

CARE SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 17 November 2015

Present:

Councillor Judi Ellis (Chairman)
Councillors Ruth Bennett, Kevin Brooks, Mary Cooke,
Hannah Gray and Stephen Wells
Linda Gabriel, Justine Godbeer and Rosalind Luff

Also Present:

Councillor Robert Evans and Councillor Diane Smith

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillors David Jefferys and Pauline Tunnicliffe.

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

41 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING

Two questions had been received from Bill Miller and these are attached at Appendix A.

42 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE HELD ON 23RD SEPTEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2015 be agreed.

43 MATTERS ARISING AND WORK PROGRAMME Report CSD15128

The Committee reviewed its work programme for 2015/16, the programme of visits and matters arising from previous meetings. The following matters arising from the meeting on 23rd September 2015 were noted –

Minute 30 A: Procurement Strategy for the Provision of Care Services in Extra Care Housing: The Chairman queried whether the number of voids in Extra Care Housing had risen.

Minute 30 C: Public Health Commissioning Intentions: further useful information about the face to face visits by health visitors had been circulated.

Minute 34: Annual ECHS Debt Status Report: The figures would be broken down to show debt that was more than three months old – a further report would be made to the next meeting. Some changes in procedures had been made as a result of the Committee's discussions.

The Chairman requested a report on evaluation of step-down beds at Orpington Hospital for the next meeting of the Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

44 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF CARE SERVICES PORTFOLIO REPORTS

The Committee considered the following reports for pre-decision scrutiny prior to decisions being taken by the Care Services Portfolio Holder.

A) BUDGET MONITORING 2015/16 Report CS15937

The report provided the budget monitoring position for 2015/16 based on activity up to the end of August 2015.

The following matters were discussed and noted -

- It was noted that, in section 3.8 of the report, the savings in staffing, short breaks and direct payments made in the Children's Disability Service were due to a reduction in demand for these services. Members queried whether this might in turn be because the provider was not offering the services that people wanted.
- The Carelink overspend was due to staffing savings being implemented late.
- The Independent Living Fund had now closed, with responsibility passing from central government to the local authority.
- The Council faced enormous financial pressures in the next few years, and proposals for making major savings were needed.
- A Member commented that, despite the current underspends, there was a need to invest more in mental health services. It was accepted that this was an issue for the Health and Wellbeing Board to consider, and this had been recognised in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA.) Members who would be participating in the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee looking at the Our Healthier South East London programme had flagged that mental health services should be integrated into the project, and Public Health was increasing its efforts to reach out via the schools.

- A Member asked for information about the contract waiver for £353k in appendix 1B of the report. (Note: It was subsequently confirmed that this was a one year contract for Supporting People – Tenancy Sustainment Service, awarded to Hestia Housing and Support. This had been reported to the Committee on 23rd June 2015.)
- Linda Gabriel reported that Healthwatch were doing some work on assessments in Extra Care Housing – her concern was that these appeared not to be updated between annual reviews. Officers confirmed that assessments could be requested at any time, and providers could adjust their services within certain tolerances to meet their clients' needs. The Chairman was concerned at the level of voids in Extra Care Housing and suggested that age limits could be reduced so that the accommodation could be made available to younger people. A report was requested addressing these issues.
- It was noted that there was now an underspend on No Recourse to Public Funds, but this area remained volatile and the Committee would continue to monitor demand.

RESOLVED that

(1) The following matters be noted -

- (i) the latest projected underspend of £1,623,000 forecast on the controllable budget, based on information as at August 2015;**
- (ii) the full year effect for 2016/17 of a credit of £1,949,000 as set out in section 4 of the report;**
- (iii) the carry forward release requests as detailed in section 5 of the report;**
- (iv) the comments of the Department in section 8 of this report;**

(2) The Portfolio Holder for Care Services be asked to refer the funding release requests in section 5 of the report in contingency to the Executive for approval.

B) GATEWAY REPORT ON TENDERING FOR DIRECT PAYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Report CS15939

The current contract for Direct Payment Support expired on 31st July 2016 and it was therefore proposed to retender the contract.

A co-opted Member asked whether support for completing the monitoring forms was included in the contract – this would be confirmed. It was also confirmed that although people could appoint PA's from outside the borough there was no additional funding for transport costs for PA's travelling a long distance. XbyX had received one-off funding which was being used to draw up fact-sheets to help people considering Direct Payments. If people had

difficulties with Direct Payments their first recourse was usually to discuss the issue with their Care Manager, and then with Vibrance, the current contractor.

A Member asked about how client satisfaction was measured through the KPI's for the contract and whether complaints were monitored – it was confirmed that the provider was expected to provide client survey results.

RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder for Care Services be recommended to approve the commissioning and procurement approach as set out in paragraphs 11.1 to 11.3 of the report and the extension of the contract as set out in paragraph 8.2 of the report.

45 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF REPORTS TO THE EXECUTIVE

The Committee scrutinised the following reports to the Council's Executive.

A) DRAWDOWN ON THE HOMELESS CONTINGENCY NEEDS GRANT Report CS15938

The Committee received an update on homelessness pressures during 2015 and the range of initiatives being undertaken to try and reduce the rising budget pressures wherever possible. It was proposed that the Executive would be requested to approve drawdown of the £649k held in central contingency for homelessness and welfare reform pressures.

A Member commented that modelling the expected levels of homelessness was very difficult, and increasing need was leading to budget pressures year after year.

Officers were working hard to ensure that people were supported at an early stage, and made aware of the potential impact of welfare reform and the services available. This included working with other agencies such as GPs. The Council was also working with private landlords to reach those in private rented accommodation.

A risk assessment was carried out for each placement and those with high needs and requirements for local support and local schools were given priority. Responding to a query about how the Council ensured that properties were to the required standard, it was confirmed that although there was not the capacity to check each individual property the standards expected were made clear to landlords, sample inspections were carried out and officers worked across London to identify unscrupulous landlords. It was suggested that a summary of the standards should be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED that the content of the report be noted and the Executive be recommended to release £649k of the contingency set aside to offset the current temporary accommodation budget pressures being experienced.

B) LD SUPPORTED LIVING GATEWAY REVIEW

Report CS15942

Two Learning Disability (LD) supported living schemes with contracts were due to co-terminate on 27 November 2016. The schemes collectively accommodated 11 people with significant learning and physical disabilities combined with complex health needs, and incurred combined expenditure of £1,165,742pa.

The co-termination of the schemes provided an opportunity for them to be grouped together for tendering, which was an approach from which the Council had achieved the following benefits:

- Lower bids resulting from economies of scale
- More efficient use of resources
- Tenders that were more attractive for providers
- Specialist expertise shared across schemes

The schemes were also located in close proximity to each other and it made sense operationally for the schemes to be tendered as a single lot. It was confirmed that staff would be located at the two schemes, rather than just carrying out visits.

With a proposed 5 year term, the value of the contract was expected to be approximately £5M - £6M and therefore required Executive approval to enable the procurement process to commence in accordance with the Council's financial and contractual requirements.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and the Executive be recommended to -

- (i) **Agree to grouping the schemes for tendering in order to drive the best possible quality/pricing; and,**
- (ii) **Approve the commencement of the procurement procedure to enable award in accordance with the Council's financial and contractual requirements.**

C) UPDATE ON TACKLING TROUBLED FAMILIES PROJECT - UPDATE ON OUTCOMES AND GRANT DRAWDOWN

Report CS15940

The report set out expenditure on the Tackling Troubled Families Programme being delivered in Bromley and requested agreement from the Executive to draw down additional grant funding from central contingency. The scheme was not a statutory requirement, but all local authorities were involved. Payment depended on certain outcomes being delivered, and there was a heavy burden of data returns to central government.

The scheme had achieved huge benefits for some families, and turned around attitudes to issues such as school attendance. However, the money available for Phase 2 had been reduced and the Council would have to work with more families. More data was available than was included in the report, and Members sought further information on the numbers of families who had not met the outcomes from phase 1 of the programme and fallen out of the scheme.

The Chairman noted that Bromley's model for Tackling Troubled Families using Children's Centres was now being copied elsewhere, and asked that the Committee's appreciation of a well-run project be passed to Rachel Dunley, Head of Early Interventions and Family Support.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted and the Executive be recommended to approve the drawdown from contingency of £661k for Tackling Troubled Families.

46 CAPITAL WORKS POST-COMPLETION REPORT
Report CS15943

Under the approved capital programme procedure, capital schemes were required to be subject to a post-completion review. The report provided Members with a post works completion evaluation for Bellegrove in terms of the refurbishment work and operational performance for Bellegrove as temporary accommodation provision for homeless households.

The Care Services Portfolio Holder commented that the scheme was a resounding success and the financial model had produced the savings anticipated. He accepted that the accommodation was not to luxury standards and that some residents were dissatisfied, but it did provide much needed local temporary accommodation to meet statutory housing needs. Officers confirmed that no formal complaints had been received, and where concerns had been reported these had been investigated.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

47 OUR HEALTHIER SOUTH EAST LONDON - JOINT HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Report CSD15127

The six clinical Commissioning Groups in South East London, working with NHS England, had been working together to address key challenges facing healthcare across the six boroughs. The programme was known as "Our Healthier South East London" (OHSEL). The NHS organisations had indicated that the proposals arising from their work were likely to require public consultation, and had asked the six boroughs to establish a joint health scrutiny committee to scrutinise the proposals. Participation in a joint health scrutiny committee required approval from full Council.

