



Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 20 February 2020
at 10:00 am in the Edwards Room, County Hall, Norwich

Present:

Cllr Steve Morphew (Chair)
Cllr Alison Thomas (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Roy Brame
Cllr Phillip Duigan
Cllr Ron Hanton
Cllr Chris Jones

Cllr Ed Maxfield
Cllr Joe Mooney
Cllr Richard Price
Cllr Dan Roper
Cllr Hayden Thirtle

Substitute Members present:

Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris for Cllr Judy Oliver
Cllr Brenda Jones for Cllr Emma Corlett

Also present:

Cllr Mike Sands	In support of the call-in at item 8 on the agenda
Cllr Mike Smith-Clare	In support of the call-in at item 8 on the agenda
Cllr Bill Borrett	Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health and Prevention
Cllr Andrew Jamieson	Cabinet Member for Finance
James Bullion	Executive director of Adult Social Services
Amanda Dunn	Assistant Director Learning Disabilities and Autism Commissioning
Bernadette Pallister	Family Voice Norfolk
Tracey Sismey	Family Voice Norfolk
Judith Taylor	DNNG
Nick Taylor	DNNG
Fiona McDiarmid	Executive Director Strategy and Governance
Tom McCabe	Executive Director of Community & Environmental Services
Helen Edwards	Chief Legal officer (Monitoring Officer)
Phil Watson	Director of Children's Social Care
Karen Haywood	Democratic Support and Scrutiny Manager
Tim Shaw	Committee Officer

1 Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Emma Corlett, Cllr Judy Oliver and Mr Giles

Hankinson (Parent Governor Representative), Helen Bates (Church Representative) and Paul Dunning (Church Representative).

2 Minutes

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2020 were declared as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 3.1 Cllr Ed Maxfield declared an "Other Interest" for the call-in item because he worked for a charity that had applied to be on the provider framework for the original iteration of the service.
- 3.2 Cllr Hayden Thirtle declared an "Other Interest" for the call-in item because he was a Governor at James Paget University Hospital and a member of the Steering Committee for Centre 81 in Great Yarmouth. Both organisations had indicated a willingness to sign up to item 8, life opportunities.
- 3.3 Cllr Mike Sands (one of the Councillors who had called in item 8) declared an "Other Interest" in the item because he was a Trustee of Bowthorpe Community Workshops who were working in support of the issue.

4 Urgent Business

- 4.1 No urgent business was discussed

5. Public Question Time

- 5.1 No public questions were raised.

6. Local Member Issues/Questions

- 6.1 No local Member questions were received.

7. Call In

- 7.1 The Committee noted that there was one call in to be taken at item 8 of today's agenda.

8. Call In: Life Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism

- 8.1 The annexed report (8) related to the call-in of item 11 of the Cabinet papers of 3 February 2020 entitled "Life Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism".
- 8.2 The Chair explained the way in which he would handle this item to best ensure a fair and balanced scrutiny process and to decide what (if any) issues the Committee would refer to the Cabinet.
- 8.3 In addition to welcoming the Councillors who had called in the item, the Chair welcomed to the meeting Bill Borrett, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention, James Bullion, Executive Director of Adult Social Services and Amanda Dunn, Assistant Director Learning Disabilities and Autism

Commissioning, who were in attendance to assist the Committee in scrutiny of Life Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism. Apologies for absence were received from Gary Heathcote, Director of Commissioning, Adult Social Services.

- 8.4 The Chair also welcomed to the meeting Bernadette Pallister and Tracey Sismey from Family Voice Norfolk and Nick and Judith Taylor from DNNG who had been invited to comment on the consultation process.
- 8.5 In reply to a question from a Councillor, the Chair said that he accepted the call-in process had meant that Family Voice Norfolk and DNNG had received very short notice of today's meeting. In addition, Opening Doors who had been invited were unable to organise consultation with their members in order to attend and represent them. The Chair also accepted that there were lessons to be learnt for future scrutiny consultation in terms of who should be consulted and how consultation responses were reported to the Scrutiny Committee.
- 8.6 The Councillors who had called in the Cabinet decision explained their reasons for having done so. They said that they were not challenging the reasons for the Cabinet decision but were concerned about how the decision should be implemented, monitored and reviewed.
- 8.7 Cllr Bill Borrett, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention, referred Councillors to the strategy co-produced by service users "My Life, My Ambition, My Future" which was completed in 2018 and had been laid on the Committee table at today's meeting. This outlined the aspirations of the service users to have a more normal life and become more integrated in society, and to have more variation in the pathways that were open to them to reflect different levels of disability. The document laid on the table (which had received all party support) had helped formulate the proposals contained in the report to Cabinet for three distinct pathways within the Life Opportunities Framework:
1. Promoting Independence Pathway – will support people to develop life skills, providing greater opportunities to access mainstream activities and take part in training or learning activities.
 2. Wellbeing Pathway – will support people with complex and challenging needs which often require specialist equipment and facilities as well as specially trained staff.
 3. Skills and Employment Pathway. Will support people into employment through a tailored employment and outcomes plan.
- 8.8 The Committee also received on the table a presentation from the Executive Director of Adult Social Services about the specific issues concerning the consultation process which was requested as part of the call-in process.
- 8.9 The Executive Director explained the consultation events that were held across the county to promote the strategy that were organised and facilitated by a service user led organisation (Opening Doors) that was unable to attend today's meeting at short notice. The Executive Director added that providers and partnership organisations (including the NHS) had shared the strategy with the people that they supported and via social media. The Learning Disabilities Partnership Board had also been kept informed of developments. The Department had held a

number of meetings with users, families and groups.

