

SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SCRUTINY AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Thursday 24th October 2019 at 6.00 p.m.

Conference Room 2, Council House, Walsall

Committee Members Present

Councillor K. Hussain (Chair)
Councillor G. Ali
Coughlan G. Clarke
Councillor C. Creaney
Councillor I. Robertson
Councillor H. Sarohi
Councillor V. Waters

Portfolio Holders Present

Councillor R. Martin – Adult Social Care

Other Members Present

Councillor I. Shires
Councillor A. Nawaz

Officers Present

Donna McArthur – Director of Primary Care (Walsall CCG)
Kerrie Allward – Head of Service – Integrated Commissioning
Suzanne Letts – Finance Officer
Nikki Gough – Democratic Services Officer

18/19 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor B. Allen, Councillor Coughlan, and Councillor W. Rasab.

19/19 Substitutions

Councillor C. Creaney substituted for Councillor D. Coughlan for the duration of the meeting.

20/19 Declarations of Interest

There were not declarations of interest or party whip.

21/19 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)

There were no items to be considered in private session.

22/19 Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 12th September 2019 were considered by the Committee.

Resolved

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

23/19 Black Country and West Birmingham – NHS Long Term Plan

The Director of Primary Care spoke to the presentation (annexed). The Committee were informed that Walsall CCG's response to the NHS long-term plan was evolving as feedback was taken on board. The shared vision of the health and care partnership was described for improving healthcare. Challenges to this included an increase in demand, recruitment of workforce, and financial challenges.

When delivering the NHS long-term plan, consideration would be given to how it would be translated locally. Themes for consideration in Walsall included; -

- Timely access to the GP,
- Joining up of health and care services,
- Patient education
- NHS 111 and self-care advice.

Walsall had already made progress, which would meet the ambition of the long-term plan, including the establishment of primary care networks, the Walsall Together Partnership, Clinical Operating Models and collaboration of Black Country Partners to improve effectiveness of services.

The Committee were informed that Paul Maubach would be the Accountable Officer for the Black Country. A final version of the local long-term plan would be submitted to the national team with a public publication in November. The Committee were asked for their input into the final plan for Walsall. A Member stated that they welcomed the vision but questioned how it would be achieved given the financial challenges that the NHS faced. The Director of Primary Care stated that there would be investment, and that more cost effective ways of delivering services would be explored, this included treating people in the community.

A discussion on the care of people with learning disabilities was held. Officers explained that packages of care helped people to stay in their homes and avoid institutional care for people. It was important that the right pathway be established to support people.

A Member questioned what was being done to support military personal. The Director of Primary Care stressed that this was a specialist area, and that the CCG worked with GP practices to support them to specialise in developing such skills. This would be enhanced when the primary care networks became more established.

The Committee discussed the differences across Walsall localities and questioned how the long-term plan would address this. The Director of Primary Care stated that the plan dealt with high-level collaboration however, the local delivery of the plan would address this. It was noted by a Member that the NHS long-term plan did not detail mental health services, and concern was expressed that people could not secure GP appointments. The Director of Primary Care stated that the NHS long-term plan was high level and the full local plan contained the detail in relation to services.

A Member asked if it was possible to receive, a comparative of costs for a care home, compared to the costs of supported living. Officers confirmed that this would be circulated outside of the committee meeting.

Members of the public in attendance were invited to ask questions, Officers were asked what was being done to provide early intervention for mental health problems in children. The Director of Primary Care stated that she would seek clarity and respond to this outside of the committee.

An Elected Member in attendance at the meeting stated that the publication of the adult social care green paper was now three years late. He also stated that different localities had different characteristics, with some Walsall residents attending 'The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust'. The transfer of information was often an issue. He suggested that a presentation on this should be taken to Strategic Locality Boards. An Elected Member also in attendance stated that there needed to be certainty around how social care would be funded, in the future.

Resolved

That the Black Country and West Birmingham – NHS Long Term Plan presentation was noted.

24/19 Corporate Financial Performance – Month 5 (August) Financial Monitoring Position for 2019/20

The Finance Officer stated that the combined Adult Social Care and Public Health revenue outturn forecast for period five (April 2019 to August 2019) after net use of planned reserves but prior to mitigating actions was an over spend of £0.758m. After mitigating actions, the forecast revenue outturn position for period 5 was £0.434m.

A Member questioned how risk was managed. The Finance Officer stated that in such situations risk was managed through the use of reserves although these should not be used for ongoing pressures. In response to a query in relation to care home closures, the Head of Service stated that the Council were aware of trends and potential costs of care home failure.

A discussion was held about the financial payment system, which had been purchased. The Authority had also moved to payment by 'actuals', meaning that the Council now only paid for care delivered. A Member asked for the financial viability and impact of a care home failing. The Head of Service stated that an open book accounting exercise had recently been undertaken and that the outcome of this could be shared with the Committee. An Elected Member in attendance questioned if

'payment by actuals' was forcing carers wages down who were often already on low wages. The Head of Service stated that this was a complex area, however if a carer stayed for the time commissioned by the Council they would be paid, and it was only by leaving a person's home early that this did not happen. Members expressed concern that this would negatively affect carers, who may not be paid for travel and were often low paid. The rate of pay provided to care providers by the Council included travel costs. A discussion was also held about care providers providing care in zones to increase efficiency of travel time. This would be included in future contracts.

Resolved

That the 'Corporate Financial Performance – Month 5 (August) Financial Monitoring Position for 2019/20' be noted.

25/19 Walsall Together S75 Agreement

The Walsall Together Section 75 agreement between Walsall Council and Walsall Healthcare Trust was intended to enable closer integrated working between health and social care to improve outcomes and experience of care for the people of Walsall. A Section 75 agreement set out the partnership agreement. This did not transfer risk or relinquish responsibility for functions. The report presented (annexed) provided the overview and scrutiny committee with early sight of the Walsall Together Section 75 proposal prior to consideration by Cabinet in February 2020.

An Elected Member present at the meeting stated that although the concept was good, the delivery of this was at risk if the Authority did not receive adequate funding to support the agreement. He suggested that this report should also be sent to Strategic Locality Boards.

Officers were asked how the contract would be reviewed and Members were advised that this function was carried out by Officers and finances would be scrutinised. The Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care suggested that locality working would enable GPs to have more services available at their disposal to encourage early intervention and prevention.

Resolved

That the report on Walsall Together S75 agreement was noted

26/19 Areas of Focus 2019/20

The Committee considered the areas of focus for the 2019/20 year.

Resolved

The areas of focus 2019/20 was noted .

27/19 Forward Plan

The forward plans were noted.

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 7.35 pm.

Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting was the 14th November 2019.

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 7.35 pm.

Signed:

Date: