



**People and Communities Select Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held on 14 July 2023 at 10am
in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Norwich**

Present:

Cllr Fran Whymark (Chair)	Cllr Michael Dalby
Cllr Ed Connolly (Vice-Chair)	Cllr Brenda Jones
Cllr Tim Adams	Cllr Brian Long
Cllr Sharon Blundell	Cllr Paul Neale

Substitute Members Present:

Cllr Chrissie Rumsby for Cllr Mike Smith-Clare

Also Present

Titus Adam	Head of Strategic Finance
Susanne Baldwin	Assistant Director Workforce, Markets and Brokerage; Adult Social Services
Debbie Bartlett	Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services
Michael Bateman	Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Partnerships, Children's Services
Samantha Fletcher	Interim Assistant Director, Education Strategy and Infrastructure, Children's Services
Christine Futter	Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support, representing Norfolk Care Association
Isabel Horner	Sufficiency Delivery Manager, Children's Services
Tim Weller	Head of Integrated Quality Service, Adult Social Services
Helen Wright	External Workforce Manager

1. Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Claire Bowes, Cllr Julian Kirk and Cllr Mike Smith-Clare (Chrissie Rumsby substituting)

2. Minutes of last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2023 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.
- 2.2 The Select Committee noted the following information which was circulated to them following the meeting of the 19 May 2023:
- At the meeting of 19 May Select Committee members requested:
 - officers' definition of health as applied in the Public Health Strategic Plan.
 - information on what chemicals were in vapes and information about the tobacco control alliance
 - information on the programme of safe accommodation provided to sufferers of domestic abuse across Norfolk and the predicted future demand

- Responses to these requests for information were circulated to the Select Committee on 7 July 2023; see appendix A of these minutes
- An update on Carers Matter Norfolk was circulated to the Select Committee on 12 July 2023 following an earlier request for an update on the Carers Social Impact Bond. See appendix B of these minutes.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 No interests were declared

4. Urgent business.

4.1 No urgent business was discussed.

5. Public Questions

5.1 No public questions were received.

6. Member Questions and Issues

6.1 No Member questions were received.

7. Norfolk Adult Social Care Quality Framework

7.1.1 The Select Committee received the report giving information on the work and progress of the Integrated Care System Social Care Quality Improvement Programme and the framework approach we are taking to address quality improvement from all parts of the Council and the wider health and social care system.

7.1.2 The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services and the Assistant Director Workforce, Markets and Brokerage, introduced the report to the Select Committee:

- At the last meeting in May 2023, a report was brought discussing the Market Position Statement and work being carried out in the care market. This report set out how work was progressing in this area.
- External organisations were working with the Council on this piece of work.
- A 0.1% drop in care quality had been seen this month, however, overall, an incremental improvement had been seen.
- There was a focus on feedback, working with Healthwatch Norfolk, to ensure a strong voice from providers and people using the services, their carers and families.
- The commissioning strategy and contract management was important as there was a lot of care commissioned by the council.
- Data and culture were key components of the work, including links with Adults Safeguarding Board and looking at the culture in the council and more widely to ensure people were confident
- This programme had been fully operational for around 8 months and there were strong developments to keep this piece of work on track.

7.1.3 The Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support spoke to the Select Committee via video link:

- Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd had supported the quality improvement board as the voice of Norfolk Care Association. There were 6 workstreams,

the first of which was provider lead. This workstream were undertaking 2 pieces of work: peer to peer support and workshops on excellence in practice

- The framework had been created by providers for providers and was created to enhance and promote work to ensure providers could put quality at the forefront.

7.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- At the last meeting in May 2023, it was noted that meeting the target of 85% good and outstanding care providers would be hard to achieve. This target would be kept, with recognition that there was a complex issue within the re-inspection system. Quality monitoring visits were carried out to care providers in the interim between re-inspection. It was **agreed** that this data could be circulated to members of the Select Committee.
- The Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support agreed that achieving the 85% target would be challenging and depended on the Care Quality Commission returning to reinspect providers. Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd worked with the council to bring providers together to support each other with quality improvement. Good and outstanding providers were matched with those rated inadequate or requires improvement for 3 day peer support. This allowed for quick improvements to be made. Workshops were also provided, focussing on key areas to allow providers to work together, mitigating some of the issues around lack of funding. The Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support was encouraged by the level of interest for the 3-day peer to peer support, with 13 expressions of interest from good and outstanding providers and 9 from those needing support to improve.
- Concern was raised that inspectors did not visit private care settings and learning disability settings and whether contract monitoring would be provided for such settings. Officers reported that there was a pilot in place for people with learning disabilities living in residential services to support Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS) activity; training had been provided for these experts who would support reviewing officers by speaking to residents one to one or along with an officer.
- Officers clarified that some learning disability and mental health settings were commissioned by health; in this case, Norfolk County Council did not review them. If a setting was jointly commissioned by Health as well as Social Care, Norfolk County Council did review them. There were about 6 mental health settings registered by the Care Quality Commission which were commissioned by Health. Discussions were underway around how issues around how quality reviewing of these settings could be remedied moving forward.
- It was confirmed that contract monitoring was not a single function within social care but happened across a range of areas. This was a recognised area for improvement and there would be a contract segmentation approach moving forward.
- Concerns were raised about the amount of change needed at some care providers, and in some cases that this may be impacted by staffing shortages. The Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support replied that the three days of peer support may not be enough to make required changes for all providers. Non-compliant providers would either be taken out of the market or choose to leave; however it was important to note that most providers in the county provided good care.

- The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services added that officers were aware of the issues of poor care, and there had been a renewed focus from the safeguarding summit on how organisations focussed on safeguarding individuals. The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services **suggested** that the approach to commissioning, setting out the standards and expectations which partners signed up to was brought to a future Select Committee meeting.
- It was suggested that the Council should lobby for the Care Quality Commission to inspect providers in a more reactive way, with more timely re-inspections. The Chair agreed that this would be beneficial; the Provider Assessment and Market Management Solution (PAMMS) inspections helped provide information on the quality at providers in-between Care Quality Commission inspections.
- The Council had increased the fee levels given to providers as much as possible to allow providers to pay their staff higher wages. A care sector job evaluation framework had been carried out, benchmarking the skills and expertise of care staff against those of other sectors. On average, care workers with similar experience were paid £1 less per hour, increasing up the scale. This tool was planned for use in campaigning about the value of social care. It was agreed that the care sector should have more parity of pay with similar jobs in other sectors such as health.
- It was noted that staff vacancies in the sector would likely be having an impact on quality.

- 7.3 The Select Committee noted and discussed the content of this report, providing the following suggestions:
- That the Council pursue a more timely regime of review inspections from the CQC following requires improvement or inadequate inspection outcomes.
 - That data on quality visits be provided to the Select Committee

8 Adult Social Care Reform update

- 8.1.1 The Select Committee received the report providing an update on the work underway in readiness for the implementation of social care reform.
- 8.1.2 The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services introduced the report to the Select Committee
- The report followed up from a previous report to the Select Committee, and set out the work continued from the original piece of work in this area
 - key areas being looked at included reviewing: the skills mix to support increased demand; the digital offering for working with people; and engaging with people on reform
- 8.2 The following points were discussed and noted:
- Officers were asked what new funding would be provided to ensure this piece of work was meaningful and what more could be achieved with the digital offer. The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services replied that officers were reviewing to see what could be done to make processes simpler to help staff capacity, for example providing data at a quick glance.
 - Officers would continue to review the online offer to ensure that as many services could be carried out easily online by customers, while also ensuring that those who did not have access to the internet could have access to alternative options.

- The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services confirmed that the overlay to the case management system to allow care account functionality was being tested on a small group of people and staff to ensure it was easy to use.

8.3 The Select Committee:

- a) Considered the readiness opportunities for the introduction of Supported Self Assessment
- b) Reviewed the work under this programme

9 Refresh of the Norfolk and Waveney Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy

9.1.1 The Select Committee received the report setting out background to the workforce strategy published in 2021, an overview of the challenges, funding and priorities since the launch of the strategy, an overview of the current adult social care workforce landscape in Norfolk, actions and progress achieved to date, findings from the review of the Strategy and Implementation plan two years on and the proposed priority actions for the refreshed implementation plan

9.1.2 The Assistant Director Workforce, Markets and Brokerage, Adult Social Services, introduced the report to the Select Committee:

- Some of the workforce challenges seen were not unique to the social care sector. These challenges were critical for the sector to ensure staff had access to good careers, training and development and that providers were good employers.
- Achievements to date included the Social Care Academy, work with schools and colleges and work with Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd, which had allowed the recruitment campaign and careers site to be extended.
- A key priority was working with Suffolk County Council to develop a sector skills plan working with schools, colleges, Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd and others to provide a range of training opportunities.
- The service would link up with economic development teams to link with wider skills strategies and the county deal to unlock future funding to support the work of the strategy.

9.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support reported that North Norfolk, Broadland and South Norfolk District Councils were supported through the Health and wellbeing Partnerships and further support had been given by Norfolk County Council to run the 3 Care Academies. The most recent one was in King's Lynn, working with the College of East Anglia and the job centre. This was promoted through local papers and social media and involved a week-long training course followed up by seeking employment for trainees.
- A Select Committee Member raised concern about MPs campaigning against this strategy noting that it was important to see wages rise in this sector and that senior qualified staff should not be removed from the sector due to their nationality.
- The importance of ancillary staff who support the good running of care homes alongside care workers was noted, such as cooks, cleaners, maintenance workers, advocates and porters. Health Education England funding was being used to highlight the importance of such roles; they were

discussed in schools and colleges alongside putting in specific training where appropriate.

- It was noted as a concern that the social care training programme was no longer funded.
- Placements and apprenticeships were carried out in social care settings as a way to introduce people to care.
- The Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Services thanked the Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support for her work over the years as a driver of improvement and advocate of social care. The Select Committee thanked the Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support for her work and wished her a happy retirement.
- The Chair asked about the figures on page 102 of the report which showed an 8.7% vacancy rate. He asked if records of retention rates of people who had been through Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd were kept for future support. The Chief Operating Officer of Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support replied that data on how long people stayed required a high level of resource to obtain due to GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) meaning staff had to seek out the data. Vacancies in social care had dropped by 7% and there had been a 1% increase in posts filled, showing a positive trajectory. It would be important to have an appropriately funded workforce plan for social care to make real changes in the sector.
- The Skills for Care survey was carried out nationally and would help improve the Norfolk strategy.

9.3 The Select Committee reviewed and discussed the paper and revised priorities.

9.4 The Select Committee took a break from 11:52 until 12:05. Cllr Michael Dalby left the meeting during the break.

10 Schools' capital programmes

10.1.1 The Select Committee received the report setting out the schools' capital programmes for mainstream and specialist places across Norfolk.

10.1.2 The Sufficiency Delivery Manager, Children's Services, introduced the report to the Select Committee:

- There was external grant funding available, but the programme was dependent on borrowing for its delivery.
- Paragraph 2.10 of the report showed that a number of schemes were completed in 2023-23, including a new primary school in Cringleford. More schemes were in progress to ensure the Council was meeting its requirements for adequate school places.
- Expansions to existing schools and new schools would be built in response to housing developments, with a demographic peak being seen in secondary schools.
- A key project to note was the relocation and expansion of the Fred Nicholson school to Swaffham.
- Governance for programmes was overseen by the Capital Priorities Group and the Executive Director of Children's Services, with delegation from Cabinet, made decisions on changes to the budget.

10.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- It was noted that the amount of delegated capital to schools had reduced.

- The Vice-Chair queried a proposed school development in their local area which was being discouraged by Norfolk County Council. The Sufficiency Delivery Manager replied that officers considered the impact of building additional classrooms in an area on other schools and the surrounding area. If a project would have an impact on existing schools, then the Council would discourage it. The Sufficiency Delivery Manager, Children's Services to discuss this specific query if required with the Vice Chair.
- The provision available for children with Special, Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) older than 16 was queried. The Assistant Director, SEND Strategic Improvement and Partnerships, confirmed that complex needs schools provided provision for children aged 3-19 and schools specialising in support for Autism and Social Emotional and Mental Health provided provision for children aged 5-16 so that these children could be supported into mainstream further education. A decision was being awaited on two more special schools; one of these would specialise in support for autism and one for complex needs.
- The expansion of Downham Market school was noted as positive, which would help reduce travel times for children. It was further noted that Local First Inclusion would support reducing travel time for children to their places of education, although this may take time to implement due to not moving children from their existing schools unnecessarily.
- A multiplier was used to calculate the number of children likely to live in new housing developments, which was used alongside real data of children being born in that area.
- Work was being done with housing teams to look at the obligations standards to see what could be done to develop contributions for pupils with SEND.
- The Chair asked about availability of Educational Psychologists. There was a grow your own strategy in place for Educational Psychologists which was supporting improvement in this area.
- Officers were not aware of any schools requiring replacement due to structural issues. There was a greater issue seen around the suitability of existing buildings to meet the changing needs of children, which could give a high capital cost to the Council.

10.3 The Select Committee:

1. Received the report on the proposed schools' capital programmes for mainstream and SEND investment prior to the presentation to Cabinet, including:
 - understanding the proposed SEND programme of capital investment in the context of the DFE 'safety valve' in support of the Local First Inclusion Strategy
 - noting the individual projects set out at Annex A of the report.
2. Considered the revised draft Terms of Reference for Capital Priorities Group at Annex B of the report and agreed proposed plan for future oversight of the development of the schools' capital programmes

11 Financial and Strategic Planning 2024-25

- 11.1.1 The Select Committee received the report setting out the beginning of the Council's budget setting process for 2024-25 and providing an opportunity for the Select Committee to give its view on priorities and the approach to preparing budget proposals for the services within its remit.

11.1.2 The Head of Strategic Finance introduced the report to the Select Committee:

- The report marked the start of the process for preparing a 2024-25 balanced budget to go to council in February 2024
- Work was underway to develop budget proposals and forecast savings were currently around £46m, which was lower than for 2023-24
- There was a focus on developing savings that would provide transformation and not impact on frontline services.
- Costs were driven by the rural nature of Norfolk, the demography of the county and the complexity of demand for services; inflation continued to be high and would continue into 2024-25.
- Council continued to work with Government, relaying information on the financial issues being experienced and the need for more funding. The financial settlement for 2023-24 was a one year settlement and there were indications for the 2024-25 settlement however the clear picture would not be known until around November 2023.
- Table 1 of the report showed the medium term financial statement position and table 2 showed modelling of cost pressures provided for in 2024-25, resulting in a £146m gap over the years 2024-28
- Savings would be sought in the context of the whole council. £10m would be sought through transformation from the strategic review work.
- There would be two opportunities for the select committee to be engaged with throughout the process before February 2024.

11.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- The Head of Strategic Finance confirmed that historically there had been an assumption when planning budgets that there would be a roll-over of settlements; the Government was thinking that there would be a similar settlement in 2024-25 but recognition had been given for inflation in the planning.
- There had been an allocation in 2023-24 budget around pay. The current year's pay award had not yet been agreed so this was recognised but there was sufficient in the budget to fund this unless a higher award was agreed.
- Officers were asked if the Council was close to defaulting on paying any care providers. The Head of Strategic Finance confirmed that at that time the Council was cash-rich and not close to defaulting on payments, with no issues on paying bills being seen at that time. There was a focus on ensuring a balanced budget to ensure financial stability across the Council.
- The Council had repeated its ask to Government on what it needed financially however it was unlikely that there would be a substantial overhaul of the Government funding system. The concerns expressed by the care sector had been heard which was that they would like a longer term settlement and funding to deliver services in a rural area.

11.3 The Select Committee:

1. **CONSIDERED** the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy position as reported to Cabinet in June 2023 (Appendix 1), noting in particular the following elements as set out in the appended report, which form the context for 2024-25 budget setting:
 - a) the budget gap for 2024-25 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) period.
 - b) The Departmental saving targets.
 - c) The overall timetable and approach to developing the 2024-25 Budget.