The Chairman reported that she had attended an initial briefing with other scrutiny representatives from across the boroughs where terms of reference

had been discussed. She stated that she would be prepared to represent the Council on the joint committee, and asked for one more councillor to volunteer – Councillor Kevin Brooks offered to take part. Rosalind Luff reported that she was already involved in assisting the OHSEL programme through the Patient and Public Advisory group

The Portfolio Holder stated that he was not in favour of the Council being pulled in to the NHS review process. The Chairman responded that she shared his scepticism, but considered that it was necessary to be involved to ensure that services in the borough were protected.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended to agree that Bromley participates in the proposed joint health scrutiny committee on the Our Healthier South East London proposals and appoints Councillors Judi Ellis and Kevin Brooks to the joint committee.

48 BROMLEY INDEPENDENT REVIEWING OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT
Report CSD15941

The Children and Young Persons Act 2008 created a new power for the Secretary of State to issue statutory guidance to IROs known as the 'IRO Handbook'. The IRO Manager was responsible for the production of an annual report for the scrutiny of the members of the local authority corporate parenting board. The report presented to the Committee details of activity and development of the IRO Service over the past year and summarised how the IRO Service monitored the performance of the local authority in relation to its looked after children. Officers added that IRO's were expected to be more challenging so that the quality of services was raised.

RESOLVED that the IRO Service Annual Report be noted.

49 QUESTIONS ON THE CARE SERVICES PDS INFORMATION BRIEFING

The Information Briefing consisted of papers on the following issues –

- Contract Monitoring Activity update
- Bromley Safeguarding Adults Boards annual Report
- Adult Social Care Local Account

It was noted that there would be an event in December to discuss the draft Carers Strategy. A separate strategy for children as carers was being drawn up separately.

**50 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION)
(VARIATION) ORDER 2006 AND THE FREEDOM OF
INFORMATION ACT 2000**

RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.

**The following summaries
refer to matters
involving exempt information**

**51 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE CARE SERVICES PDS
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23RD SEPTEMBER 2015**

The Committee confirmed the exempt minutes of the meeting held on 23rd September 2015.

**52 CONTRACT AWARD FOR TENANCY SUSTAINMENT FOR
WOMEN IN REFUGES**
Report CS15944

The Committee recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Care Services approve the award of the contract for Tenancy Sustainment Services for Women in Refuges to Bromley Women's Aid.

The Meeting ended at 8.45 pm

Chairman

CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE
17th November 2015

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

(1) From Mr Bill Miller

Manorfields, Avalon Road

Can the Committee please confirm their intentions for publicising/ rescrutinising the business case for the use of Manorfields as a hostel for the homeless in the light of the revision of the number of intended occupants, revised refurbishment plan, and current levels of a) housing benefit and b) comparable accommodation available elsewhere?

Reply:

The business case remains current as there have not been any material revisions which affect this business case in terms of the need for accommodation and projected savings against alternative provision available. Once completed Manorfields will be subject to a post capital works completion report, as we have a report about Bellegrove, which assesses its performance against the business case.

Supplementary Question:

Mr Miller stated that he believed that the business case should be scrutinised, and that if it was not and residents subsequently found any issues then scrutiny would be found to have failed.

Reply:

The Chairman responded that all Members were aware of the comments of some residents on the scheme and that the Committee would not be calling the business case, which had already been scrutinised, back in to Committee.

2. From Bill Miller

Hostel management services

Can the committee please confirm its plans to openly retender the hostel management arrangements when the existing contract is due for renewal in May 2016? Adverse comments reported by Scottish Refugee Council in 2014 and negative comments from Bellegrove residents suggest that all options should be explored, not just an automatic renewal.

Reply:

Contracts are not automatically renewed. The Council is currently considering its options in relation to the temporary accommodation procurement and management contract. This gateway review setting out the options and recommendations will be presented in the New Year as it would be for any other contract let by the Council.

Supplementary Question:

Mr Miller stated that he assumed that there would be transparency in awarding any future contract.

Reply:

The Chairman advised Mr Miller to look at the gateway review reports on the Committee's agendas – these showed that officers looked at all options in detail before tenders were sought. However, it was necessary that certain financial information remained confidential to avoid prejudicing the companies concerned.