

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SOCIAL CARE SERVICES BOARD** held at 10.30 am on 26 October 2016 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Friday, 9 December 2016.

Elected Members:

- * Mr Keith Witham (Chairman)
- * Mrs Margaret Hicks (Vice-Chairman)
- Mr Ramon Gray
- * Mr Ken Gulati
- * Miss Marisa Heath
- * Mr Saj Hussain
- * Mrs Yvonna Lay
- * Mr Ernest Mallett MBE
- * Mr Adrian Page
- * Mrs Dorothy Ross-Tomlin
- Mrs Pauline Searle
- * Ms Barbara Thomson
- * Mr Chris Townsend
- * Mrs Fiona White
- Mrs Helena Windsor

Substitute Members:

- * Mrs Hazel Watson

Members in attendance

- * Mr Mel Few
- * Mr Tim Evans
- * Mrs Clare Curran
- * Mrs Mary Lewis

64/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Ramon Grey, Pauline Searle and Helena Windsor.

Hazel Watson substituted for Pauline Searle.

Apologies were also received from Linda Kemeny.

65/16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 2 SEPTEMBER 2016 [Item 2]

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

66/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were no declarations of interest made.

67/16 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions received.

68/16 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SCRUTINY BOARD [Item 5]

There were no responses from Cabinet.

69/16 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]

The Board noted and approved the recommendations tracker and forward work programme.

The Board were also provided an update from the Performance and Finance sub-group of the Board which are attached to the minutes as Annexe A.

70/16 ADULT SOCIAL CARE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S UPDATE [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Helen Atkinson, Strategic Director for Adult Social Care and Public Health

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Tim Evans, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. The Strategic Director for Adult Social Care explained to the Board that the service was currently prioritising winter planning for 2016, noting that there was in place an integrated campaign with partner organisations to ensure that there was a single, clear message. Officers also pointed out that there was available an updated response from the Emergency Management Team in response to the work undertaken regarding winter planning, noting the updated business continuity plan that had been implemented. It was highlighted that there was a focus within the service on updating the vulnerable individual reporting system.
2. The Board was informed of the following actions that the service had undertaken with regard to winter planning:
 - a) updated the public webpage with the information relating to the updated Winter Plan;
 - b) promoting influenza vaccinations;

- c) use of NHS England toolkits in Care Homes to assist with Winter Planning; and
 - d) worked with partners, such as electricity companies, to ensure that information was shared to prevent vulnerable people suffering significant loss of amenity.
3. Members questioned the effect on local pharmacies as a result of recent central government announcements and if the service was working closely with partners to feed into any updated plans. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence commented that the service would be looking into the effects and feed back any issues to the Board. Officers also noted that communications made were county-wide, but that any information regarding borough, district and partner response will be looked into and considered with Surrey County Council's proposals.
4. Officers highlighted the work that was being undertaken by the service with the NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) and that meetings with the groups had taken place in late October 2016, noting that the Surrey Heartlands Committee in Common had good representation from Surrey County Council officers with the aim of positively influencing the development of the STP.

Recommendations:

None

71/16 ADULT SOCIAL CARE BUDGET MONITORING [Item 8]

Witnesses:

William House, Finance Manager

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Tim Evans, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. Officers highlighted the challenging budgetary situation facing the service, noting that a core reason for the budget overspend were the high savings targets set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). It was highlighted that the updated September 2016 projected overspend for 2016/17 was £20.9 million. Officers explained that increased demand for adult social care placed a burden on the

service, however, it was also noted that this was a national pressure, and one that was not limited to Surrey County Council.

