

COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 NOVEMBER 2019

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

41 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Hill-John and Carter.

42 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

43 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

44 : EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: that Appendix C to the following item is confidential and is not for publication by virtue of paragraphs 14 and 21 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972. The public would be excluded from the meeting for consideration of this item in accordance with the same legislation.

45 : OLDER PEOPLES CARE HOME FEE SETTING STRATEGY 2019-2024

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Susan Elsmore Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing; Claire Marchant, Director of Social Services and; Angela Bourge, Operational Manager for Strategy, Performance and Resource.

The Chairperson reminded Members that that if they wanted to discuss Appendix C, then it would be necessary to move into closed session.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Elsmore to make a statement in which she said that this was a really report, which was very technical in nature but it presents the outcome of the cost of care exercise taken over many months of this year. It provided the ability to be transparent going forward with regards to the cost of care and fees paid for commissioning. Capital Ambition has a great emphasis on how we treat older people and in relation to Adult Services, older people in care homes. It was important to get it right and important to have an evidence based approach going forward.

Members were provided with a presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments;

Members noted that there was some increased quality provisions and some that was not and asked if there was any correlation with what they charge. Officers stated that

this was not the case, some were high cost and in escalating concerns and some who charge below the average and there is no problem with the provision.

Members referred to the DPS procurement system and asked if this would remain. Officers explained that they were moving to a standard fee so procurement on price would become defunct. If approved there would need to be consideration given to what would be used. DPS can procure on quality and fees or you don't need to use a system as such at all. It needs to be worked through with providers over the coming months. Members asked if there was a risk of turning off some providers and officers stated that standard fees are accepted in almost all of Wales, engagement so far has mitigated that risk.

Members noted that 19 providers participated in the consultation and that the figures agreed for standard fees were taken from this; Members asked if 19 providers was a fair representation of Cardiff as a whole. Officers explained that it was 19 out of 35 providers of a cohort specific to care for older people. Experts had advised that this is a representative sample to make a feasible study.

Members referred to the 1.5m uplift and then the 600k uplift in the presentation and asked for clarity on this. Officers explained that the 1.5m is the additional cost over a period of time and the 600k is around a particular pot of money, the uplift in the current financial year for a specific cohort.

Members referred to the 6 recommendations to Cabinet; recommendations 4 and 5 were to delegate authority to the Director of Social Services, Members asked why this was required. Officers explained that in accordance with the Council Schedule of Delegation, delegation is sought from Cabinet for the Director of Social Services to take annually. If elements change, such as workforce, this needs to be taken into account on an annual basis. Overall direction is by Cabinet and the detail by the Director of Social Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member.

Members noted that the 79 care providers don't all deliver this specific care; Officers explained that specific care for older people was provided by the 35 provider.

Members asked why there was variation between fees and whether there was a correlation between the amount charged and the length of contract. Officers did not consider there to be a correlation length; they stated that at times there have challenges in the market, one had closed and alternative arrangements had to be sought which resulted in an increased care price. The cost differential was largely driven by the operating model and the market.

Member asked if the other elements would come before Committee and Officers advised they would, explaining that there was lots of significant work coming forward such as the Charging Policy and Overall Commissioning of the Care Home Sector.

Members noted the 88% increase in people over 85 and asked if officers were confident that the system can cope. Officers explained that they need to grow and develop the market, they need to provide care at home, specific are for dementia, provide more reablement at home etc. there were lots of different ways to keep up with the demographic demand that the Council is facing. The Cabinet Member added that the RPB are pooling budgets and looking at how they communicate as a region over time to ensure there is more flex and sustainability.

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.

46 : EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

Members discussed the Public Interest Test with regard to the following item.

The following Legal Advice was provided to Committee:

The report, appendices and presentation are all exempt. The following legal advice needs to be added to the legal implications in the report

“This report and appendices are not open to public inspection. They contain “information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime”. This is exempt information under paragraph 18 of Schedule 12A, Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1972.”

In relation to whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, the advice is yes regarding exemption being maintained. The report (paragraph 11) indicates that the Guidance provided to Local Authorities by the DWP includes a requirement for a Risk Based Verification Policy and that the guidance also suggests that the information held in the Policy should not be made public due to the sensitivity of its contents. By disclosing the information contained in the report and appendices, the Local Authority would be making public some of the most sensitive information from the Policy.

It was added that if the information on assessments was in the public domain, how the assessments are made could be circumvented, so the advice was that the report and appendices remain as exempt.

Members considered matters and although they felt that the public interest test had not been met and had been minded to consider the item in open session; they were conscious that in order to move things along and to hear from witnesses present in closed session they agreed a compromise.

RESOLVED: that the Reports and Appendices are confidential and are not for publication by virtue of paragraph 18 of Schedule 12a, Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1972. The public were excluded from the meeting for consideration of this item in accordance with the same legislation.

47 : HOUSING BENEFIT RISKED BASED VERIFICATION

This item was exempt and not for publication by virtue of paragraph 18 of Schedule 12a, Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1972. The public were excluded from the meeting for consideration of this item in accordance with the same legislation.

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.

48 : CABINET RESPONSE TO CYP & CASSC'S INQUIRY 'PREVENTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S INVOLVEMENT IN DRUG DEALING'

The Chairperson welcomed Cllr Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member for Housing & Communities; Sarah McGill, Corporate Director; Alison Jones, Interim Community Safety Manager and James Helan from the Youth Service.

The Chairperson invited Councillor Thorne to make a statement in which she thanked Committee for the invitation to update on the progress of the recommendations set out in the Joint Scrutiny Inquiry 'Preventing Young Peoples Involvement in Drug Dealing'. She added that since the Cabinet Approval of 18 of the 19 recommendations, there has been a lot of progress and the inquiry has played an important role in helping to shape the priorities for the Cardiff Community Safety Partnership.

The importance of the Inquiry was acknowledged by a commitment in the Corporate Plan, since last addressing the scrutiny committee the Community Safety Partnership and Public Services Board have approved a new model of Governance and Engagement for Community Safety and rolling out of the Butetown Model as cited in the Inquiry report has been identified as the way forward in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour in Cardiff.

The Butetown Model has recently been reviewed and refreshed and established a further area based working group in Splott and Tremorfa.

Much of the work progressed has been around understanding the picture in Cardiff and making strides of improved partnership working across the public, private and third sectors. Some of the work progresses includes:

Embedding the Community Safety Partnership Model which includes area based working and County Lines and Exploitation of the vulnerable as two of its key priorities.

Improving partnership working, including mapping of existing arrangements and improved communication through the Community Safety network.

Engagement with partners across all sectors to discuss and agree improved ways of working both operationally and strategically; this was a key element of the workshop at the recent Community Safety Conference.

Linking with the Hubs who continue to play a key role in delivering opportunities and diversions for young people and some examples of these are set out in the Agenda Pack.

The Council playing a key role in the area planning board's substance misuse recommissioning strategy and that the work of this board reports to the Community Safety Governance Arrangements, that is a key theme in the Task and Finish Inquiry.

Making crucial links with the work of the Safeguarding Board in identifying and tackling vulnerabilities and contextual safeguarding.

Linking with the Police in a refresh of their problem solving groups and linking these with the area based working priorities.

Continue to support the work of the Into Work services who are playing a key role in supporting young people to transform their lives.

Working with the newly established Violence Reduction Unit, which will cover violence and vulnerabilities across the region.

Continue to work with colleagues in the third sector and improve the sharing of data and intelligence across partners.

The Cabinet Member added that it can be seen that there is a lot of work already going on but it is about bringing it all together and working together so going forward the main priority will be bringing all of the work into a wider action plan and ensuring there are strong partnership arrangements in place to add the issues highlighted in the inquiry report and across the range of priorities across Community Safety.

Members were provided with a presentation after which the Chairperson invited questions and comments;

Members noted that recommendation 18 seemed to be the lightest of them all and asked if there could be greater focus on this. Officers explained that the issues of tackling ASB were difficult to extract, there was so much going on that connects together to impact on ASB. Whilst there could be a move to enforcement in some areas, targeted intervention also works very well in lots of areas.

Members asked if enforcement was a separate issue and whether officers were apprehensive to take this route. Offices explained that the main focus was on prevention and a strength based approach; officers were not suggesting that there would be no enforcement, as there was already lots of enforcement activity such as public nuisance, noise and litter but the focus would be on prevention and to understand the problem you want to solve in the first place. The Cabinet Member added that there was lots already going on and it was all about bringing it all together and getting the different organisations talking to each other. The Task and Finish has given a focus to the Community Safety Partnership and the work it does; huge strides were being made and this needs to continue going forward. Because of this work and the work undertaken with the hubs, community are no longer afraid to speak to the police and this has been evidenced in Butetown and the increase in the number of successful drug raids.

Members referred to recommendations 15 and 16 and the action plan for improvement and timescales regarding social media. Officers stated that this is an areas that is quite difficult, it more work to do on the methodology. Schools have done some work in this area but it can be tricky to determine a national communication strategy. Officers added that this is a priority piece of work and they would be bringing together what kinds of messages/communication strands they want to use by the end of the financial year.

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.

49 : URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)

The Chairperson had been advised that Cllr Goddard has resigned as a Member of CASSC but wished to remain on the current Task & Finish.

The Chairperson sought Members agreement for Cllr Goddard to remain on the current Task & Finish.

RESOLVED: to agree that Councillor Goddard remain on the current Task and Finish inquiry.

50 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Community & Adult Services Scrutiny Committee is scheduled for 4 Dec at 4:30pm in Committee Room 4, County Hall, Cardiff.

The meeting terminated at 7.15 pm