



Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 20 April 2023
at 10 am at County Hall Norwich

Present:

Cllr Steve Morpew (Chair)
Cllr Lana Hemsall (Vice Chair)

Cllr Carl Annison
Cllr Lesley Bambridge
Cllr Phillip Duigan
Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris
Cllr Keith Kiddie
Cllr Brian Long

Cllr Ed Maxfield
Cllr Jamie Osborn
Cllr Brian Watkins
Cllr Fran Whymark (substitute for Cllr Richard Price)

Also, present (who took a part in the meeting):

Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance
Gary Heathcote	Director of Commissioning, Adult Social Care
Susanne Baldwin	Assistant Director Workforce, Markets and Brokerage, Adult Social Care
Tim Weller	Head of Integrated Quality Service, Adult Social Care
Christine Futter	Chief Operating Officer, Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd (who joined the meeting remotely)
Kat Hulatt	Head of Legal Services
Peter Randall	Democratic Support and Scrutiny Manager
Tim Shaw	Committee Officer

1A Opening remarks by the Chair --Former County Councillor Barry Duffin

The Chair asked Members of the Committee to hold a minute's silence, for the sad passing of Barry Duffin, Councillor for West Depwade, who died on Easter Sunday following an accident. Barry was an active member of the Scrutiny Committee. He also served on Norse and other Committees and had recently been appointed Vice Chair of Corporate Select Committee. Known for his hard work and commitment Barry was respected and liked by colleagues across the wide political spectrum; he would be missed.

1B Apologies for Absence

- 1B.1 Apologies were received from, Cllr Richard Price, Ms Helen Bates (Church Representative) and Mr Paul Dunning (Church Representative).

2 Minutes

The minutes of the previous meetings held on 16 March 2023 and 22 March 2023 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 Cllr Ed Maxfield declared an “other interest” because he worked for a charity that was in receipt of funding from Norfolk County Council.

4. Public Question Time

- 4.1 There were no public questions

5. Local Member Issues/Questions

- 5.1 There were no local member issues/questions.

6 Call In

- 6.1 The Committee noted that there were no call-in items.

7 Update on Recommendations to Cabinet from the Scrutiny Committee

- 7.1 The annexed report (7) was received.
- 7.2 The Scrutiny Committee received a report that set out the Cabinet response to recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee and discussed whether further action was required.
- 7.3 The response by the Cabinet and the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee on 6 March 2023 on the topic of Education Health and Care Plans was noted. It was **agreed** to examine this issue further at a future meeting and in particular what progress was being made in supporting families and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities going through the appeals process and reduce the length of time that the appeal process took to complete.

8. Adult Social Care – Overview of Care Market Quality and Improvement

- 8.1 The annexed report (8) was received.
- 8.2 The Scrutiny Committee received a report that provided an update on the current quality of care provision in Norfolk and the progress and impact of the improvement actions undertaken to date and planned.

- 8.3 During discussion of the report with Cllr Bill Borrett, (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention), Gary Heathcote, (Director of Commissioning), Susanne Baldwin (Assistant Director Workforce, Markets and Brokerage), Tim Weller (Head of Integrated Quality Service) and Christine Futter (Chief Operating Officer, Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd) who joined the meeting remotely, the following key points were noted:
- The Committee examined the quality of the care market in Norfolk and the role of Adult Social Services in overseeing the care market now and in the future.
 - The provision of Adult Social Care was a complicated mix of state-funded and privately financed care, provided in Norfolk by more than 450 independently owned businesses of various sizes, at prices determined by local market forces and the funding available to the Council.
 - Officers said that they were familiar with the workings of the Norfolk care market and the local geographical challenges that it faced. They understood their duties to shape the care market but do not control all the levers that were needed to do this effectively.
 - The County Council did, however, have a market sustainability plan to address the current market sustainability issues within residential, nursing and domiciliary care markets.
 - It was pointed out that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulated care providers for quality and reviewed and assessed local authority performance. There was, however, insufficient CQC capacity to undertake timely reviews of providers who were demonstrating significant quality improvements.
 - Officers said that there was a close relationship between CQC's current inspection requirements and the Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS) (an online assessment tool used to help assess the quality of care delivered by providers of adult social care services). PAMMS was used by most of the 11 authorities in the East of England and enabled an objective quality audit to be undertaken. It helped identify where Adult Social Services could provide additional support, signposting or referral to expert teams.
 - Members asked for the relationship between PAMMS and the work of the CQC in demonstrating significant quality improvements to be explored in more detail.
 - The Committee noted that there were significant variations in quality-of-care provision across Norfolk. There was no one area of the county that had good quality in all service types of care. Members said that they would welcome more detail about the care market at the local level as it was recognised that there were specific challenges in delivering services in some areas of the County.
 - The Committee discussed detailed issues of workforce resilience and provider sustainability.
 - Officers said that following Covid there was a high turnover and vacancy rates among the care workforce, as the sector struggled to compete with other industries on pay and conditions. The position in filling care vacancies had now started to improve.
 - Officers said that they would be working with the integrated Care Board to review the current care definitions and what was needed to ensure that the market was sustainable.