2. It was highlighted that the introduction of the national living wage had seen care costs increase.
3. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence highlighted that briefings had taken place between the Council's Cabinet and Members of Parliament for Surrey to focus on the issue of the overspend within Adult Social Care. The Cabinet Member noted in particular the limitation of the powers regarding the adult social care 2% council tax increase. This was highlighted as benefitting the service by £12 million and reducing the impact of savings requirements. However, the possible limitation of this increase as a one-time occurrence was a key risk for the service budget. Equally, the £12 million of income raised from the precept is substantially less than the £35 million of pressures budgeted in 2016/17 relating to increased demand and market prices.
4. Members questioned whether the budget setting method used by the service was appropriate, querying how the financial planning process could be improved to better reflect the trends in demand. Officers explained that the issue was not to do with the methodology used to predict demand, but the difficulties experienced in delivering savings plans to reduce demand to budgeted levels. Demand is currently running at 6-7% which is very close to the level modelled prior to including the impact of savings plans which intended to bring demand down to 4%. It has not been possible to achieve this level of reduction in light of increased demand across the whole health and social care system in Surrey.
5. It was questioned by the Board whether direct payment reclaims were an achievable target. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence noted that the introduction of prepaid accounts for direct payments (which automatically prevent monies being paid out to individuals who have surpluses in their accounts) in the previous financial year will considerably reduce manual reclaims in future years.
6. Officers and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence noted that budget changes as a result of winter were not possible to predict accurately due to changing pressures from winter conditions, however that the service was expecting a maximum of £25 million overspend up to the end of the financial year.
7. Members questioned the impact of Surrey Choices funding on the budget overspend and whether the service holds the organisation to account effectively regarding the increase of £2 million in funding

provided by the Council. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence noted that the organisation was in a transformation programme. It was also noted that the operational structure of the organisation was the responsibility of its shareholder board. It was noted by the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence that it would be ideal for there to be representation of the Adult Social Care service on the shareholder board to improve accountability.

8. The Board was informed that Surrey Choices was undergoing changes in delivery since it became a separate entity from the Council, and that this had presented new challenges. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence highlighted that, dependant on who was driving change, this organisation could present a positive way forward.
9. Members raised concerns that there was a danger to frontline service as a result of the overspend in the future.

Recommendations

The Board is extremely concerned that the projected overspend in Adult Social Care poses a significant risk to the Council's overall financial position in 2016/17 and future years.

The Board recommends:

1. That the Cabinet set out the actions that be undertaken in the next three months in order to reduce the projected overspend;
2. That the Cabinet consider revising the methodology for finance planning;
3. That the Cabinet prioritise a sustainable set of savings for Adult Social Care as part of the planning for the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2017-2022;
4. That officers bring a future report on the present issues emerging in the home-based care market, and what action the Council is taking in relation to this;
5. That officers bring a future report on Surrey Choices to the Board, as the Board is concerned about increased costs;
6. That the Chairman write to the Surrey Choices shareholder board requesting non-executive representation for Adult Social Care.

72/16 SURREY MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB [Item 10]

The Board agreed to combine items 10 and nine in order to aid the flow of the discussion.

Witnesses:

Garath Symonds, Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention

Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing

Mary Lewis, Cabinet Associate for Children, Schools and Families

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. The Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention highlighted that the Surrey Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) went operational on the 5 October 2016. It was noted that the MASH was based at Guildford Police Station and served as the first point of contact for all safeguarding queries, in contrast to the multiple points of contact that were present prior to the introduction of the MASH. It was noted that this represented a significant culture change away from siloed working and the prior “multi-door” approach for the service and its partners.
2. It was noted that the initial implementation of the MASH had been positive, with several key benefits being identified: better co-ordination of response, greater capability for information sharing and a more consistent response to challenges.
3. Officers noted that one of the key challenges for the MASH following its inception was a backlog of calls. It was noted that there were two avenues of contact for the MASH: email and telephone calls. It was queried by Members whether the service had looked into the idea of instant messaging services. Officers responded that they would look into the feasibility of the idea.
4. It was noted that there was some initial down time in the email system at the inception of the MASH which led to a backlog of cases. It was also highlighted that there was a high volume of contacts for the MASH at its inception, and that the majority of these were repeat or already open cases. It was expected that this would reduce as more became familiar with the function of the MASH. It was noted that the service expected to be on target for call handling by the end of 2016.
5. Another key challenge that was noted by officers was the resilience of computer systems and databases to reliably cope with information required by MASH operators. It was noted that the Early Help Module (the way to access and use the databases) had a long response time, and caused some backlog. It was highlighted that, to resolve this issue, the service was working together with Information Management

Technology to resolve any issues arising as a matter of urgency.

6. The Board was informed that the MASH programme would transition to business as usual in January 2017, and this would see new governance arrangements being introduced. It was emphasised that, as part of this transition, there would be a governance board which would consist of representatives from Surrey Police, Clinical Commissioning Groups, the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB), the Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board and the Children's Service directors. It was noted that this board would be accountable to all statutory partners through the SSCB.
7. It was highlighted that the service needed an increase in staffing levels in order to effectively meet with demand, noting that 19 additional personnel were required. However, it was highlighted that the service was reviewing the requirement for the operators to be qualified social workers, in order to improve capacity for recruitment.
8. Officers noted that there was a communications programme sent out to users of the MASH three weeks prior to launch.
9. Members requested that the service use clear terminology to users of the MASH, to ensure high quality service.

73/16 EARLY HELP UPDATE [Item 9]

Witnesses:

Garath Symonds, Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention
Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing
Mary Lewis, Cabinet Associate for Children, Schools and Families

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. It was noted that that the programme of change was part of an overall strategy for the improvement plan following the Ofsted inspection in 2015.
2. Officers explained that there was in excess of 64,000 contacts made to the service per annum with regard to safeguarding children. It was highlighted that the MASH served to allow the service to determine whether a child was able to receive Early Help as a preventative measure, or if formal social care service was required.

3. It was highlighted that the new service would provide help to all children and adults, noting that all who had requested a safeguarding referral for children were provided help through either a formal service or through the Early Help system.

Hazel Watson left the meeting at 12.30pm

4. The Board questioned whether the service had a resource bank of information relating to partner organisations in the voluntary, community and faith sector. Officers confirmed that this was the case and that there was an attempt to work closer with partner organisations going forward, noting work with church organisations that was due to take place as part of phase two of the development process. It was agreed that, as part of this closer working with partners, the Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention would work closely with the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) Task Group of the Social Care Services Board in future.
5. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing and Cabinet Associate for Children, Schools and Families highlighted the Safer Surrey approach to practice with children and families, and the that this a strength based approach.. It was noted that the MASH and EH were a key aspect of this new strong and collaborative approach between the service and its partner organisations.
6. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families Wellbeing informed the Board that once the MASH had been embedded, it would create additional capacity in the system and there would be scope to restructure teams in the four quadrants. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that the VCFS had a key role to play in the delivery of early help.
7. The Cabinet Member highlighted that there had been a need to increase capacity to deliver Early Help and address actions set out in the improvement plan. The Board was informed that this was being supported by external consultants, funded through an additional investment that had been agreed as part of an Early Help transformation fund.

Recommendations

The Board thanks officers for the report, and recognises the good progress made to date in establishing the MASH. It recommends:

1. That officers report progress of Early Help and the MASH in six months, including how benefits are being realised and how emerging key issues have been addressed

It is requested that the Performance and Finance Sub-Group are updated regularly on the following:

2. efforts to reduce the number of contacts to the MASH where a child's case is already open to Children's Services, and
3. the issues that have arisen as a result of the new IMT modules and what is being undertaken to improve the system.

with matters to be escalated to the Board if appropriate.

74/16 DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTIES SAFEGUARDS [Item 11]

Witnesses:

Andy Butler, Principal Social Worker and Senior Practice Development Manager

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Tim Evans, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. Officers highlighted the complexity of Deprivation of Liberties Safeguards (DoLS) and the issues that arose out of the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) and the ruling of the Supreme Court in 2014, which had lowered the threshold for DoLS requests. It was noted that, as a result, numbers of referrals had increased significantly.
2. It was noted that Surrey County Council was the authorising body for referrals and that the service planned to mitigate risk regarding these referrals through the implementation of a triage process.
3. The Board queried why there were currently a high number of unassessed cases. It was highlighted that the data that was presented to the Board was a snapshot of a few weeks, but that any referrals made that do not require action and may remain in a low priority backlog. Members questioned if there was any measure in place to clear this backlog of cases. It was highlighted that there were a number of methods that had been undertaken by the service to do this; including expanding the DoLS team, working with social work agencies to increase capacity and working closely with partners. Officers highlighted that if an urgent referral was required, the service would undertake rapid assessments. It was noted that most work undertaken by the service were urgent assessments, causing some backlog of lower priority cases.