8.10 Bernadette Pallister and Tracey Sismey from Family Voice Norfolk and Nick and Judith Taylor from DNNG who were invited to comment on the consultation process gave evidence to the Committee that can be found at appendix A They also answered detailed questions from Councillors.

8.11 The issues that were considered by the Committee included the following:

- The Committee heard that the Council had a dedicated employment service that would support the Skills and Employment Pathway. One lesson from the pilot was that the pathway to paid work was considerably more than 12 months for many people.
- There would be opportunities for people to move between pathways as their circumstances changed.
- The Cabinet Member said that the strategy for providing Life Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism was cost neutral.
- Officers said that a design group would be put in place to develop and run the pilots for pathways one and two.
- Councillors were concerned to ensure that proper infrastructure mechanisms were in place to support people to access services, that transport arrangements were effective, that employers were able to provide workforce adaptations for vulnerable people and that there were the right kind of links with the DWP, particularly around welfare benefits.
- It was recognised that engaging with small local groups and rural employers was important so that Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism did not always have to travel long distances.
- In reply to questions, the Executive Director pointed out that there had been no statutory legal requirement to consult with service users. The Department had, however, put in place a mechanism to obtain an accurate picture of service user requirements and wanted to ensure that going forward co-production worked better.
- The Executive Director said that Family Voice and DNNG would be involved in consultation about the co-production going forward.
- It was accepted by Officers that co-production was important in terms of monitoring contracts and hearing directly from disabled people.
- Councillors were mindful of the need for there to be the social worker capacity to support the introduction of the pathways.
- It was pointed out that while not all service users had an annual review by a social worker of their individual circumstances (which was an issue of national concern) this did not impact on their ability to take part in the pathways. The service knew the needs of all its service users in receipt of support.
- The Cabinet Member said that excellence in social work was one of the key goals of the Council and why the Council had taken steps to employ an additional 50 social workers.
- Councillors said that those individuals who were subject to restrictions that had been placed on the minimum income guarantee could find themselves disadvantaged when seeking to obtain suitable employment.
- It was noted that the financial landscape had changed since 2018 but that this did not detract from the need for change in the way that the Council approached Life Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or

Autism.

- In reply to questions, the Cabinet Member said that the results of the pilots would be made widely available to all Councillors by way of a Member Briefing. The Briefing would suggest ways in which Councillors could approach voluntary organisations and commercial enterprises to support the Council's strategy.
- In reply to other questions, the Executive Director said that people in residential care who were getting 24 hr support from the County Council would not normally be eligible to receive support to take part in the pathway activities, but participation would always depend on individual circumstances.
- It was accepted that adults with learning disabilities should be registered with and seen by their GP on an annual basis for an annual health check. This was not always the case in Norfolk at present and this matter was taken up by the Norfolk Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- It was also accepted that the culture of independence for people with learning disabilities should start at very early age.
- The monitoring of service provider performance was expected to take place on an exception basis; the amount of time spent monitoring performance dependant on the quality of service provider response. It was, however, intended to have an annual contract meeting with each provider, when resources became available.
- The pledge for adult social services support had been made available as part of the Making it Real Campaign and would made available on the Committee pages website.

8.12 **RESOLVED**

That the Scrutiny Committee agree with the ambitions and the general direction of travel behind the Cabinet decision but would advise Cabinet (and service department) to consider the following issues when implementing the decision:

1. That there should be more co-production in areas such as the service specification, the monitoring arrangements and the reviews of the pilots. This will enable these issues to be better addressed when the implementation is planned and carried out and for the monitoring and review of pilots to be genuine co-productions.
2. That a way should be found to strengthen and improve the flow of information on learning disability issues to Councillors generally.
3. That a full briefing on the outcomes of the pilots should go to the People and Communities Select Committee so as to strengthen strategy development (perhaps through a Working Group of the Select Committee that is already looking into these issues).
4. That, because of concerns about the scale of change for service users, their carers and providers, the new services should be up and running before existing services and contracts are changed.

9. **Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Plan**

9.1 The Committee considered the forward work plan.

9.2 **RESOLVED**

That the Committee agree the forward work plan (as set out in the Appendix of a report received on this matter).

The meeting concluded at 13:10

Chair