

## **Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

### **Minutes of the Meeting**

**Date: Tuesday 7 January 2014**

**Time: 10 am**

**Venue: Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich**

#### **Present:**

Mr B Bremner  
Ms E Corlett  
Mr D Crawford  
Mrs S Gurney (Chairman)  
Mr B Hannah  
Mr H Humphrey

Mr J Mooney  
Mr W Richmond  
Mr E Seward  
Mr M Smith  
Mrs M Somerville

#### **Substitute Members Present:**

Mr A Dearnley for Mrs E Morgan  
Mr T Garrod for Mr W Northam  
Mr R Smith for Mrs A Thomas  
Mr J Ward for Mr J Law

#### **Also Present:**

Mr D Roper, Non-Voting Cabinet Member for Public Protection  
Ms S Whitaker, Non-Voting Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care  
Mrs M Wilkinson, Non-Voting Cabinet Member for Communities

#### **Officers/Others Present:**

Harold Bodmer, Director of Community Services  
Janice Dane, Interim Assistant Director Prevention and Transformation, Community Services (Adult Social Care)  
Jeremy Bone, Senior Planning Performance and Partnerships Officer, Resources  
Ann Baker, Vice-Chairman of the Norfolk Strategic Board for Older People  
Jill Perkins, Business Support Manager, Community Services (Adult Social Care)  
Jennifer Holland, Assistant Director of Community Services, Head of Libraries and Information  
Richard Pendlebury, ICES Business manager, Community Services (Adult Social Care)  
Peter Timmins, Interim Head of Finance  
Debbie Olley, Assistant Director of Community Services, Safeguarding (Adult Social Care)  
Mike Forrester Community Services, Interim Finance Business Partner, Community Services (Adult Social Care)

Lorna Bright, Community Services  
Karen O'Hara Community Services  
Catherine Underwood, Director of Integrated Commissioning, Community Services  
John Perrott, Business Support Manager, Community Services (Adult Social Care)  
Maureen Orr, Scrutiny Support, Resources  
Stephen Andreassen, Strategic Risk Manager, Resources  
Anne Gibson Chief Executive (Acting)  
Colin Sewell, Planning, Performance and Partnerships Manager, Resources  
Jo Maule, Resources  
Richard Bearman, County Councillor  
Dr Marie Strong, County Councillor

## **1 Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms J.Brociek-Coulton, Mr A Grey, Mr J Law, Mrs E Morgan, Mr W Northam, Mrs A Thomas and Mr J Law.

## **2 Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 November 2013 were confirmed by the Panel and signed by the Chairman.

## **3 Declarations of Interest**

Mr E Seward declared an "Other Interest" in that his daughter was employer by an organisation entitled "About with Friends" at Cromer.

## **4 Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

## **5 Public Question Time**

Mr James Kearns asked:

"Norfolk County Council has invested over £1m into the BUILD Charity over the last 12 years to actively encourage and develop community based social, leisure and learning activities for adults with disabilities.

Given this recommended action, what is the change from the current position, how will this make the required NCC savings, and will this new guidance be easily available to assist people who use the services, and those that provide them, to establish whether an activity is regarded as "well-being" or not?"

With the approval of the Chairman the following answer was presented by the Director of Community Services:

"Please note that these are budget proposals only at this stage. The final decision on the budget will be made by the full County Council on 17th February. If the proposal is accepted the change from the current position in the personal budget calculation will give less weighting to questions on 'being part of your community' in the personal budget questionnaire. This will result in reduced personal budgets for a number of people with a

consequent saving to the purchase of care budget. Details of the proposal following public consultation can be found on page 44 of the agenda papers for this meeting.

We will reissue the current guidance on personal budgets and this will be available to people who use services and those who provide services.”

Mr James Kearns then asked the following supplementary question:

“What guidance will be made available to those members of the public who require a varied support plan to meet their needs?”

With the approval of the Chairman, the following answer was provided by the Director of Community Services:

“If the budget proposals for adult social services are accepted by the full Council then the guidance on personal budgets will be reissued to all those who receive a support plan and applied consistently across the Department.”

## **6 Local Member Issues/Member Questions**

There were no local Member issues or local Member questions.

## **7 Cabinet Member Feedback**

The annexed report (7) by the Cabinet Member for Community Services was received.