4. Members questioned if any representation had been made to Central Government regarding raising DoLS thresholds and if there were any opportunities to increase funding levels for DoL Safeguarding. Officers noted that this was a national problem, and not unique to Surrey. It was noted that representations were being made by a number of local authorities, but that the legislative changes brought into effect by the Law Commission recommendations would not take place until 2018. It was also noted to the Board that these legislative changes were unlikely to reduce the pressure created by the DOLs assessments. It was additionally highlighted that any Supreme Court ruling would be difficult to challenge.

Recommendations

The Board expresses continued concerns regarding the backlog in DOLS assessments, and the increase of those requiring of assessments.

It recognises the efforts of officers to manage risk to individuals through prioritisation and thanks them for their continued work. It recommends:

1. That a quarterly update is reported through to the Performance and Finance sub-group, with matters being escalated to the Board if required.

75/16 ADULT SOCIAL CARE DEBT [Item 13]

Witnesses:

Toni Carney, Head of Resources

Denis Fuller, Vice Chairman, Audit and Governance Committee

Tim Hall, Member, Audit and Governance Committee

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Tim Evans, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. Officers highlighted that, as a result changes brought in by the Care Act 2014, the service was no longer able to place charges upon property, shifting the between secured and unsecured debt.
2. It was indicated by officers that the impact of debt recovery on individual wellbeing was considered as a key aspect.
3. It was noted by officers that there was a £17 million social care debt owed to the service. It was noted that the service was working to establish the amount that was unrecoverable and what could be

claimed through a small claims court where possible.

4. The Board questioned whether the increase to £17 million was in proportion to the increase in demand for social care. Officers responded that this could be a cause, but that the root causes would need to be ascertained through further study.
5. Officers informed the Board that conversations with recipients of Adult Social Care were held to highlight the issue of social care cost. However, it was acknowledged that there were extenuating circumstances for individual cases.

Denis Fuller and Tim Hall entered the meeting at 1.15pm.

6. The Members of the Audit and Governance Committee noted that the key challenge facing the service was to create the resources within the service to focus on this issue effectively. It was highlighted that an immediate cause and assessment process needed to be implemented more effectively.
7. It was queried by Members whether the service could increase its number of Direct Debits collected to be higher than 60% of those on adult social care, as a means of reducing the possibility of a user incurring social care debt. It was noted by officers that Direct Debits are advertised as the preferred choice, but stressed that it was a personal choice for individual users.
8. Officers informed the Board that, as part of the improvement process, those who are in danger of being indebted were being visited by the service. It was noted that these face-to-face meetings had been responsible for the collection of £150,000 and that they are a good means of remaining in contact.

Yvonna Lay and Chris Townsend left the meeting at 1.34pm

Recommendations

The Board notes the improvement with the number of those payments collected by Direct Debit. It recommends:

1. That officers explore the business case for the additional temporary resource referred to in paragraph 14 to be made permanent, as a means for ensuring early and regular contact with debtors and their representatives.

76/16 ADULT SOCIAL CARE SYSTEMS REPLACEMENT [Item 12]

Witnesses:

Toni Carney, Head of Resources

Mel Few, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Tim Evans, Cabinet Associate for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence

Declarations of interests:

None

Key points of discussion:

1. Officers highlighted that there was positive progress with the new systems and that there were no major problems to report with implementation.
2. It was noted that phase two of implementation was to go ahead on the 9 November 2016.
3. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence thanked the service for its good delivery of the project on time and on budget. It was highlighted that a key part of the success was that the system was service led in its implementation.

Recommendations

None

77/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 14]

The next public meeting of the Board will be held on the 9 December 2016, 10.00am at County Hall.

Meeting ended at: 1.46 pm

Chairman

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Social Care Services Board - Performance and Finance Sub-Group
Monday 17 October
Update for the Board

Adult Social Care (ASC) Budget Scrutiny

The sub-group was given a briefing on the current savings planned within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2016-2021. The MTFP included a 2% reduction in ASC spending, including planned savings of £198 million over the five years.

It was highlighted that Health and Social Care Integration, Accommodation, Family, Friends and Community Support and other initiatives amount to approximately 75% of savings. It was noted that around 26% of the necessary savings across the five years were still to be identified.

The sub-group was informed that there was a projected budget overspend of £21 million for 2016/17. A summary of the current budget position and overspend are being reported to the Board on 26 October 2016.

The sub-group raised concerns as to frontline services, and how the Council could continue to meet its statutory duties. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Wellbeing and Independence stressed that frontline services were being maintained and met statutory requirements.

There was a concern raised as to whether Family, Friends and Community Support initiatives were placing additional burdens on community partners. Officers noted that the service was developing a system that provided better outcomes at less cost through working closely with partners, and reducing the need for unnecessary and costly services.

The sub-group discussed the sustainability of adult social care funding, and what discussions had taken place with central government. There were concerns that the additional powers to raise a specific proportion of the council tax to fund adult social care would not be sufficient to meet demand pressures. It was highlighted that even a significant cut to other services provided by the Council would not resolve the long term challenges of funding social care for adults. Therefore it is essential that the government implements funding changes to make the system sustainable in the long term.

It was questioned how the service was working on prevention and integration with health services. The Cabinet Member highlighted the complexity of funding both acute and preventative provisions, and the challenge in quantifying the effectiveness of preventative initiatives.

The sub-group raised questions regarding commissioning arrangements for Surrey Choices. It was noted with concern that the contract value had increased, and there was a discussion around the relationship between the shareholder board, the Council as a commissioning body, and how changes were being introduced to these arrangements to improve contract management oversight.

Children's, Schools and Families Improvement Report Card

The sub-group was informed that the service still had a number of children on Child Protection Plans (CPP) over 18 months, though this showed signs of continued improvement. Officers explained that there were difficulties in ending plans with the agreement of all partners, as required, due to there being a general aversion to risk amongst them.

The role of the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Early Help were highlighted as being significant developments in terms of improving performance. The Board will receive reports on both topics on 26 October 2016.

It was noted that performance around assessments had improved in three of the four quadrants. There remained a continued challenge in the South East area, the sub-group was informed that this related to reliance on locum social workers and the difficulty in managing performance in this area.

The interim Head of Children's Services expressed the view that the greatest risk for the service at present was the recruitment and retention of social workers. The social work academy was highlighted as an example of steps put in place to address this. The sub-group was also informed that there was scope to build capacity through the use of social work assistants. Members questioned whether this could be expanded into creating social worker apprenticeships as a future option for the service.

It was noted that the recorded instances of missing children over the calendar month was under 50. It was explained that this was partly a result of the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) within Surrey. It was also noted that Surrey had a large number of UASC compared to other local authorities, and that this had put strain upon social workers in the area. The sub-group discussed the protocols in place for when children went missing, and how this reflected risks to the individual. Examples were cited where vulnerable children had a history of absconding, and how this needed to be managed to ensure a consistent response on each occasion.

The sub-group noted that social worker caseloads of children on CPP and the numbers of Looked After Children were slightly lower than the recommended level. The sub-group discussed how the complexity of cases varied, and this could give a false impression of a manageable workload. Officers discussed the role of managers in assessing social worker capacity and capability in this respect. The sub-group suggested that the caseload levels should be highlighted as a positive when seeking to recruit social workers.

It was highlighted that the new Assistant Director of Children's Services was continuing on from the work of the current incumbent, however it was stressed that the Board had a vital scrutiny role to play in ensuring that the service continued on its improvement path.