- The Cabinet Member said that current demographic trends in Norfolk suggested a greater demand for care and increasingly complex care needs in the future, resulting in care forming an ever-increasing proportion of the Council's expenditure. Future reforms were being put in place to tackle these growing challenges.
- The Cabinet Member also referred to strategic transformation projects which were already in place to help identify opportunities to re-shape the market and ensure that services were delivered in the best possible way.
- In reply to questions, it was pointed out that the Connecting Communities transformation programme was working in partnership with front line teams, voluntary sector partners, providers, and districts councils to shape new ways of working to help people live the lives they wanted.
- The Collaborative Care Market Review project was working with providers and the Integrated Care Board to review current service models and current and future projected demand to identify what needed to be done differently to ensure that there was a stable residential sector in Norfolk.
- In reply to questions from the Chair, it was pointed out that Adult Social Services would be willing to assist care providers in any way that it could who for one reason or another were looking to exit the care market.
- It was noted that the Council planned to follow through on key commitments it had made to develop a workforce strategy, to enhance training and career development and tackle recruitment and retention challenges, aligned with the NHS People Plan, where appropriate.
- The vacancy levels for social care workers within residential and nursing homes varied across the county. The highest levels were in North Norfolk which had some of the most expensive housing in the county. Disproportionately high-cost housing and land values in some areas of the county made it difficult to recruit and retain staff as they could not afford to buy or rent in these areas.
- Members of the Committee spoke about how in conjunction with District Councils and other partner organisations the County Council needed to develop a strategy for improving the experience of the workforce and in particular the range of accommodation and housing needed for those providing social care.

8.4 **The Committee RESOLVED:**

That the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee take up the following issues with the Chair of People and Communities Committee before Scrutiny Committee decide on those issues that should be brought back to Scrutiny Committee as part of its future work programme:

- **The relationship between Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection requirements and the assessments made by the Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS) (an online assessment tool used to help assess the quality of care delivered by providers of adult social care services) in assessing the quality of care provided in Norfolk. The Scrutiny Committee noted that PAMMS was used by most of the authorities in the East of England and enabled an objective**

quality audit to be undertaken. It helped identify where Adult Social Services could provide additional support, signposting or referral to expert teams.

- The impact the current cost of living squeeze was having on the development of the care market.
- Place based solutions to how the care market in Norfolk could be developed.
- How the County Council's plans to improve the long-term stability of the Norfolk care market was linked to other community strategies and those of its partners at a time of increasing demand for care. It was noted that current demographic trends in Norfolk suggested a greater demand for care and increasingly complex care needs in the future, resulting in care forming an ever-increasing proportion of the Council's expenditure.
- The Scrutiny Committee noted the Council's plans to follow through on key commitments it had made to enhance training and career development for social workers and to tackle recruitment and retention challenges. The plans needed to be broadened out to include more work with District Councils and other partner organisations to develop a strategy for improving the living experience of the workforce and the range of local accommodation and affordable housing they needed.

9 Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

9.1 The annexed report (9) was received.

9.2 RESOLVED

That the Committee:

Note the current forward work programme as set out in the appendix to the report (which would be discussed in detail at a training session for Scrutiny Committee members at the end of this meeting)

The meeting concluded at 11.30 pm

Chair