

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 11 JULY 2016 FROM 7.00 PM TO 8.40 PM**

**Committee Members Present**

Councillors: Ken Miall (Chairman), Parry Batth, Laura Blumenthal, Richard Dolinski, Philip Houldsworth, Clive Jones and Chris Smith

**Others Present**

Madeleine Shopland, Principal Democratic Services Officer  
Lynne McFetridge, Head of Adult Social Care and Safeguarding  
Marlena O'Donnell, Policy and Strategy Manager  
Stuart Rowbotham, Director Health and Wellbeing  
Sarah O'Connor, Adult Safeguarding Service Manager  
Jim Stockley, Healthwatch Wokingham Borough  
Nicola Strudley, Healthwatch Wokingham Borough

**10. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillors Kate Haines and Bill Soane.

**11. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 1 June 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Jones asked the number of GP vacancies in the Borough. The Principal Democratic Services Officer indicated that she would resend the information received.

**12. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

**13. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

**14. MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

There were no Member questions.

**15. CARE HOMES**

Lynne McFetridge, Head of Adult Social Care & Safeguarding and Sarah O'Connor, Adult Safeguarding Service Manager, provided an update on care home provision within the Borough.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:

- At present in the Borough there were 21 homes providing a total of 356 residential care beds and 542 nursing beds. There were 3 Extra Care Units with 106 flats. Fosters would be coming online in September/October 2017. Additional private provision in Bulmershe would become available from approximately March/April 2017.
- Current capacity within the market was considered to be adequate. However, the impact of quality assurance frameworks and organisational safeguarding concerns resulting in an embargo (red status) for a provider could dramatically impact on the

market and place availability. In the past year this particular issue had had an impact.

- Wokingham had a high number of self-funders so places were often priced at premium rates.
- The Borough had an ageing population. In 2015 there were 4442 people with a high level of need and by 2030 it was predicted that there would be approximately 7280. It was predicted that there would be a significant growth in the number of over 65's by 2030.
- Future market shaping needed to be based on research into the local ageing population. Public Health and Commissioning were working on mapping the future population.
- Members were informed that anecdotal evidence suggested that many affluent self-funding residents reaching retirement age were utilising high property value in the Borough.
- In addition many of the 'baby boom' population were indicating that different choices of care were preferred to traditional types of care. This could potentially lead to a much reduced demand for provision of 'traditional care' in the future.
- It was noted that with the current significant proportion of affluent self-funders reducing, cost to the councils might significantly increase.
- Sarah O'Connor updated Members on quality assurance and outlined the expectation, standards and local and national drivers.
- Quality assurance began at the contract and commissioning stage. A Care Governance Framework and a proactive and reactive response was provided to quality assurance concerns identified. In addition there was a Serious Concerns Framework in place. The Care Governance Board met monthly and analysed information and concerns received and safeguarding alerts. Information could be received from partners and the external regulators, amongst others.
- Members were informed of the external quality assurance agencies:
  - Care Quality Commission;
  - Safeguarding Adults Board (tri-borough with Reading and West Berkshire councils);
  - NHS England South Standard Operating Process for Enhanced Levels of Surveillance.
- Councillor Blumenthal commented that planning permission had previously been granted for a care home in Loddon but that the developer had been unable to attract a provider. She questioned whether this was a Borough wide issue. Lynne McFetridge reminded Members that Wokingham was an expensive area to live and that this had an impact on staff recruitment. Stuart Rowbotham emphasised that there was not concerns regarding the number of homes and in fact many residents came from outside of the Borough.
- Options with regards to securing provision were under consideration.
- Councillor Jones questioned whether residents would ever be placed far outside the Borough. Stuart Rowbotham commented that the Council would look at the most economic means of sustaining the local family link. Under the Care Act 2014 the Council had a responsibility to help maintain local family relationships.
- Councillor Jones went on to ask how often care homes were inspected. He was informed that the Care Quality Commission had a round of inspections but that care homes were inspected approximately every 2 years. If the home had received a good rating it could be up to 3 years. Councillor Jones questioned whether this was sufficient and was informed that it was.

- Nicola Strudley indicated that Healthwatch Wokingham Borough would be undertaking a project on extra care homes, working together with Optalis to understand the experience of living in extra care housing.
- Councillor Miall referred to concerns raised in the media regarding certain care homes and asked how issues had come to light to the Council. Sarah O'Connor indicated that safeguarding concerns had been raised which had been considered under the Quality Assurance programme. Residents within the home had been reviewed and an improvement programme monitored.

**RESOLVED:** That Lynne McFetridge and Sarah O'Connor be thanked for their presentation.

## **16. SUPPORT FOR CARERS**

Marlena O'Donnell, Policy & Strategy Manager, updated the Committee on support available for carers.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:

- There had been a huge drive in legislation to recognise and support carers. The Care Act 2014 had introduced new eligibility criteria for support for carers and new rights for carers.
- The Council had created a Carers Strategy 2016-2018. Its main priorities were:
  - Supporting carers;
  - Enabling carers to keep healthy;
  - Addressing social isolation;
  - Supporting carers to self-help and empowerment;
  - Promoting community based approaches to support.
- The Council actively supported around 700 carers through the provision of statutory services. Councillor Dolinski commented that he thought that this number seemed low. Stuart Rowbotham stated that this number corresponded to a third of customers supported by the Council, so in fact this figure was quite high, as not all adult social care customers would have carers (e.g. they may be living in residential care or live on their own). In addition, many more carers were supported via the local voluntary sector. Marlena O'Donnell commented that many carers did not see themselves as carers or did not wish to be identified as such, however, were receiving services from the voluntary sector organisations funded by the Council.
- Nicola Strudley commented that earlier in the year Healthwatch Wokingham Borough had spoken to 14 carers and they had not been aware of support available to them post the Care Act implementation or had said that it had not made a difference. Marlena O'Donnell commented that carers do not necessarily realise what services were provided by the Council, such as services funded by the Council, but provided by voluntary sector organisations.
- The carer's assessment provided an idea of the needs of the individual carer. Stuart Rowbotham indicated that needs would vary from carer to carer; some required practical support and others emotional. Those who were assessed were given a copy of their assessment and the support plan. Nicola Strudley suggested that carers may not always know what support they would like and that it would be helpful if some examples of what was available were provided when the carer came to be assessed.
- A new model of carers support services was being developed and a review of carers support services was being implemented. Extensive consultation with carers had taken place with regards to advice and information and outreach services. The

service specification for the new service had been informed by local carers and carers would help with choosing the provider.

- Marlina O'Donnell outlined the new carers support services model.
- Support already available included information on the Wokingham Information Network.
- Members were informed of new services including a carers club for carers of people with dementia which would start later in July and advocacy for carers which would also begin in July.
- A Young Carers Service would be starting in July. Councillor Miall asked up to what age carers were considered young carers and was informed that it was up to 18 years old.
- Councillor Blumenthal asked how support for young carers differed to that offered to adult carers. Marlina O'Donnell commented that some of the services were the same, but the young carers' services worked closely with the schools and provided 1-2-1 support as well as opportunities for young carers to have fun, meet their peers and get support from other young carers.
- Members asked how many young carers there were in the Borough and were informed that statistically there were in the region of 2,000 but it was unclear how accurate this was. Nicola Strudley indicated that Healthwatch Wokingham Borough had identified 100 young carers just via their work with St Crispin's School.
- A target was to increase the number of young carers identified and supported by the new young carers' service.
- A new information and advice service for carers was being commissioned.
- Nicola Strudley stated that many GP surgeries currently had lists of patients who were carers. She asked how this information would be shared as the integration agenda was advanced. Marlina O'Donnell indicated that GPs no longer had a duty to keep such lists. The Community Navigators would, however, help to provide a link.

**RESOLVED:** That Marlina O'Donnell be thanked for her presentation.

## **17. UPDATE ON INDEPENDENT LIVING FUND**

The Committee received an update on the transfer of Independent Living Fund (ILF) cases to the Council from Stuart Rowbotham, Director of Health and Wellbeing.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:

- On 1 July 2015, 18 cases had transferred to the Council as confirmed by the final data schedule issued by the ILF. Shortly afterwards, the Council had been informed that it would receive £230,456 in ILF grant funding for the remainder of the 2015/16 financial year.
- It was noted that the Council had a surplus of grant over costs of £72,521.90 for 2015/16. There was no requirement to return the surplus to central Government. Councillor Blumenthal asked where the surplus had been allocated and was informed that it had been put against the overall adult social care budget. Health and Wellbeing had seen an overspend the previous year due to a number of factors such as the requirement under the Care Act 2014 to move from providing care to 'Critical' need to 'Substantial' need.
- A further grant would be paid for 4 financial years – 2016/17 to 2019/20, based on the former ILF caseload data and reducing year-on-year in lieu of expected reductions in ILF funding that would have occurred had the fund not closed.

- Of the 18 individuals, in 13 cases the re-assessment and Personal Budget review process had been completed. Members were informed that in one case, whilst the re-assessment and Personal Budget process had been completed, the Council was involved with the customer in appealing against Health partners' decisions not to fund the case under S117 arrangements. Members requested an update on the final case once it had been resolved.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) the report and update on the transfer of Independent Living Fund cases to the Council, be noted.
- 2) that a final update on the remaining outstanding case be provided to the Committee once it had been resolved.

### **18. HEALTHWATCH WOKINGHAM BOROUGH UPDATE**

Nicola Strudley presented the Healthwatch Wokingham Borough annual report 2015-16.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:

- Over 650 people had shared their experiences with Healthwatch Wokingham Borough and 167 people had been signposted to advice and guidance.
- 8 reports had been produced over the year and 3 visits to care homes had been undertaken.
- Members were encouraged to download the Appyness App which had been co-produced with young people.
- A number of video vox pop had been produced including one of the Healthwatch youth champion speaking about his experience of mental health services.
- The Committee was informed of some of Healthwatch Wokingham Borough's achievements over the year. Numerous changes had been made at Wokingham Medical Centre including the font on signage being made bigger and strips being put onto the stairs to help visually impaired patients. All Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust managers and team leads were currently reviewing the practice of their duty clinicians, following young people expressing suicidal ideation, which Healthwatch had raised. Following its visit to Suffolk Lodge, Healthwatch Wokingham had made a number of recommendations, which had been actioned. Westmead Day Centre had been paired with local artists, making better use of the art room.
- A designated volunteer driver space was being trialled at Royal Berkshire Hospital following work undertaken by Healthwatch.
- Members were informed that Healthwatch Wokingham Borough had presented at the Healthwatch England conference on its work with young people.
- Nicola Strudley outlined Healthwatch Wokingham Borough's aspirations for the forthcoming year. This included undertaking a joint Enter and View to Prospect Park Hospital later in the year with Reading and West Berkshire Healthwatches. The young Healthwatch Champion would be working with Healthwatch Wokingham Borough during his gap year to ensure that the young person's voice was heard.
- It was noted that Healthwatch Wokingham Borough would be looking to recruit another Non-Executive Director.

**RESOLVED:** That Nicola Strudley and Jim Stockley be thanked for their presentation.

## **19. FORWARD PROGRAMME 2016-17**

The Committee discussed the Forward Programme for the remainder of the municipal year.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:

- Councillor Blumenthal indicated that she had previously suggested that the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee look at the issues of young people's mental health and the support that they were offered and how disabled children and their families were supported in education and everyday life. It had been felt that it would be more appropriate for these topics to be considered by the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Principal Democratic Services indicated that she would liaise with Officers with regards to an appropriate time to consider these items.
- A presentation on the impact of the 21st Century Council project on health and social care services was scheduled for the Committee's November meeting. It was possible that this would need to be deferred to a later meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Forward Programme be noted.