

MINUTES of the meeting of the **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 11.00 am on 5 September 2014 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

Elected Members:

- * Mr Keith Witham (Chairman)
- * Mrs Margaret Hicks (Vice-Chairman)
- Mr Graham Ellwood
- * Miss Marisa Heath
- * Mr Saj Hussain
- * Mr George Johnson
- Mr Colin Kemp
- Rachael I. Lake
- * Mr Ernest Mallett MBE
- * Ms Barbara Thomson
- * Mrs Fiona White
- * Mr Richard Walsh

Ex officio Members:

Mr David Munro, Chairman of the County Council
Mrs Sally Ann B Marks, Vice Chairman of the County Council

Substitutes:

- * Mr Denis Fuller

58/14 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Rachael I Lake, Graham Ellwood and Colin Kemp. Denis Fuller acted as a substitute for Colin Kemp.

59/14 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 26 JUNE 2014 [Item 2]

These were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

60/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were no declarations of interest.

61/14 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions.

62/14 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

There were no referrals made to Cabinet at the last meeting of the Committee, so there are no responses to report.

63/14 DIRECTOR'S UPDATE [Item 6]

Item 6 was taken after Item 7

Declarations of Interest: None

Witnesses:

Dave Sargeant, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Steve Cosser, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Strategic Director advised the Committee that the Adult Social Care Directorate would be undergoing structural changes in order to modernise the Directorate and realign it with current trends and priorities in care-giving. It was highlighted that these changes were under discussion but assurance was given that they would not affect frontline services but would instead focus on the managerial structure of the Directorate and an update would be forthcoming once the changes had been finalised. The Committee agreed that the Adult Social Care Directorate was in need of modernisation, in particular noting the importance of synchronising it with the six Clinical Commissioning Groups in Surrey.

2. The Strategic Director gave a verbal update on the latest developments with the final strategy for the implementation of the Better Care Fund in Surrey. It was advised that the presentation of the final document to the Committee would be delayed until the next meeting due to some final amendments being required as a result of mixed messages being issued by Central Government. It was highlighted that the Better Care Fund only

represents 3% of the Adult Social Care budget for Surrey which limits the opportunities to address how care is delivered to Surrey's vulnerable adults. The Director advised that a strategy was being developed for more wholesale changes to the delivery of Adult Social Care in Surrey. The Committee expressed concern that buzz phrases such as the Better Care Fund don't translate well within the community and that more needed to be done to ensure that people in Surrey were made aware of what the Fund actually is in practice. The Strategic Director agreed that more engagement with the Community on these issues was required.

3. The Committee was referred to the recently published Barker Commission which sets out new approaches to the delivery of Adult Social Care including the suggestion for a ring-fenced budget for providing free Adult Social Care. It was advised that a briefing document summarising the recommendations of the Barker Commission would be circulated in due course.

4. The Strategic Director advised that the report from the Coroner on an ongoing Serious Case Review would be available from the 9 September 2014 although no further update on the case was given.

5. The Committee were advised that, in light of new legislation requiring Local Authority Children's Services to extend the remit of care provisions to children until the age of Twenty-five, some Adult Social Care services in Surrey along with some of their budget will be reallocated to Surrey County Council's Children's Services to allow them to fulfil these new obligations and advised that more information would be given to members on this reallocation once it had been fully agreed with Children's Services. Members expressed some concern that a Transitions Team hadn't yet been set up despite assurances and that Adult Social Care and Children's Services were not fully cooperating on transitioning vulnerable residents from the care of Children's Services to that of Adult Social Care due to the significant amount of time taken to work put the correct protocols in place to create a Transitions Team. The Strategic Director advised that Children's Services and Adult Social Care worked closely with each other and held regular meetings to ensure that there was no gap in care provision and highlighted that the protocol was close to being finalised. An invitation was extended to the Chairman to attend a Children's Services Select Committee to see how the two services worked together.

6. The Committee requested clarification on upgrades being made to software managing Adult Social Care in Surrey. The Strategic Director indicated that improvements to the software were on hold until the full implications of the Care Act and the additional demands it placed on Care services had been fully realised. It was also highlighted that, while clunky, the software was functioning effectively. The Strategic Director further added that a pilot scheme to give staff tablet devices to reduce the amount of time they spend completing paperwork was underway and that this scheme would be rolled out across Surrey in due course. Concerns were raised by members about the impact that tablet devices would affect the ability of staff to interact with residents as well as flagging issues of practicality although it was generally agreed that they would allow staff to spend more time in the community.

Recommendations:

None

Actions/ further information to be provided:

It is agreed that the Strategic Director will:

- Provide an update in October on the realignment of the ASC Directorate
- Feedback on the outcome of the Better Care Plan fund.
- Circulate a summary the King's Fund's Barker Commission, Professor Bolton's report on the demands being placed on adult social care and the outcome of the Gloria Foster Inquest.
- Give an update on the future of the Transitions Team following implementation of the Children and Families Act.

Committee Next Steps:

None

64/14 FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS [Item 7]

Declarations of interest: None

Witnesses:

Dave Sargeant, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care,
Shelley Head, Interim Assistant Director
Paul Carey-Kent, Strategic Finance Manager

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care
Steve Cosser, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Committee was given a brief summary of the Family, Friends and Community programme and its goal to ensure that adult social care in Surrey provided better outcomes for vulnerable residents through more tailored care packages designed at keeping them connected to the communities in which they live while also registering savings for the Directorate. Significant concerns were raised by the Director of Surrey Coalition of Disabled People around reassessments and noted that Friends, Family and Community is perceived as a cost-cutting measure instead of a programme of reform designed to provide better outcomes for adult social care users. Members echoed this concern and highlighted the need to disseminate the message that Friends, Family and Community is not a cost-cutting initiative. The Strategic Director stated that care packages were not reduced where it was concluded that the support being provided prior to the reassessment was in line with the particular requirements of the resident and in some cases more expensive care packages were being put in place where the reassessment showed that a more expensive care package was necessary. It was also highlighted that a theatre company had been employed to train frontline staff in talking to vulnerable adults if their reassessment deemed that their support package should be reduced and gave valuable insights into how to conduct this conversation with the resident and their families. It was acknowledged,

however, that more could be done to get the message out to affected residents that Family Friends and Community is first and foremost about providing better outcomes rather than being a cost-saving measure.

2. Members suggested that County Councillors should also be more active in promoting the benefits of Family, Friends and Communities across Surrey and ensure that residents are aware that the initiative is about promoting better outcomes. It was recommended that it be added to the agendas of formal committee meetings as these are more widely attended and plans put forward on how Councillors can be encouraged to engage with and promote the initiative amongst their residents.

3. The Interim Assistant Director stipulated the need to empower staff and give them the tools to develop innovative approaches towards creating care packages which can provide the best possible outcomes for Surrey's vulnerable adults. Members drew attention to particularly creative schemes which had happened in their boroughs or which they had heard about taking place in other boroughs and asked the officers present to ensure that schemes which worked well in one borough were considered for the whole County to avoid adult social care in Surrey becoming siloed. The importance of regional visits by members was also emphasised to ensure that they retained an up-to-date understanding of local issues and developed a connection with frontline staff and care providers.

4. The Strategic Finance Manager provided the Committee with a detailed insight into how the Family, Friends and Community initiative was performing against its projected budget and its impact on the budget of the Adult Social Care Directorate as a whole. FF&C is projected to contribute a significant amount to reducing spending on adult social care with a target of saving the Directorate £13.3 million for 2013/14. It was advised that, at present, FF&C was on course to exceed this specific target and record savings of £16.5 million.

5. FFC DP surplus, which relates to the cost of new care packages as from reassessment indicates that a saving of nearly £2 million was made from April – July and that projected savings of £2.1 million would be made from August to March.

6. Savings arising from reassessments in light of the new FFC guidelines for care packages indicate that up to the end of July savings of £654k although these were not evenly spread throughout the community. Further savings of £3.75 million are projected to be made in light of reassessments from August until the end of March. These savings are weighted towards the latter half of the year as a result of more reassessments being scheduled for the end of the year. These positive figures have prompted an upwardly revised saving of £9 million from reassessments for next year.

7. The cost of conducting reassessments has contributed to an over-spend of £605k to the end of July in this area. Savings of £5.5 million are projected for the year but is hard to predict as the cost of creating care packages for children moving into adulthood who will require a care package from the Adult Social Care Directorate is unclear. The FFC Catch up field also has projected savings for the year although none have been recorded to date. Both of these were highlighted as potential areas of risk by the Strategic Finance Manager

where the projected savings might not be realised although was hopeful that the savings would be achieved.

8. The Committee expressed support for the Family, Friends and Community initiative but stressed that a strategic, Surrey-wide approach was required for implementing it effectively rather than the CCGs and Borough Councils working independently. Members stressed the importance of officers across the Boroughs cross-fertilising ideas for the implementation of FF&C, sharing tips on best practice and discussing schemes that have been effective. The importance of local knowledge, however, was also promoted and suggestions were made about how this could be accessed through systems such as Surrey Information Point and Surrey-i. It was suggested that Councillors be issued with business cards and Surrey Information Point that they could distribute to residents to make them more aware of the benefits of this system. Member involvement in FF&C was further advocated by the Committee who recommended the creation of 'Member Champions' for each district and borough in Surrey who would be able to share positive schemes with each other on how the programme was working in their area.

9. The Committee asked for assurances that the Directorate was indentifying the care needs of 18-25 year olds. The Strategic Director stated that key connections and networks were in place to ensure that young adults with care needs were being identified and their needs catered for.

Recommendations:

The Committee:

- Commends and echoes the enthusiasm among officers and practitioners for the Family, Friends and Community Support programme.
- Recognises the understanding officers and practitioners have for the cultural change which the programme represents.
- Notes that the Directorate needs to present a clear and positive message to ensure individuals' and families' expectations
- Recommends that information exchanges including Surrey Information Point and Surrey-i are readily available and localised.
- Will provide members with Surrey Information Point business cards to disseminate to residents.
- Recommends that 'Member Champions' are identified in each district and borough to help develop the programme in their area and link up with contacts such as GPs and their Practice Managers with officer support to gather and share information on the implementation of FFC across Surrey. Local networks which can be collaborated with should also be indentified such as Neighbourhood Watch groups, community navigators and other voluntary groups operating at the local level.
- The Chairman will write to the Chair of Local Committees to ensure that the FF & C Support Programme is scheduled as a formal item.

Action points/ further information to be provided:

None

Committee next steps:

None

65/14 **BUDGET UPDATE [Item 8]**

Declarations of interest: None

Witnesses:

Dave Sargeant, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Steve Cosser, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Strategic Finance Manager advised the Committee that the forecasted savings increase for 2014/15 had been cut due to anticipated savings from a block contractor not coming to fruition. It was hoped that the Directorate would be able to negotiate a longer term agreement with the contractor but this wasn't possible and so the savings which were projected to be made did not come about.
2. Savings were also projected in both continuing health care and the Better Care Fund although the Strategic Finance Manager stated that these savings were proving more difficult to make than originally anticipated.
3. The Committee requested clarification on the £2.8 million assigned to meet increased demand pressure and it was advised that the Directorate have forecasted that there will be a 6% increase in the use of Surrey County Council's Adult Social Care services and this money had been set aside to cope with this projected increase in demand.

Recommendations:

None

Action points/ further information to be provided:

None

Committee next steps:

None

66/14 **APPOINTMENT OF A SELECT COMMITTEE PERFORMANCE & FINANCE SUB-GROUP [Item 9]**

Declarations of interest: None

Witnesses: None

1. The Chairman advised the Committee that he wished to appoint Councillors Walsh, Hussain, White and Mallett to the Performance and Finance Sub-Group. All members agreed that they were happy with the Chairman's suggested appointments.

Recommendations:

None

Action points/ further information to be provided:

None

Committee next steps:

None

67/14 **RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND INTRODUCTION TO WORKFORCE STRATEGY [Item 10]**

Witnesses:

Dave Sargeant, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care

Steve Cosser, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The HR Relationship Manager provided an update on the challenges facing the Adult Social Care Directorate in recruiting and retaining front-line staff. It was highlighted that the high-cost of living in Surrey as well as restrictions on offering competitive salaries as a result of the existing corporate pay structure means that some difficulties have been experienced in recruiting and retaining staff to work in adult social care for the Council. The HR Relationship Manager indicated that a number of different strategies were being devised to make Surrey's social care services a more attractive employer both in terms of recruiting new staff and retaining those who already work for Surrey. Avenues which were being explored included introducing a more flexible pay progression structure particularly in areas such as Social Work and the creation of a rewards structure for existing staff. It was advised that it would take 6 months to finalise this strategy.

