

SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY & PERFORMANCE PANEL

THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2014 AT 6.00 P.M.

Panel Members Present: Councillor T. Oliver (Chair)
Councillor B. Douglas-Maul
Councillor D. Coughlan
Councillor L. Rattigan

Officers Present: Keith Skerman, Interim Executive Director
Peter Davis, Head of Community Care (Operations)
Michael Hicklin, Service Manager – Employment and Day Opportunity
Dan Mortiboys, Senior Finance Manager
Matt Underhill, Committee Governance & Business Manager

333/13 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received for the duration of the meeting from Councillor D. Barker and Andy Rust.

334/13 SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no substitutions for the duration of the meeting.

335/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or party whip identified at this meeting.

336/13 MINUTES

The Panel considered the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2014.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2014 as amended, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

337/13 UPDATE ON EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES FOR ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Chair explained that the item was to be considered earlier than indicated in the published agenda. The Head of Community Care and the Service Manager – Employment and Day Opportunity introduced the report. The following is a summary of the report and subsequent discussion:

- It was explained that Links to work was a range of highly valued services for adults with a range of learning disabilities. The council was committed to these services although work was now underway to ensure that they continued to be viable in the long-term. It was further explained that Recruit-ability Plus was a service commissioned from Links to Work which has now supported over 20 people into paid permanent full or part time employment. At present there are 34 people currently on the Recruit-ability Plus scheme with the expectation that they will be able to move through to the wider employment market at a future point. It

was also explained that the Community Hub at 17 Lichfield Street has become a major success. It is now planned to establish an Employment Hub which, following a Business Case and appointment of a charitable organisation, will offer supported employment, advice and support, job coaching, enterprise development and Work Clubs. It was explained that through commissioned partnerships adults with learning disabilities, physical and sensory disabilities, autism and those returning to work from informal caring the opportunity to enter paid employment;

- In response to Panel queries officers explained that Walsall council's employment initiatives are divided into distinct schemes: Links to Work provides supported employment opportunities for adults with disabilities in light industrial packaging and assembly supporting local industries and companies, while some also work in horticulture at Goscote Greenacres. The 24 people currently on the scheme earn £6.69 per hour for up to 10 hours per week and make National Insurance contributions; Recruit-ability Plus currently provides 6 month placements with the individual's wage met by the central adult social care budget, with 21 people currently participating in this scheme. It was explained that the total number of people participating in Links to Work was 89;
- It was explained that a review of the Links to Work service was currently underway, a significant reason for the review was the existence of a £32k cost pressure. It was also explained that a £44K saving proposal, relating to payments made to those participating in Links to Work schemes, had not been approved as part of the budget for 2014/15. Officers explained that they considered Links to Work had become too large. It had continued to grow with additional operations such as the food bank forming part of the 6 month placement scheme. The review presented the opportunity to deliver best value from the service. In response to a Panel query it was explained that consideration is being given to developing the Links to Work service as either a micro or social enterprise, with an associated business plan to be produced. It was explained that a recent proposal had gone to CMT for the right to use £100k of external funding to pursue one of the enterprise options. However, the Walsall Adult College (WAC) had been judged better placed with its own proposals for use of the funding in support of its own activities. It had been agreed that should external funding be available in the future WAC and Children's and Young People's Services will work jointly with Links to Work to maximise the benefit;
- In response to a Panel query it was explained that Links to Work operates with a staff support team of 20, while Recruit-ability Plus coordinate all placements. It was further explained that half of placements were within the council, with the other half with external organisations. It was also explained that 21 permanent full or part time jobs have resulted from the scheme with a range of employers. In response to a further Panel query it was explained that at one point Links to Work was the second highest performing service of its type in the country. However, the service was suspended in September 2013 and as a consequence outturn has fallen from 13% to 10% over the last 6 months. It was also explained that the Interim Executive Director had agreed that National Indicator 1E would be used for measuring the success of the service in the future. It was now intended to re-state the vision for the service which will include reviewing those who are currently on the scheme. In response to a further Panel query it was explained that Links to Work has established contracts with a number of different companies. Officers also pointed out that the services provided through Links to Work, including record storage, compared well with the private sector;

- Officers agreed with a Member who noted that this was not a straightforward issue. Officers explained that previous consultation activity with more than 50 service users had identified that they considered Links to Work to be a business which brings income into the council. It was on this basis that service users had lobbied both the interim Executive Director and Members for the service to continue making payments to service users. Officers would now be working to identify the most suitable way forward for the service. The Interim Executive Director explained that as part of the process of familiarising himself with the services within his remit he had physically walked round and undertaken a stock-taking exercise. He emphasised that it would be important to place Links to Work on a sustainable basis. However, he also acknowledged the importance of such a service in contributing to the self-esteem and value of those who participate in the scheme;
- The Chair noted that the update was largely reassuring, in terms of both progress with Links to Work and the associated reporting to the Panel which historically had not always been as clear as Members would have wished. In response to a further query officers explained that in terms of developing the service it had been determined that a social enterprise which incorporated those elements of Links to Work that could be spun out was potentially the most appropriate. It was clarified that Links to Work had grown too large for the accommodation, including the factory, in which it is housed. As an example of how Links to Work had grown in a number of different directions it was explained that the service currently fits all telecare equipment. Officers agreed to return to the Panel by the end of 2014 with an update on the review process and potential options for the development of the service.

Resolved:

That:

- 1. the Panel would receive an update prior to end of 2014 with an update on the review process and potential options for the development of the service; &**
- 2. the report be noted.**

338/13 PLANS FOR FUTURE FINANCIAL MONITORING FOR 2014/15 MUNICIPAL YEAR

The Interim Executive Director and Senior Finance Manager introduced the report. The following is a summary of the report and subsequent discussion:

- It was explained that the report to the previous Panel meeting had indicated that as at the end of quarter 3 a net overspend for 2013/14 of £739k was anticipated. It was explained that this overspend was based on the one off benefit of the use of reserves, without the use of which the pressure would be £4.060m. It was further explained that it had been agreed at the previous Panel meeting that as a method of understanding the key financial issues within the directorate a number of themed based reports would be received. The Interim Executive Director acknowledged that 2013/14 had been a difficult year and the series of reports would enable officers to explain to the Panel in greater detail the underlying and continuing pressures being experienced within adult social care services. It was agreed that the outturn report for 2013/14 would present the initial opportunity for

the detail regarding the pressures to be set out. It was also agreed that to assist the Panel, in further understanding the pressures being experienced by the service, officers would include within the theme reports 4 – 5 year trend charts. In relation to timetabling of the Panel's receipt of the themed reports it was agreed that these would be received over the course of a number of meetings early in the new Municipal year. It was further agreed that the themes to be considered in the reports would include NHS partnership funding, including background guidance and how this funding is being used. It was also agreed that the theme of expenditure on short term placements and respite care would be considered. An analysis of extra care housing, including the Housing 21 contract and the associated £1m pressure, would also be the subject of a report. It was agreed that this report would include guidance regarding the fact that Benefit Based Charging (BBC) had not been implemented and the consequential loss of income. In addition, a report providing a 5 year analysis of commissioning costs would also be produced. In addition it was agreed that a report would be produced relating to residential and nursing care, including a profile of the number of placements within and outside the borough, associated costs and issues. This will include analysis of trends regarding where individuals are placed to assist in understanding the short, medium and long-term cost pressures. The Interim Executive Director explained that in Walsall the overall position appeared to be that there was a high volume of relatively low cost placements in care homes for older people, with a low volume of much higher cost residential placements for older people suffering with degenerative conditions. He made the distinction between placements for older people and those for younger people where the needs of the individual will also determine whether or not they are placed within or outside the borough. It was agreed that a separate report should be produced providing guidance in relation to placements for young people. It was also agreed that a report would be received relating to the wider element of domiciliary care including home/ personal care. In addition, a report addressing mental health services would also be produced. In terms of an outline timetable for the reports it was agreed that guidance would be provided to the Panel at its first meeting in the new Municipal year setting out the overall financial position. It was agreed that officers would develop a timetable for the themed reports which would then be agreed with the Chair.

Resolved:

That:

- 1. a timetable for the receipt of the themed service area reports will be agreed with the Chair; &**
- 2. the report be noted.**

339/13 HOLLYBANK INTERMEDIATE CARE UNIT – CARE QUALITY COMMISSION WARNING NOTICE

The Chair explained that he was satisfied that the fact the Panel had not received a report on this matter, at the same time that a report was first received by the Audit Committee, was down to miscommunication between Social Care and Democratic Services rather than a deliberate act of seeking to deceive the Panel. The Head of Community Care (Operations) introduced the report. The following is a summary of the report and subsequent discussion:

- Officers apologised for formal guidance on the outcome of the inspection not having been provided at an earlier point. It was explained that Hollybank is a 21 bed reablement service. It was also explained that the service receives a good mix of referrals from a range of partner organisations. Those attending Hollybank receive a range of intense support with an average stay of around 17 days in the unit before discharge. It was also explained that the unit is operated by a combination of council and Health staff. Officers explained that Hollybank was not a typical residential care unit as it operated using the integrated care model;
- Officers explained that in July 2013 a Care Quality Commission (CQC) Unannounced Inspection identified three areas where action was required to improve: Management of Medicines; Supporting Workers; Assessing & Monitoring Quality of Service Provision. It was further explained that an action plan was put in place and the team worked towards improvements in these areas. A further unannounced CQC inspection on 11 December 2013 determined that the Unit was compliant in the management of medicines. However, an additional inspection on 19 December 2013 resulted in a Warning Notice being received by the Unit in relation to Supporting Workers. The Notice raised concerns regarding supervision, appraisal and training of staff. It was explained that an action plan was developed with monitoring undertaken by the Unit Manger and Service Manager and the service had responded by bringing the lapsed supervisions up to date by the CQC deadline of 28 February. It was also explained that a further Unannounced Inspection took place on 13 March 2014. As a result the Unit has been advised that it is now compliant in the areas relating to the Warning Notice which had subsequently been rescinded;
- In response to Panel queries officers acknowledged that the management of medicine was very important. It was explained that there was now a clear policy regarding the recording of a service user's medicine management and the associated risk management. These procedures had formed part of enhanced training where staff are encouraged to take greater responsibility. Other improvements include the implementation of a range of different ways of supporting staff. In response to further Panel queries officers highlighted that Hollybank was not a typical type of reablement unit and the high turnover of service users made it a stressful place to work. However, the improvements to the process for recording when service users had received medication would better assist staff. It was also explained that a locum GP undertook ward rounds every week as part of the process of ensuring the effective management of medicines.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

340/13 UPDATE ON BETTER CARE FUND

The Interim Executive Director and Senior Finance Manager introduced the report. The following is a summary of the report and subsequent discussion:

- It was explained that there would no new money made available for the delivery of the Better Care Plan. Instead it would be necessary for the Plan to be

achieved using a reshaped combination of existing NHS, CCG, council and current joint funding in the system. In addition, the requirements of the Care Act would also have to be implemented;

- It was explained that a response had been received based on the submission made to NHS England of Walsall's Better Care Plan. In relation to Walsall's assurance outcome it was explained that under the RAG (Red, Amber, Green) ratings most areas were given either a green or amber rating. However, national conditional: **Agreement on the consequential impact of changes in the acute sector** has been assessed as Red. This specifically relates to the potential impact on the hospital as it is expected to be under significant financial pressure as a result of the proposed changes, where the focus will be on community based care and reablement. It was further explained that the hospital will be under further admissions pressure as a result of receiving patients from Mid-Staffordshire Hospital. However, at the same time the focus of the Better Care Plan, and consequently future funding, was on community based care. The Hospital had identified a number of ways in which it might be able to replace the income it would lose should the Better Care Plan be successful. This included undertaking elective surgery. The Chair expressed wariness that the Manor, competing with other local hospitals, will be able to bridge the funding gap through such activities. Officers also agreed that much would be dependent on the Birmingham/ Black Country Strategic Programme;
- The Interim Executive Director explained that to make the Better Care Plan successful the challenge was to ensure that people made use of community based services, including GPs, rather than A&E and other hospital based services. In response to a Panel query it was explained that community based care services would include assisting individuals to remain independent and in their own homes for as long as possible. This would have the effect of reducing the number of people in care homes and the associated costs to the council;
- In relation to governance it was explained that the Health and Wellbeing Board had a remit to oversee the pooled budgets. While it was agreed that the Panel would receive updates regarding the implications for health and social care. Officers agreed to email Members with guidance regarding the actual number of older people who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation services. Following a Panel query it was explained that dementia diagnosis rates had improved from 38% to 44%, which represented an improvement of around 10%. However, the target for 2015/16 was 68% and therefore further significant improvement would be required.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

341/13 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN 2013/14

The Interim Executive Director explained that a report was scheduled to go to Cabinet on 30 April relating to domiciliary/ home care contracts. It had been identified that the current contractual hourly rate for some agencies was £10.80 which officers considered was too low to be sustainable. Officers explained that one agency had indicated that it intended to withdraw from Walsall as they could not operate at this hourly rate. The company had been persuaded to continue operating in the borough for the present with an additional payment being made by the council. It was also explained that in order to

resolve the issue of inconsistency between legacy and new contracts a new minimum price will be proposed in the report to Cabinet. In addition, small payments will be made to existing companies who are still receiving lower hourly rates to assist them in being more sustainable. It was further explained that it was hoped that this work would help positively re-shape the domiciliary care market. In response to Panel queries it was explained that the budget for 2014/15 provided enough scope for the additional payments to be made which it was estimated would be around £0.5m. It was agreed that Members would be contacted by email to enable them to express their views on the proposal ahead of the report being considered by Cabinet.

Resolved:

That the work programme and forward plan be noted.

342/13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair informed Members that the date of the next Panel meeting would be 8 May 2014.

The meeting terminated at 7:52p.m.

Chair:

Date: