

MINUTES of the meeting of the **SOCIAL CARE SERVICES BOARD** held at Time Not Specified on 4 March 2016 at Ashcombe, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 12 May 2016.

Elected Members:

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

Ex officio Members:

Mrs Sally Ann B Marks, Chairman of the County Council
Mr Nick Skellett CBE, Vice-Chairman of the County Council

Substitute Members:

Mr Michael Gosling

13/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Mr Saj Hussain and Ms Barbara Thomson. Mr Michael Gosling attended the meeting as a substitute.

14/16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 09/12/2015 & 25/01/2016 [Item 2]

The minutes of the meetings on 09/12/2015 and 25/01/2016 were agreed as accurate records of the meetings.

15/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

16/16 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions.

17/16 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SCRUTINY BOARD [Item 5]

There were no items referred.

18/16 FAMILY, FRIENDS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT INTERNAL AUDIT [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Shelley Head, Area Director
Rebecca Brooker, Project Manager
Will House, Finance Manager

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

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Board acknowledged that target savings attached to the Family, Friends and Community (FFC) programme were very challenging. Members were interested to learn when the detailed budget proposals would be available for the Board to scrutinise to ensure that a realistic budget be set. An overview of the budget would be provided later in the meeting and a meeting of the Performance and Finance Sub-Group will be set up in due course.
2. The Cabinet Member emphasised that the Family, Friends and Community Support Programme should be regarded as a way of working rather than a stand-alone project, and members of the Board suggested that the culture change required may perhaps be easier in rural parts of the county than urban areas. The Area Director confirmed that the team is motivated and empowered to make efficiencies across the programme, particularly around practice outcomes.
3. In response to a question from the Board about how the team links up with voluntary groups across the county, the Area Director confirmed that the team collaborates with colleagues in the community, including in districts and boroughs, to ensure that funds are allocated on a needs basis and that they are spent in a focused way.
4. The Board was also reassured that the content of Surrey Information Point is kept updated and that the weblinks are fully functioning, and the Chairman suggested that the website address be included in all publicity.

Recommendations:

The Board agreed:

- a) That all information on the Surrey Information Point should be kept current and links should be tested to ensure they work;
- b) That the Council should ensure that all savings targets including those for Family, Friends and Community are realistic;
- c) That the budgets for Adult Social Care should be revised to reflect additional pressures and realistic savings.

19/16 ADULTS INFORMATION SYSTEM INTERNAL AUDIT AND NEW IT UPDATE [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Toni Carney, Head of Resources

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

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Head of Resources outlined the concerns raised in the Audit and the measures planned to address them, reminding Members that the Audit had taken place shortly before the decision was taken to replace the AIS system. Consequently, the action plan focused on improvements that could be built into the new system as well as improving guidance to staff. The Board was informed that the dates in the action plan were accurate and the planned go live date for the new system was July 2016.
2. The Board was assured that there is a target to set review dates in the current (AIS) system by April 2016. In any case where this has not been achieved, officers will automatically set a review date in the new system to ensure all cases have a review scheduled. Despite Members' concerns that it would be preferable to keep the current system running for a time once the new system was introduced, officers were of the view that it would be impractical for staff and would lead to significant risks.
3. The Board welcomed the introduction of the Liquidlogic system and the Chairman thanked the implementation team for the work they had carried out. The Cabinet Member pointed out the advantages of the implementation team having taken ownership of the introduction of the new system. In response to further questions, the Head of Resources confirmed that there were plans to use the functionality to enable third parties to access the new system to input data, and that this would be investigated from autumn 2016.

Recommendations:

The Board noted:

- (a) that the service is required to review the essential information fields in light of service wide impact and previous audit recommendations; and
- (b) the progress made to date against the management action plan arising from the internal audit.

Actions/further information to be provided:

The Board agreed to receive an update on the management action plan and the ASC IT replacement project in October 2016.

20/16 CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Julie Fisher, Deputy Chief Executive
Sheila Jones, Head of Countywide Services

Linda Kemeny, Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement
Mary Lewis, Cabinet Associate for Children, Schools and Families Wellbeing

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Deputy Chief Executive gave a presentation, copies of which were tabled at the meeting. She talked through the improvement programme, drawing attention to the key dates, and reminded Members that an Ofsted support package is in place, which means that they visit the authority on a monthly basis to check that progress is being made. In addition, a Department for Education adviser works alongside officers and Members and is supportive of the improvement programme.
2. The Board was informed about the restructure in Children's Services. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that only the Assistant Director for Commissioning and Prevention post had been filled, while the other two Assistant Director posts, for Children's Services and for Education, were still to be recruited to.
3. Members were interested to find out how quickly capacity could be provided in Surrey for children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Board that an inclusion pilot has been designed by Babcock 4S in consultation with Surrey officers to enable mainstream schools to build resilience, capacity, understanding and training. Specific programmes have also been introduced to cater for autistic pupils.
4. Recruitment and retention continue to be big issues for the service, although the Board heard that retention rates are improving and some social workers have been recruited. Currently there is a high number of locums in the service, and the intention is to convert them to permanent members of staff. Measures to improve recruitment include expanding the social worker academy, more support for newly

qualified social workers, working closely with agencies and cementing links with universities. The Deputy Chief Executive invited other suggestions for improving recruitment and retention.

5. The Head of Countywide Services assured the Board that young carers were well supported and that schools currently provided much of this support.

Recommendations

- a) The Board agreed to continue to receive updates on the progress of the Children's Improvement Plan; and
- b) The Board recommends that along with officers identifies the key data for regular review including children and families' feedback, recruitment and retention rates, social worker case loads, placement geography (in or out of county) and case stability

Actions/further information to be provided:

SEND 2020 strategy to be circulated to the Board.

Board next steps:

Joint report from Directors of Children's and Adults' Services about the transition from Children's to Adult Social Care to be provided at the Board's next meeting.

21/16 LEAD MEMBER'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR CORPORATE PARENTING [Item 9]

Witnesses:

Sheila Jones, Head of Countywide Services

Linda Kemeny, Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. Members were informed that the bulk of the budget for Looked After Children (LAC) was spent on those for whom the council is the corporate parent as most of the allocation spent on the approximately 150 asylum seeking children in the county could be claimed back subsequently.
2. The Board was also concerned about the provision made for care leavers. The Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement welcomed a suggestion from the Vice-Chairman of the Board that a career mentoring scheme for care leavers be developed among Members. In addition, the Head of Countywide Services emphasised that Surrey is the fifth best performing authority in terms of children not leaving care before the age of 18, and reported an improvement in the number of care leavers going to university.

1. The Head of Countywide Services confirmed that there was still a shortage of foster carers. A national recruitment programme was piloted last year but as yet is not producing results for Surrey. Other measures are being looked at, including the support packages offered to foster parents and the need to engage with districts and boroughs in the county.

Recommendations

The Board noted the report

Board next steps:

1. Joint report from Directors of Children's and Adults' Services about the transition from Children's to Adult Social Care to be provided
2. Chairman recommended that annual reports go to just one meeting as far as possible

22/16 FOSTERING AND ADOPTION SERVICES [Item 10]

Witnesses:

Suzanne Chambers, Team Manager Adoption Service
Sheila Jones, Head of Countywide Services

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Team Manager highlighted specific points from the report, including that although the number of children placed in adoption had dropped last year a large number of adopters had been approved and were waiting to adopt. The service is trying to encourage them to take on children with more complex needs. Support services for adopters are robust, including some provided in-house as well as a Government-funded Adoption Support Fund.
2. A member of the Board asked whether there was scope for asking people to act as mentors and to provide respite care. It was confirmed that voluntary organisations are commissioned to provide befriending services and that a short break service does exist but that further opportunities to offer more would be explored.
3. The Board thanked the Head of Countywide Services, the Team Manager Adoption Service and their teams for their work, noting that the service was rated as 'Good' by Ofsted.

Recommendations

The Board noted the report

[The Board took a lunch break from 12.50 – 13.20]

23/16 ADULT SOCIAL CARE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S UPDATE [Item 11]

Witnesses:

Helen Atkinson, Strategic Director Adult Social Care and Health

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

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. As regards the budget, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Independence and Wellbeing informed the meeting that the Adult Social Care budget was facing a challenging deficit of £55m. He pointed out that the service had managed to achieve significant savings in the past but this would prove difficult in the light of the current 7-8% annual increase in demand. The Cabinet Member undertook to circulate further detailed budgetary information after the meeting, and Members were invited to send any comments to Democratic Services.
2. The Board heard that a key element of achieving savings currently was a focus on reviewing Adult Social Care's contracts and grants. In partnership with Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) colleagues, all providers had been written to, with the aim of ensuring appropriate social care provision for the benefit of residents. All Members had been copied in to that letter.
3. Members were keen to hear more about good experiences on integrated care between local authorities and the CCGs and it was suggested that an item be brought to a future meeting to give the Board further information.

Recommendations

The Board noted the report

Actions/further information to be provided:

Detailed budgetary information.

Adrian Page, Fiona White and Pauline Searle left the meeting at 13:58

24/16 SURREY CHOICES [Item 12]**Witnesses:**

Simon Laker, Managing Director
Ian Hutchinson, Chief Operations Officer
Dexter James, Chairman of the Involvement Board
Jo Poynter, Area Director (East)
David Brazier, parent of service user
Robin Clarke, parent of service user

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Board watched a video about the support provided by Surrey Choices and invited the Managing Director to draw out the highlights in the report provided for this item. He acknowledged that the business plan was

ambitious but that there had been a series of significant achievements. This view was echoed by the Area Director, who nevertheless emphasised that vast challenges remained for the company.

2. Parents of service users were welcomed to the meeting and invited to give their view on the support provided by the company. Issues raised included concern regarding the loss of facilities, for example, at Fairways in Ashford that expected new hubs had not yet materialised, and that annual consultation meetings no longer seemed to be taking place. The company representatives acknowledged that there had been delays in setting up provision, including hubs, but pointed out that reviews of every user's needs had now been carried out, and parents and carers consulted.
3. In response to questions from the Board, Surrey Choices confirmed that their work over the next year would focus on matching provision to demand through closer working with the Adult Social Care Service.
4. The Chairman of the Board put on record his thanks to the Managing Director of Surrey Choices and his management team, as well as to the parents who had attended the meeting and clarified for the Board the difficulties around current provision. Comments from the Board will be submitted to the Council Overview Board, who will scrutinise the company's financial performance.

Recommendations

The Board noted the report, and the invitation from Surrey Choices for the Scrutiny Board to visit any of its services, speak with staff or visit its Involvement Board at a future date.

Board next steps:

To invite Surrey Choices to return to the Scrutiny Board to provide an update on progress at a future date.

25/16 SURREY CARE ASSOCIATION [Item 13]

Witnesses:

David Holmes, Chair of Surrey Care Association
Erica Lockhart, Chief Executive of Surrey Care Association
Jo Poynter, Area Director (East)
Liz Uliasz, Deputy Director – Adult Social Care

Key points raised during the discussions:

1. The Board welcomed the Care Association to the meeting and heard from the Chair about the organisation's current pressures, in addition to viewing the presentation contained in the agenda pages. The Board heard that, in the light of current difficult market conditions, the Care Association has rethought its strategy over the last few months to refocus on the benefits it can deliver for its members. Particular emphasis would be put on developing the market and ensuring there were sufficient resources to meet their objectives of high quality provision that ensures wellbeing.

2. Members were informed that the key issues faced by the Association were around funding, staffing and ensuring quality. The Chair voiced his fears for the sustainability of the market. While private funded homes were booming, members of the association who are delivering publically funded care are uncertain of their future and are considering other avenues of revenue.
3. The Chair implored the council to consider raising the council tax rate in the county. The Cabinet Member sympathised with the situation outlined by the Chair and valued the collaboration with the Care Association on workforce recruitment but reiterated the gap in funding and demographic challenge that impacts the council, the NHS and providers. The Cabinet Member added that a referendum to increase the income from council tax would most likely fail and that there are limited options available to tackle the rising demand for adult social care.

Ken Gulati left the meeting at 15:10

Marisa Heath left at the meeting at 15:14

Recommendations:

The Board noted the report

Actions/further information to be provided:

Briefing on the outcome of the collaboration between Adult Social Care and the Surrey Care Association on workforce.

26/16 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 14]

Key points raised during the discussions:

The Board noted the programme and tracker

27/16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 15]

The date of the next meeting will be on Thursday 12 May 2016 at 10.00am.

Meeting ended at 15:30

Chairman