

## **CARE SERVICES POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 12 January 2016

### **Present:**

Councillor Judi Ellis (Chairman)  
Councillor Pauline Tunncliffe (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Ruth Bennett, Kevin Brooks, Mary Cooke,  
Hannah Gray, David Jefferys, Charles Rideout QPM CVO  
and Stephen Wells

Linda Gabriel, Justine Godbeer and Rosalind Luff

### **Also Present:**

Councillor Robert Evans, Portfolio Holder for Care Services  
Councillor Diane Smith, Executive Support Assistant to the Portfolio  
Holder for Care Services  
Councillors Nicholas Bennett J.P. and Ian Dunn

### **53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Terence Nathan.

### **54 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **55 QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

Eight oral questions for the Portfolio Holder for Care Services were received from Mrs Kay Miller, Mr Bill Miller and Mr Bob Thatcher and these are attached at Appendix A.

### **56 MINUTES OF THE CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2015**

In considering Minute 47: Our Healthier South East London – Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, the Chairman reported that Council had agreed that Councillor Judi Ellis and Councillor Hannah Gray be appointed to the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee representing Bromley. The Chairman thanked Councillor Kevin Brooks who had also offered to stand.

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 be agreed.**

**57 MATTERS ARISING AND WORK PROGRAMME**

**Report CS15934**

The Committee considered its work programme for 2015/16, the programme of visits to day centres and residential homes, and matters arising from previous meetings.

The Chairman advised Members that a special Care Services PDS Committee would be held on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 to consider a number of matters including the draft Public Health budget 2016/17.

**RESOLVED that matters arising and the Care Services work programme for 2015/16 be noted.**

**58 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF CARE SERVICES PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

**A) CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 2ND QUARTER 2015/16**

**Report FSD16007**

On 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015, the Council's Executive received the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarterly capital monitoring report for 2015/16 and agreed a revised Capital Programme for the four year period 2015/16 to 2018/19. The Committee considered the changes to the Capital Programme for the Care Services Portfolio which included additional funding from the Greater London Authority of £450k towards the Manorfields refurbishment scheme and £170k for the Empty Homes Property scheme, and a £74k increase on the London Private Sector Renewal Scheme which reflected the total funding available within the scheme. The Council's Executive also agreed an increase of £616k in the Capital Programme budget for Section 106 to match the total funding available.

In considering the report, the Chairman noted that the additional funding received from the Greater London Authority of £450k towards the provision of temporary accommodation would be used to fund the cost of the refurbishment of Manorfields in place of the Local Authority funding already agreed rather than in addition to it, and that this would allow a significant proportion of the Local Authority funding to be returned to contingency. Further works, including the replacement of the boiler, had now been identified which would increase the overall cost of the refurbishment. These works had been listed in previous surveys as areas where further work might be required, and in some cases were identified as planning conditions and therefore could not have been anticipated before the application was determined. Members expressed concern that these major extra costs had not been identified earlier and questioned why the potential areas of further work had not been reflected in a significant contingency allowance for the project. Members asked for reassurance that any possible cost recovery had been investigated. A breakdown of the refurbishment costs for Manorfields would be provided to Members following the meeting.

With regard to unallocated Section 106 funding, the Portfolio Holder for Care Services advised Members that it was hoped to invest a significant proportion of the unallocated funding during 2016/17. In response to a question from a Member, the Head of Education, Care and Health Services Finance confirmed that it was possible for unallocated Section 106 funding to be carried forward into 2017/18, but that some Section 106 funding was subject to time limitations. Work continued to be undertaken with the Planning Sub-Committees to encourage the inclusion of affordable housing in developments across the Borough rather than agree Section 106 funding, which could be difficult to spend due to limitations on the funding and a lack of schemes in which to invest.

**RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to confirm the revised Capital Programme agreed by the Council's Executive on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2015.**

## **B) UPDATED TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PROCUREMENT STRATEGY AND PLACEMENT POLICY**

### **Report CS16004**

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report outlining the Local Authority's updated approach to the procurement of temporary accommodation and the placement of clients to whom the Local Authority owed a statutory rehousing duty into temporary accommodation.

Legislation provided that 'so far as reasonably practicable', the Local Authority was required to secure accommodation within its own area. There was currently insufficient accommodation within the Borough to meet the Local Authority's statutory re-housing duties, with similar housing pressures relating to affordability and supply impacting local authorities both regionally and nationally. The increased use of temporary accommodation across London, and in particular the volume of out-of-Borough placements had given rise to a number of legal challenges which had placed increased restrictions and stipulations on the type of accommodation that could be offered, as well as the requirement to have regard to the need to promote as well as safeguard the welfare of any children in a household.

The Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy and the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy had been developed in response to the changing requirements of recent case law around provision of temporary accommodation, and to avoid the risk of legal challenge by setting out clearly how the Local Authority sought to produce a sufficient supply of suitable temporary accommodation and make the most appropriate use of this supply to meet its statutory re-housing duties. Whilst there were insufficient resources available to ensure that all households received an allocation of in-Borough accommodation, the Local Authority was committed to ensuring that priority for such placements was given to households that had been identified as having the greatest need to remain in-Borough, including those who were employed, had children attending education or were receiving critical medical care within the

Borough, and those for whom there were safeguarding concerns, particularly those relating to child protection.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director: Housing Needs confirmed that work continued to be undertaken with private sector landlords to secure housing. This included support from a dedicated officer, an annual landlords' event and work to address individual issues that could be causing concern, such as the introduction of Universal Credit. Work would continue to be undertaken to support clients into temporary and permanent accommodation, but it was also proposed to work more closely with key agencies around early intervention to reduce homelessness, such as by signposting families to appropriate support.

A Co-opted Member underlined the need to understand health issues, both physical and mental, which could contribute to a person becoming homeless or develop as a result of homelessness, and noted that homelessness could also be barrier to accessing GP services and other key factors for wellbeing, including good nutrition. A Member also highlighted the increasing proportion of older people seeking temporary accommodation and further information on the age of clients seeking temporary accommodation would be provided to Members following the meeting.

**RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to approve the Temporary Accommodation Procurement Strategy and the Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy in order to enable formal implementation.**

### **C) DOMICILIARY CARE CALL TRACKER CONTRACT**

#### **Report CS16005**

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report seeking permission to extend the Panztel contract from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017, pending the result of the options appraisal being undertaken around the future delivery of the Reablement Service.

The Reablement Service provided intensive support to vulnerable service users by helping them to maintain or regain simple daily living skills which might have been eroded due to illness or a hospital stay, and to increase their independence by reducing or removing the need for ongoing domiciliary care packages. The provision of this service was supported by an electronic data collection system provided by Panztel, which monitored the domiciliary visits made by reablement facilitators.

The existing contract with Panztel for provision of the electronic data collection system was due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016. To ensure continued provision of this service it was requested that this contract be extended for a period of one year to allow time for the options appraisal to be completed and for consideration to be given to the future delivery of the Reablement Service.

In considering the report, a Member was concerned at the £13k cost to extend the Panztel contract from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and queried if monitoring could be undertaken in an alternate way to realise a cost saving.

On questioning, Officers confirmed that the electronic data collection system recorded the time that reablement facilitators arrived and left each service user, which could include multiple visits across the day, and that this monitoring showed whether service users were receiving sufficient visits to provide the care detailed in their care plan. The electronic data collection system also acted as a safeguard for reablement facilitators by showing evidence of their visits. Members were advised that four complaints had been received since the start of the new calendar year around reablement facilitators not visiting service users as arranged. It was also noted that the system assisted the Controller in planning the schedule of visits for each reablement facilitator and accurately assessing travel time.

A more detailed breakdown of the cost of the electronic data collection system per visit would be provided to Members following the meeting.

**RESOLVED by majority that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree to extend the Panztel contract from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.**

#### **D) CHANGES TO NON RESIDENTIAL CHARGING POLICY AND ADDITIONAL INCOME GENERATION**

##### **Report CS16006**

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report considering the impact of the Local Authority's charging policy and outlining proposed changes to the non-residential charging policy.