2. **AGREED** that the Select Committee will provide input to the 2024-25 Budget process in July (this meeting) and in November, with the latter (November) report providing an opportunity to comment on the detailed savings proposals being taken to public consultation.
3. **CONSIDERED** the key issues for 2024-25 budget setting as they pertain to the services within the Select Committee's remit (as set out in this paper, the appended Cabinet report, and the 2023-24 Budget Book), and in particular to endorse:
 - a) The overall service strategies as set out within the 2023-24 Budget Book.
 - b) The budget setting principles set out in Section 3 of the appended Cabinet report, which will provide the broad framework for savings development for services within the Select Committee's remit.
4. **CONSIDERED** specific areas of activity that the Select Committee would recommend exploring for savings development, in order to provide input to the 2024-25 budget process and inform the saving proposals put forward to Cabinet later in the year.

12 Forward Work Programme

- 12.1 The Select Committee reviewed the Forward Plan.
- 12.2 It was noted that the school transport report would be moved to November.
- 12.3 The Vice-Chair thanked the Chair for his work on the alcohol and drug task and finish group.
- 12.4 The Select Committee:
 1. **AGREED** the forward plan
- 12.5 The Select Committee agreed:
 - That the briefing on Home Schooling would be removed from the forward plan. A training session to be arranged for all members on this topic, following on from this being considered at Children's Services Performance Review Panel.
 - That the briefing on the music service would be removed from the forward plan and that information on successes and achievements of this service be collated to go in the weekly briefing to all Councillors. Officers would keep this topic under review and bring a report to the Select Committee if any changes relevant for the Select Committee to review and discuss arise.

The Meeting Closed at 12:51

**Cllr Fran Whymark, Chair,
People and Communities Select Committee**

Appendix A: response to Committee Member request for definition of health as applied in the Public Health Strategic Plan

Response to request by Member for definition of health as applied in the Public Health Strategic Plan:

The Public Health Strategic Plan 'Ready to Change...Ready to Act' presented at People & Communities Select Committee on 19 May 2023 refers to health starting from definition of Public Health as being, "The science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health through organised efforts of society". With health defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (WHO, 1948). In the context of the NCC Public Health strategic plan applying this to being about physical health, mental health, and wellbeing.

In addition, national government sets out the statutory duties of Directors of Public Health (DsPH) in Local Authorities which includes:

'DsPH will continue to play a key role as we face ongoing and new challenges, including action to increase healthy life expectancy, tackle health disparities and protect our communities from communicable and non-communicable diseases and other threats to health.'

Along with a leadership role spanning all 3 domains of public health – health improvement, health protection and healthcare public health. In doing so required to lead work to improve local population health by understanding the factors that determine health and ill health, and how to change behaviour and promote health and wellbeing in ways that also reduce health inequalities.

The Public Health Strategic Plan 'Ready to Change...Ready to Act' sets out approach to population health by working to improve and protect our population's health by promoting healthy lifestyles and supporting people to make healthy choices. Furthermore, to provide focus to some of the wider, indirect health impacts as highlighted by the pandemic, for example on mental health, healthy weight, children's health, and engagement with public health services. Public Health taking a leadership role in providing data and evidence to inform on improving health outcomes and promoting access to preventative health and wellbeing support services. Working closely with place-based organisations in efforts to secure better public health including considering the health aspects of planning, housing and air quality.

Tobacco Control Alliance

The Norfolk Tobacco Control Alliance was reformed following the Covid19 pandemic in 2021 with an inaugural workshop in October 2021.

Norfolk Tobacco Control Alliance provides strategic leadership for tobacco control in Norfolk and for the delivery of the Norfolk Tobacco Control Strategy.

The vision for the TCA is a '**Smokefree Norfolk by 2030**'.

The Alliance works in partnership across agencies within and outside Norfolk to ensure robust tobacco control practice. It will:

- a) Tackle the priorities set out by Tobacco Control Plan for England and associated policies and guidance.
- b) Provide leadership for the Tobacco Control agenda in Norfolk
- c) Revise, develop and implement the Norfolk Tobacco Control Strategy and action plan.
- d) Monitor the performance of tobacco control activities against targets set for each priority
- e) Highlight/promote current practice of the Alliance and its partners
- f) Provide a forum for the development of multi-agency funding opportunities
- g) Continue to develop partnerships with relevant organisations
- h) Maintain a clear understanding of mainstream funding and ensure smoking cessation links closely with the tobacco control work stream.
- i) Sharing best practice
- j) Provide a forum to understand health need in the population
- k) Stimulating innovation to reduce smoking in Norfolk

The Alliance is chaired by the Consultant in Public Health with a lead for adult health improvement and reports to the N&W NHS ICS's Health Improvement Transformation Group. A core group has been established to drive forward the work, with two other sub-groups focusing on Smoking in Pregnancy and Children and Young People.

Tobacco Control Alliance includes the following member organisations:

Local Government:

- Norfolk County Council Public Health
- Norfolk County Council Trading Standards
- Norfolk County Council Communications
- District, Borough and City council Environmental Health Services

Other Public Sector organisations:

- Fire and Rescue Service
- Children Centres

Third Sector:

- Voluntary Norfolk
- Community Action Norfolk

NHS:

- Norfolk Stop smoking service provider(s)
- Local Pharmacy Committee
- Health Psychology
- ICS/HITG
- Acute Trusts
- Community Trusts
- Mental Health Trust
- Norfolk Healthy Child Programme (Cambridgeshire Community Services)
- Primary care

Academic

- UEA
- School Governors
- Further Education representative

Other Organisations/Communities

- Housing associations
- User groups

Others may be invited to attend the meetings to discuss specific items or proposals as the project progresses, for example to provide specialist/expert information.

For any further questions please contact the Chair

Ciceley Scarborough

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Vaping information - Technical

E-cigarettes are a battery-powered device that heats a solution, usually containing nicotine, to produce a vapour that is inhaled by the user and simulates the sensation of smoking. An e-cigarette user is often referred to as a 'vape' with the action referred to as 'vaping'. Other components of the solution are vegetable glycerine, propylene glycol and, usually, flavourings. Unlike tobacco cigarettes, they do not contain tobacco, and using an e-cigarette does not involve burning, meaning they don't produce tar or carbon monoxide which are two of the most harmful components of tobacco smoking¹

Vapes are not recommended for people under 18 years old and cannot be sold to people who are under 18 years old.

To find out more about vaping go to this NHS website:

[Using e-cigarettes to stop smoking - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/stop4me/stop-smoking/using-e-cigarettes-to-stop-smoking)

For any further questions please contact

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¹ [adph-south-east-position-statement-on-electronic-cigarettes-dps-v8-opt.pdf \(stopforlifeoxon.org\)](https://www.stopforlifeoxon.org/adph-south-east-position-statement-on-electronic-cigarettes-dps-v8-opt.pdf)

Appendix A: response to Committee Member request for information on the programme of safe accommodation provided to sufferers of domestic abuse across Norfolk and the predicted future demand

Duties under Part 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requires Tier 1 authorities to:

- Conduct a comprehensive needs analysis of the prevalence and support needs of adults and children as victim-survivors of domestic abuse.
- Formulate and enact a strategy that meets the identified support needs of both adults and children.
- Operate a Local Partnership Board, with designated representation/membership to oversee and monitor the implementation of the strategy.

The Norfolk Office of Data and Analytics (NODA) was published in September 2021 the main point in relation to Member request is that in Norfolk (at that time) it was estimated that 38 bedspaces were required (over and above the 54 bedspaces in refuge for women only already provided). The information provided by the Needs Assessment were used to help formulate the Support in Safe Accommodation Strategy for Norfolk (which was agreed by the Norfolk Domestic Abuse Partnership Board – NDAPB). There are 5 clear aims of the Strategy:

1. **Increase the amount and flexibility of safe accommodation**
2. **Improve engagement with victim-survivors of domestic abuse**
3. **Improve the quality of support and safe accommodation**
4. **Support children in safe accommodation**
5. **Improve data intelligence**

Over the past year (April 2022-March 2023) we have:

Accommodation

- 10 new properties (amounting to 30 new bedspaces) have increased capacity and additional support has been commissioned. 11 bedspaces are exclusively for women, but 19 can be used by any adult and their children. This creates greater flexibility as to how we use capacity efficiently and effectively. In addition, victim-survivors have greater choice and there is less pressure on refuges. The additional properties have increased our ability to accommodate those who require accessible accommodation; an increase of 3 units (7 in total).
- Grant funding to the 7 districts in Norfolk now means that victim-survivors at standard and medium risk can stay safely in their own homes, regardless of tenure type. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk (OPCCN) commission NIDAS to provide a Sanctuary Service to those at high risk. This has resulted in a full Sanctuary Service offer to victim-survivors in Norfolk. The use of target hardening measures (such as additional locks or cameras) means that victim-survivors can choose to stay safely in their own homes. This ensures that adults and children can maintain their education and family networks, and employment can be sustained where required. In addition, this decreases pressure on the demand for refuge and dispersed accommodation (as forms of safe accommodation).

Victim-survivor engagement

- An Engagement Framework has been produced, and an engagement working group has been created to further our commitment to future co-production. Representation includes victim-survivors, representation from district councils, commissioned providers, and Registered Providers. Work is currently focused on finalising an engagement tool through a test and learn process.

Quality

- A Quality Assessment Framework (QAF) has been produced to drive and continuously improve quality of safe accommodation, through regular auditing and scrutiny of commissioned services.
- Funding has been provided to district authorities and Registered Providers who own safe accommodation, to achieve Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance Accreditation. This ensures our continued commitment to the whole housing approach in Norfolk.

Children

- We commissioned additional support in refuges where previously support had not been provided; this has ensured a consistent approach across safe accommodation. In addition, a new Specification now includes a clear overview of the types of support that should be provided to children. This ensures the quality of support being provided in all safe accommodation is consistent and of a high standard, and able to be monitored through the new QAF and our regular contract review meetings.

Intelligence

- A new monitoring workbook has been designed and completed by providers. This ensures data collection is streamlined to meet our DELTA return requirements and improve intelligence for our needs assessment.

A refreshed Needs Assessment (in draft) has estimated that, bearing in mind the additional accommodation secured during the year that the case is that 8 additional bedspaces are required. However, it is worth noting that as there is little data evidencing the needs of males and/or LGBTQ+ communities that this need may be higher, so we will endeavour to go look beyond this current unmet need. In the pipeline we have an additional 4 properties in South Norfolk (again dispersed accommodation which has greater flexibility) and 6 flats for those facing multiple disadvantage (i.e. complex needs – higher levels of mental health acuity/drug and/or alcohol use etc).

People and Communities Select Committee

Report Title: Carers Matter Norfolk - Briefing

Date of Meeting: 14.7.23

Responsible Cabinet Member: Cllr Borrett (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention)

Responsible Director: Debbie Bartlett

Executive Summary

This briefing details the successes of our commissioned Carers Matter Norfolk service, which launched in 2020, and supports adult carers caring for adults. The service supports thousands of carers in Norfolk each year, with information, advice, assessment and support.

It is delivered via a Social Impact Bond, and the contract is outcomes based. We are supported by the Life Chances Fund, who part fund our outcomes payments to Carers Matter Norfolk.

We are also supported by the Institute for Public Care, who act as an external evaluator to the Social Impact Bond. They are currently working on a report which will tell us how well the Carers Matter Norfolk service is doing at preventing Carer Breakdown. They have previously shared with us the carer's experience of using the service, and changes have been made to the assessment process so that carers are better supported moving forward.

1. Background and Purpose

1.1 On 1 September 2020, we launched the new Carers Matter Norfolk service, which offers an enhanced service for adult carers caring for adults in Norfolk. Under the Carers Matter Norfolk service, carers can access:

- A single integrated service for Carers in Norfolk that will help improve the quality and number of services for carers
- A flexible service that can respond to individual carers needs more effectively
- Information, advice, guidance and Carers Assessments
- A health and wellbeing fund to support carers when they need it
- A short breaks service for carers who need a break from their caring role,
- All being delivered by experienced, value driven, outcome focussed third sector providers

1.2 The Carers Matter Norfolk contract is delivered as a Social Impact Bond, meaning the service is only paid once they achieve one of three main outcomes for a

carer. Alongside this, we are working with the Life Chances Fund, who support a number of Social Impact Bonds across the country. As part of their support to this contract they offer top up funding of £4.1m which part funds each of our outcome payments to Carers Matter Norfolk.

1.3 The contract is focussed on three main outcomes. Our three key outcomes are:

- Sustainment of the caring role – measured by prevention of carer breakdown at 6 and 12 months
- Increased numbers of carers known and understood by Norfolk – measured by the number of unique, new to the service, carers referred into the service.
- Carers wellbeing improvement – measured by carers improving their wellbeing assessment score at 6 and 12 months

2. Carers Matter Norfolk Performance

2.1 Overall, the Carers Matter Norfolk service is performing well. In 2022/23 they had over 3,587 unique carers referred to them, of which 3,184 carers were new to the Carers Matter Norfolk service. In 2022/23 they also:

- Triaged 2,061 carers
- Offered low level support to 1,258 carers
- Offered high level support to 493 carers
- 219 carers were received support from the Health and Wellbeing Fund
- 529 carers breaks were received, totalling 2,713 hours

2.2 To ensure Carers Matter Norfolk are delivering good outcomes for carers, and offer us good value for money, an external evaluation of the contract is being completed by the Institute of Public Care as part of Oxford Brookes University. They are currently undertaking a large piece of research which aims to:

- Develop a better understanding of “carer breakdown” and implications for services
- Explore the relationship between needs and risks, wellbeing and carer breakdown
- Understand the success of the Carers Matter Norfolk service in preventing carer breakdown, and associated care costs with this
- Seeing how the service has acted on the Year 1 Institute of Public Care Report

In undertaking this research the Institute of Public Care are utilising:

- Carer Surveys
- Carer Interviews
- Professional Surveys
- Carers Matter Norfolk Staff Interviews
- Analysis of Case Files

2.3 Following the Year 1 Evaluation Report from the Institute of Public Care, we learnt that carers felt the level of assessment they underwent in the service was disproportionate to the level of support they then received from Carers Matter Norfolk. Based on this feedback Carers Matter Norfolk have reduced the number of assessments being undertaken, whilst ensuring carers are afforded the same level of support.

2.4 It was also identified that carers were having to tell their story a number of times as they moved through the Carers Matter Norfolk system. To combat this, over the previous six months Carers Matter Norfolk have invested in a new self-assessment tool which allows carers to explain their situation at a time and pace which suits them. This allows Carers Matter Norfolk to use this information to have more meaningful conversations with carers about what matters to them. It also enables Carers Matter Norfolk to get carers to the appropriate team for support without having the carer go through a lengthy assessment process involving multiple different professionals. Carers who were involved in developing the new self-assessment approach reported that they felt the self-assessment form put carers first, made them feel listened too, and the questions made them feel valued as a carer. They preferred having a form to fill in at their own pace, when it suited them to fill it in, and found the subsequent conversations more positive.

2.5 Carers Matter Norfolk is committed to putting carers at the heart of everything they do. As part of their approach to service development, Carers Matter Norfolk carry out regular targeted focus groups with Carers accessing the service to understand carer experience and discuss service changes. They also gather feedback from individual carers, through Locality Meetings and at Carers Advisory Board to understand the thoughts and feelings of carers who don't necessarily access the service.

2.6 Overall, since the introduction of the new Carers Matter Norfolk Social Impact Bond, we have seen an increase in the number of carers being referred to and supported by the service. We have also seen the service respond to feedback from carers and our external evaluation partner, Institute for Public Care, and improve their services to better support carers in Norfolk. The current work being undertaken by the Institute for Public Care will help us understand how the service is reducing carer breakdown, and further our understanding of how carer wellbeing will affect carer breakdown.

3. Background Papers

[A Social Impact Bond for Carers Report](#)

Norfolk County Council – Cabinet – 2 December 2019

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If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.