The Cabinet Member for Public Protection thanked all the staff and volunteers who had dealt with flooding caused by recent storm and tidal surges over the Christmas period, in many cases working all hours of the day to ensure that communities received help. He also said that a local agreement had been reached with the Fire Brigades Union regarding dealing with emergencies during the current period of industrial action, and that this had been invoked on two occasions where lives were in danger. The Cabinet Member continued that there had been several periods of industrial action since the last meeting. As on previous occasions cover of approximately 50% had been maintained. The Cabinet Member added that he had attended the first meeting of the new Rehabilitation Board which had been organised by the Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care thanked all the County Council’s emergency staff who had worked over the Christmas period, during which 115 calls for help had been received and all but twelve of the calls had involved adult social services. She said that the three acute hospitals in Norfolk were very busy and that adult social services were moving towards seven day a week working in order to carry out assessments where necessary to help to prevent bed blocking. The Cabinet Member said that she had recently attended a Norfolk Independent Care conference which had been very successful and that in February the first Norfolk Independent Care awards would be held, which had been partly sponsored by the County Council. She added that she had recently attended the “topping out” ceremony for a new care home in Gorleston. In addition, she said that a planning application had been submitted for new housing with care homes in Bowthorpe.

In reply to a Member question, it was pointed out that officers were continuing to work behind the scenes to strengthen attempts to secure European funding for key core services from 2015/16 onwards and that details about what could be done would be shared with

Panel Members when the position became clearer.

The Cabinet Member for Communities reported on the continued success of the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library which remained for the 7<sup>th</sup> year running the UK's most popular and most visited library in the United Kingdom. In addition she said that libraries elsewhere in Norfolk had reported higher issue figures than other county council library services. The Cabinet Member announced that the Customer Service Centre had undergone a quality of service assessment and had been awarded the Cabinet Office Centre of Excellence for Customer Service Standards, which was a commendable achievement. Finally she reported that attendance at Norfolk's museums had increased by 7%.

The Chairman placed on record the Panel's thanks to all those staff and volunteers who had dealt with emergencies that had occurred over the Christmas period.

## **8 Community Services Finance Monitoring Report for 2013/14**

The annexed report (8) by the Director of Community Services was received.

The Panel received a report that showed that at the end of October 2013 (period seven) the overall Departmental forecast revenue outturn position for 2013-14 was a balanced budget for Adult Social Care, Community Safety and Cultural Services.

In the course of discussion, the following key points were made:

- There had been a significant change between period seven and period eight forecast spend for 2013-14: the Department was now contributing £1.3m one off funding to the reserve as part of the contingency planning for the residual waste treatment contract.
- It was pointed out that funds held within the sub-budget heading for Director, Finance and Transformation are being used to balance the Department's overall budget. The funding allocated to this heading was subject to periodic fluctuations because it held short term reserves, including Additional NHS Funding for Adult Social Care, before they were allocated elsewhere in the budget.
- The learning difficulties reform grant mentioned at paragraph 2.7 was specific to Adult Social Services.
- The forecast spend in respect of the budget heading for aids and adaptations/ Integrated Community Equipment Service was showing signs of improvement. Steps were being taken to put in additional controls around authorisation and to make savings. Recycling of equipment was good and a key part of the contract, with targets and incentives for the supplier to reuse equipment.
- It was noted that the Skills Funding Agency could adjust its allocation to the Adult Education Service in a year where targets were not met, as occurred in 2012-13. While the service could never be sure there would not be reductions in funding, it was not expected that there would be further in year reductions in 2013/14 as recruitment to courses had been good in the autumn term and it was expected the current year performance would be on target.

### **Resolved-**

That the report be noted.

## 9 Putting People First – Service and Budget Planning 2014/17

The annexed report (9) by the Director of Community Services (which was part of the main and supplementary agendas) was received.

The Panel received a report that set out the latest information on the Government's Local Government Finance Settlement and specific information on the financial and planning context for Community Services for the next three years. The report also set out any changes to the budget planning proposals for Community Services and the proposed cash limit revenue budget for the service based on all current proposals and identified pressures and the proposed capital programme.

It was pointed out in the meeting that assumptions had been made in relation to the financial settlement, but until a final grant and the outcome of the planning enquiry into the residual waste treatment contract were received, two planning scenarios had been made. If planning permission for the site was denied then the County Council would be faced with additional costs.

The Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care, and Cultural Services presented the findings from the Norfolk: Putting People First budget consultation and the outcome of the Equality Impact Assessments.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care confirmed that if planning permission regarding the Waste Incinerator was granted and some leeway could be found within the budget there were areas in the Putting People First consultation such as refocusing personal budgets which the Cabinet might like to reconsider.

