there may be a risk to the stability of the service if there was a reliance on voluntary organisations. Officers explained that it was positive to work with the third sector as they are best placed to provide services; with regards to stability, the same amount of due diligence is used as is with other organisations the Council works with. Examples of partnerships include Age Connect and the Alzheimer's Society. The Cabinet Member referred to part 9 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act in relation to partnerships and what the Welsh Government want to see in terms of the value of contributions of the third sector, adding that for Social Value the third sector and social enterprises are very important and make up around 20%. In relation to stability of services it was stated that the partnership with Learning Disability was a 5 year contract, with an option of a contract break at 3 years. A further example of a partnership was Innovative trust who provide the technology to support people with social care needs.

Members referred to fees and asked if they were now set and there was no longer a risk of legal challenge. Officers explained that there could still be a risk of legal challenge due to the dates, but the fees have been set; there were lots of lessons learned as the fees were being set too late in the financial year; there was a need to properly engage and consult with the sector going forward.

Members asked about the numbers of escalated concerns and officers advised that they work to statutory guidelines and the number in the context of the number of providers was to be expected; issues are identified and action plans are put in place to address them; it was important to support providers to address escalated concerns through strong partnership working.

With reference to the report, Members found it difficult to monitor the performance due to the lack of targets and KPI's; Officers stated that they could build those in to the report, they are available from the Corporate Planning Process and comments on the format of the report were welcomed.

Members discussed the Quality Assurance Panel and the Cabinet Member explained that other Local Authorities have used this approach, it is a good infrastructure to ensure compliance, best practice and to add actions/remedial actions, ensuring consistency.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

78 : ADULT SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Susan Elsmore (Cabinet Member Social Care, Health & Well Being), Claire Marchant (Director of Social Services) and Louise Barry (Assistant Director Adult Services) to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Elsmore to make a statement in which she said that she was delighted that the Social Services and Well Being Act places Adult Safeguarding on the same footing as Children; there was lots of detailed work being done in this area.

Members were provided with a presentation on Adult Safeguarding after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members;

Members asked if there was a likelihood that staff would be permanently based at the MASH. Officers advised that a multi-agency approach was needed as to how best this is addressed, it wasn't absolutely necessary that the staff were physically based in the MASH, it was the multi-agency working that was the important aspect of it.

Members discussed the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (SSWB) and the reference in the presentation that staff have struggled to interpret the new legislation, and asked if this has had a net negative effect on service delivery. Officers assured Members that any immediate safeguarding issues are dealt with immediately, it was the transition from POVA to the SSWB and the delays in issuing the codes of practice that had been the challenge.

Members noted the 25% increase in referrals and that 50% of those were inappropriate referrals. Officers explained that there was an audit being undertaken to give information on the referrals screened out as inappropriate, as it was important to know the presenting issues to look at the capacity demand going forward.

Members noted that the number of enquiries dealt with in 7 days was declining and asked what was being done to mitigate this. Officers explained that there had been some procedural issues in relation to when the date starts in the IT system, some dates had been started incorrectly due to this anomaly in the system. In other cases there can be a delay in waiting on information which can take over 7 days.

Members asked if there was training in place to increase awareness in relation to Ethnic Minority Adults at Risk. Officers explained that this is enshrined in the training that has been commissioned and is a separate element in that training too to provide an optimal level of training. It was added that Corporate Safeguarding training is offered to all managers and there is specific training for adult protection for managers

in Adult Services. The Cabinet Member also added that she and Cabinet colleagues meet officers every 6/8 weeks to ensure there is join up between Children's and Adult Services and Councillor Weaver will also be joining them as Chair of the Corporate Safeguarding Board.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

79 : COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING STRATEGY

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Lynda Thorne (Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities); Sarah McGill (Corporate Director, People and Communities), and David Jaques (Housing Development Manager) to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Thorne to make a statement in which she said that she wished to thank Officers for the work undertaken to get to this stage and being in a position where they are on site and starting projects.

Members were provided with a presentation on the Council House Building Strategy after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments from Members;

Members asked if Energy Efficiency and Zero Carbon options had been explored. Officers explained that they work with the Welsh Government on this and are committed to bringing forward a report to be used by the industry looking at the complexities and costs etc. The current standard is Fabric First which is 17% above the required standard; the next stage is Passivhaus as used in the Highfields development. The next stage would then be zero carbon which the Council is committed to in the next stage of Cardiff Living.

Members asked if sight loss was a consideration when looking at accessibility and were advised that it was, they are fully RNIB audited and go beyond compliance.

Members asked if maybe there was a lack of focus on quality of building when the focus is on accessibility and energy efficiency. The Cabinet Member stated that the standard of building was higher quality than any standard private sector builds and the Council is setting the standard for the public and private sector; she added that people are buying them over homes built by Persimmon and Redrow. Officers added that quality is at the heart of the development, a Cardiff standard has been developed and energy efficiency is just one part of it alongside Place Making. Members were invited to visit one of the show homes.

Members commended the Cabinet Member and Officers on the vision but were concerned about the affordability and the borrowing needed. Officers explained that the decisions are made on affordability and this has to be evidenced; new build social housing brings in revenue. There are some key decisions to be made and there is lots of experience to take into Cardiff Living. Members made reference to the rent cap and Officers explained they are waiting for the decision on the review.

Members discussed the height of blocks of flats and Officers explained the process of place making and planning and what is acceptable; adding that the pre-application

process, while time consuming is beneficial to get local peoples considerations and to receive comments into the design team. It was noted that they start with an outline view of sites and there can be increases/decreases in density as the project progresses, they try to ensure there is flexibility in the thinking and Officers ensured Members that they would be kept informed throughout the process with early and clear communication.

AGREED: that the Chairperson, on behalf of the Committee, writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

80 : COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Principal Scrutiny Officer outlined the forward Work Programme to Members who discussed items that were coming to forthcoming meetings.

The Principal Scrutiny Officer explained that another Member was needed for the Performance Panel, if not then the Quarter 4 performance report would need to come back to full Committee. Members would be contacted via email and invited to join the Performance Panel.

Members were provided with an update on correspondence and were advised that members would be updated on the Welsh Government response on the Rent Review.

81 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

None received.

82 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 1st May 2019 at 4.30pm in Committee Room 4, County Hall.

The meeting terminated at 7.00 pm