2. The Committee expressed some serious concerns about the staffing problems highlighted by the HR Relationship Manager and requested further clarification on the current number of vacancies in Surrey County Council's

Adult Social Care provision as well as information on the financial incentives offered by Surrey in comparison to other Local Authorities in the Southeast. The Chairman and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care confirmed that conversations have taken place with the Head of HR and Organisational Development in relation to the rigidity of the corporate pay structure and the adverse effects it is having on recruitment and retention strategies for adult social care services and so they were aware of these issues. The HR Relationship Manager advised that there were currently 95 vacancies across Adult Social Care services. In relation to the financial incentives offered by Surrey in comparison to other Local Authorities, it was highlighted that Surrey's recruitment and retention strategy lagged behind competitors due to the high cost of living in the County and that £7k was offered to for resettlement costs in line with the minimum government guidelines. The Committee were in agreement that the £7k resettlement allowance was not enough money to attract skilled and experienced workers to Surrey and suggested that this needs to be reconsidered. Members also queried whether the shortage in staff was impacting on the ability of the Adult Social Care Directorate to deliver its strategies for providing better care to Surrey's vulnerable residents. The HR Relationship Manager reiterated that the vacancies were across the whole of the service and with the highest concentration being in residential care which is currently undergoing significant changes which was impacting on staff numbers. The shortages are not severe in any particular area such that the delivery of services would be affected.

3. The Committee further queried whether the pay allocations for frontline service providers in Surrey restricted the quality of staff that Surrey was able to attract to Adult Social Care and requested assurances that only the right people with the right skills would be hired to fill vacancies. It was stated by the Strategic Director that a tight grip was kept on recruitment to ensure that only staff with the correct skill-set were employed to maintain levels of quality right across the service. It was also highlighted that new initiatives were being developed to devolve staffing budgets to the localities to ensure that they were able to employ the right people with the right skills for the needs of the residents in their local area and to take account of regional differences.

4. The HR Relationship Manager stressed that financial incentives such as pay and moving benefits were not the only recruitment and retention strategies available to the Council and that the career opportunities and the chance to progress up the organisation are also factors which must be taken into consideration. Members suggested that the HR Relationship Manager's recruitment and retention strategy should also consider ideas such as shared ownership schemes, talent-spotting for potential Social Workers as well other options that might help employees place down roots in Surrey and make them less likely to want to move to another County. Accordingly, the Council has an ongoing initiative to provide training to staff to help them improve their career prospects and develop their careers within Surrey although it was highlighted that the rising costs of training and providing the infrastructure for this training did mean that the opportunities that they were able to offer had decreased over the past couple of years.

5. Members also queried the possibility of hiring locums to cover key vacancies in frontline services. The HR Relationship Manager stressed that they wanted to avoid going down this avenue where possible due to the high

cost of hiring locums which, on average, is in the region of £70k a year once agency costs are factored in.

6. The Committee also queried the average time it took to recruit a new member of staff to the Adult Social Care team; in his introduction to the report the HR Relationship Manager indicated that it took, on average, 90 days to recruit for a vacant position which the Members felt to be a bit excessive. The HR Relationship Manager advised that he didn't have information on the reasons why it took so long to hand as details of recruitment schedules were still being investigated but that he would apprise the Committee of these results at the next meeting.

7. Members also requested more information on retention strategies for Social Workers which has been identified nationally as having an average career span of just 7 years and wondered what was being done in Surrey to retain Social Workers as key frontline service providers. The HR Relationship Manager highlighted that the 7 year career span identified was more reflective of Social Workers employed in the Children's Services sector than Adult Social Care. It was advised, however, that a board had been put together in order to explore the caseloads for Social Workers and developing ways in which to help them manage their workloads more effectively through a case work allocation model. The hope was that this would reduce the instances of Social Workers becoming disillusioned and help Surrey to retain their experienced, long term staff.

8. The Committee expressed concern that they had heard from residents that the application process for Social Workers applying for jobs in Surrey was overly complicated and put many people off applying for a job. The HR Relationship Manager indicated that he was concerned to hear that this was the perception of the Adult Social Care recruitment process and that it was designed to be user friendly, it was advised that this would be looked into as a priority to ensure that it didn't discourage any potential applicants.

Recommendations:

- The Committee recommends that the leader of the Council and Cabinet concentrate on urgently finding ways to recruit the (currently) 95 key frontline vacancies that exist across the Adult Social Care Directorate.
- The Committee supports the urgent creation of a separate, flexible HR policy for Adult Social Care to attract and retain skilled staff. The Committee will seek an update on this proposal in early 2015.

Action points/ further information to be provided

None

Committee next steps:

None

68/14 **RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**
[Item 11]

Declarations on interest:

None

Witnesses:

None

Key points raised during the discussion:

None

Recommendations:

None

Action points/ further information to be provided

None

Committee next steps:

None

69/14 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 12]**

The Committee noted its next meeting would be 23 October 2014 at 10am.

Meeting ended at: 1.30 pm

Chairman