In the course of discussion, and in response to Members' questions, the following key points were made:

- It was proposed that the smallest reductions in Council expenditure would involve personal services for adults and children.
- It was also proposed that the eligibility criteria for adult social services would remain unchanged.
- During the previous round of budget reductions the Purchase of Care budget, from which personal budgets are paid, had been protected and slightly more money was spent on this budget heading due to funding of demographic growth. This could, however, no longer remain the case because of the level of funding reduction that the Department was being asked to identify. The Department had taken legal advice on what was proposed and this had confirmed the County Council could reduce funding for non-core social care activities.
- The Director of Community Services said that he had written to all service users alerting them to the specific budgetary proposals for Community Services as part of the Consultation.
- It was important that the needs of carers as well as of service users should continue to be addressed.
- In order to achieve the proposed reduction in transport for Adult Social Services there would need to be more careful checks made on if a person had a disability vehicle or required a mobility component in their DLA.
- There was considered to be a substantial risk as to whether all the savings for the Department were achievable.
- The Member Champion for Mental Health said that she was concerned about how the reduction in personal budgets would impact on those with mental health needs,

some of the most vulnerable people in society, and in particular on plans for the integration of mental health services that was essential in order to achieve seamless, efficient services that best met the needs of these individuals.

- Members expressed some concern about the impact that budget reductions would have on the Strong and Well initiative that was due to be delivered through voluntary and community sector organisations across the county in the coming years.
- Members of the Panel and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care spoke about how it was important that the budget savings that Adult Social Services had to identify were not viewed by the NHS as “cost shunting” between the two organisations.
- It was pointed out that Additional NHS Health funding for Adult Social Care and the Better Care funding would continue to be used to promote further effective integration of community health and social care. It was said that this money needed to continue to be focused on the key challenges for both Adult Social Services and for the NHS of preventing hospital admissions (and re-admissions) and for facilitating hospital discharge, and preventing substantial long-term social care packages and care home placements and for the Department to maintain and improve what it did for individuals at a time of severe financial pressures.
- The budgetary pressures that arose from demographic changes while remaining substantial were considered by the Director of Community Services to be less than had previously been predicted and had been reduced according to the proposed budget plan. Members said that where money was available for demographic growth it needed to be directed at those individuals in the most need rather than allocated on purely age related grounds.
- It was considered important for the Department to strengthen its attempts to obtain new sources of funding (such as European funding) for key core services and for Members to be kept up to date on any proposals for joint working with Suffolk County Council, and for further integration with the NHS, such as for the integration of senior management posts.
- It was suggested that Children’s Services should be encouraged to make greater use of the services that were provided by Cultural Services, including holding meetings in libraries and other cultural services establishments.
- It was pointed out that the budget proposals involved no increase in Council Tax. It was suggested by some Members that the Council should consider raising Council Tax by up to 2 % (a maximum amount before invoking a local referendum) which officers said would raise £6m pa; while other Members pointed out that this option had already been rejected by the Council.
- Members considered the potential additional funding pressures on the County Council as a result of the changes to social care mentioned in the new Care Act to be very significant but the impact of these changes were not yet clear as Government guidance on the interpretation of the Act was still awaited.
- It was pointed out that where the Norfolk MPs had responded as part of the consultation exercise none of the Norfolk MPs had made specific reference to services run by the Department.
- Thanks were placed on record to those Officers within Planning, Performance and Partnerships who had assisted with the public consultation exercise.
- It was noted that this part of the Panel meeting was still part of the consultation process, and that draft unconfirmed minutes would form part of the Cabinet report on the consultation that would be presented to the Cabinet on 27 January 2014.

**Resolved-**

That the Panel note-

The provisional finance settlement for 2014-15 and the latest planning position for Norfolk County Council.

The updated information on spending pressures and savings for Community Services and the cash limited budget for 2014-15 in context with the feedback from the Consultation.

The proposed list of new and amended capital schemes and the proposed capital Programme for Community Services.

## **10 Fuel Poverty in Norfolk**

The annexed report (10) by the Chairman of the Fuel Poverty Panel was received.

The Chairman presented the report of the Fuel Poverty Panel and asked the Overview and Scrutiny Panel to support the recommendations for action.

The Panel supported the recommendations contained in the report and noted that responses to correspondence on this matter had so far been received from four of the six large energy companies. The energy companies that had not yet responded would be sent a reminder letter. Two of the 14 recommendations in the fuel poverty report needed to be considered by Norfolk County Council.

It was expected that the recommendations contained in the report could be implemented without any additional resources.

The Chairman placed on record her thanks to Maureen Orr for her work in supporting the task and finish group.

### **Resolved-**

That the report be forwarded to all those to whom the recommendations were directed, asking them to respond in time for 4 March 2014 meeting on:-

- a. whether or not they accept the recommendations made to them
- b. how they planned to implement, or have implemented, each of the recommendations that they accept
- C. their explanation for any rejected recommendations.

## **11 The New Compact For Social Care In Norfolk**

The annexed report (11) by the Director of Community Services was received.

The Panel received a report about the changing policy and practice environment which was coming to social care. The report proposed that the Council, in its leadership role, needed to engage key stakeholders in understanding and responding to these changes. To that end, the report proposed 'the new compact for social care in Norfolk'.

The Panel noted that the aim of the report was to capture the key national policy and practice changes which were emerging for social care.

Given the changing environment for social care it was considered essential that the Council was able to give clear commitments about its role and to engage others in collaborating to provide what was needed for good care in Norfolk. The document was not meant to hold the detail of changes. It was a high level framework which needed to include in more detail the work that was being done with the prevention agenda and that the Department would respond to comments about the framework.

## **Resolved**

That the Panel:

1. Endorse the proposal for the Council to set out a revised framework for social care, including its work in prevention services.
2. Support the proposed content of the 'new compact for social care in Norfolk'
3. Endorse the proposal to communicate and engage with stakeholders and to respond to consultation about the framework.

## **12 Implementation of An Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES) For Norfolk**

The annexed report (12) by the Director of Community Services was received.

This report provided a progress review on the new Integrated Community Equipment Service: a major service transformation undertaken by the Community Services Integrated Commissioning Team that brought together the former separate health and social care community equipment services. The report explained how the programme had created a service which could manage both health and social care equipment in the community so as to provide an integrated service. The service was also more cost effective than previous arrangements.

The Panel noted that challenges remained in managing the use of equipment within the reduced budget set for the service and in resolving related prescribing accountability issues, largely in the NHS. It was noted that while there were difficulties in the early days which had resulted in complaints this was no longer the case.

The Director was asked to let Members of the Panel have details as to the turnover of staff within the ICES.

## **Resolved**

That Panel note the contents of the report and ask that the Director provide Panel Members with details as to the turnover of staff within the ICES.

## **13 Blue Badge Disabled Parking- An Update Report**

The annexed report (13) by the Director of Community Services was received.

The Panel received a report that provided a further update following the report to Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel in September 2013 on progress towards finalising improvements to the application process and towards eradicating delays in the process for customers.

The Panel noted that the Blue Badge Unit had undergone significant improvement work in response to the Government's Blue Badge Improvement Service and Department of Transport recommendations.

## **Resolved**

That the Panel:-



note the significant improvements that have been achieved as a result of the improvement works and ask for a further report to be brought before the Committee that is to be responsible for Community Services in six months time;

note progress towards identifying outsourcing opportunities;

note the new powers provided to Councils in terms of enforcement

#### **14 Delayed Discharge from Hospital In Norfolk-Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group**

The annexed report (14) by the Director of Community Services was received.

The Panel considered draft terms of reference for a joint scrutiny task and finish group of Members from this Panel and of Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (NHOSC) on 'Delayed discharge from hospital in Norfolk' which it was noted would include discharge from NHS mental health beds.

It was pointed out by Members that the final report of the Group might not be completed before the Panel was replaced by a successor Committee.

#### **Resolved**

That the Panel:

- 1) Agree to a joint task and finish group with NHOSC members
- 2) Approve the draft terms of reference (as set out at Appendix A to the report)
- 3) Appoint Mr Hannah, Mr Humphrey, Mrs Gurney and Mrs Somerville to serve on the task and finish group.

#### **15 Forward Work Programme: Scrutiny**

The annexed report (15) by the Director of Community Services was received.

The Panel approved the Scrutiny Forward Work Programme for the period until April 2014 as it was set out in the report and asked for an update report on Blue Badge Disabled Parking to be brought before the Panel's successor body in six months time.

The meeting concluded at 1. 20 pm

**Chairman**



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## APPENDIX

The Director of Community Services was asked at the Community Services O&S Panel meeting on 7 January 2013 to let Members have details as to the turnover of staff within the Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES).(Minute 12 of the meeting refers).

The following answer was given after the meeting:

Leavers -

Administrative Staff - 3 (2 offered contracts by Norse)

Driver Technicians - 6 (1 offered contract by Norse, 1 offered contract by NCH&C)

Warehouse - 3 (2 retired due to Ill Health)