Social Care services were provided to vulnerable adults within the community who met the Local Authority's eligibility criteria and following an assessment of need. Traditionally following this assessment, the Local Authority had arranged for services to be provided, such as through a home care service. In April 2011, the Council's Executive agreed a new contribution policy for non-residential social care services allowing service users to be allocated a personal budget to buy care directly themselves or ask the Local Authority to manage this on their behalf. This new contribution policy assumed full cost recovery of all services and included a wide range of services.

Changes had previously been agreed by the Council's Executive around charging for day centre places, following the move from existing block contract arrangements to spot purchasing arrangements, and this would allow full cost recovery for the provision of places to be implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, with all service users being charged at full costs subject to a financial assessment. It was now proposed to charge for transport services to day centres following the introduction of a card swiping system which would record trips made by individual service users. It was also proposed that changes be made to key safe arrangements and that a one-off charge of £60 be levied to install a key safe at

service users' homes. These changes would primarily impact full cost clients, with those in receipt of Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance benefits not being charged.

It was proposed that engagement be undertaken with service users, their families and key organisation in Bromley on the introduction of a charge for transport services for a period of four weeks from January 2016, during which an equality impact assessment would also be undertaken to assess the impact of any changes to charging on current service users. A follow-up assessment would be carried out during the implementation phase of any changes to reassess the impact. This would include contributions from a range of stakeholders to ensure that issues and risks were identified and actions were put in place to minimise the impact.

The Portfolio Holder for Care Services confirmed that he was minded to engage with service users around the proposed introduction of a £15 charge per return journey for transport services, which was in line with neighbouring local authorities, and that engagement would be undertaken primarily via letter, including an 'easy read' version.

Additional information regarding the charges levied by other local authorities for transport services to day centres would be provided to Members following the meeting.

**RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:**

- 1) Agree to engage with service users, their families and their carers around a proposed new charge of £15 per return journey for transport services relating to formalising the arrangements for older people's day care; and,**
- 2) Agree to delegate the decision to increase charges to the Director of Finance should there be an impact to the charge rates following the introduction of the National Living Wage in April 2016.**

#### **E) ANNUAL QUALITY MONITORING REPORT**

##### **Report CS16011**

The Portfolio Holder introduced a report providing an annual update on the quality monitoring of commissioned care services, including the arrangements for monitoring contracts and progress made to raise standards in domiciliary care, extra care and supported living schemes, care homes and children's services, and recommending the addition of five care agencies to the Domiciliary Care Framework.

The Local Authority had commissioned care placements from the Domiciliary Care Framework since 2012. When the Domiciliary Care Framework was originally established, the Local Authority reserved the right to add new contractors, should one or more of the original providers withdraw or be

suspended or removed from the Framework. Three existing providers on the Framework were no longer providing care in Bromley. It was therefore proposed that five new providers who had previously operated successfully under spot contracts and were delivering care within the rates for domiciliary care set by the Local Authority be added to the Domiciliary Care Framework.

In considering the report, a Member noted the focus by the NHS on reducing admissions and facilitating discharge as soon as patients were stable and no longer required acute care, and queried the proportion of weekend discharges from hospital. The Assistant Director: Commissioning reported that the Local Authority was only involved in supported discharges, which required social care involvement, but that a very small proportion of these took place at the weekend. The Chairman confirmed that the Winter Pressures Update, due to be considered at Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016 would also include an evaluation of step-down beds at Orpington Hospital.

In response to a question from a Member, the Assistant Director: Commissioning advised that care home and domiciliary care providers were charged to access the comprehensive programme of training delivered by the Local Authority in conjunction with Skills for Care, Health partners which helped raise the standards of care across the Borough. Additional information regarding the proportion of the cost of the training that was covered by the charge would be provided to Members following the meeting.

A Co-opted Member informed the Committee that Healthwatch Bromley was currently undertaking an evaluation of Extra Care Housing provision in the Borough.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) Members' comments be noted;**
- 2) Members undertake a programme of visits to Care Homes in the Borough during 2016/17; and,**
- 3) The Portfolio Holder be recommended to agree that Daret, Krislight, Fabs Homecare, LifeComeCare and Independent Care be added to the Domiciliary Care Framework as providers.**

**59            PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF REPORTS TO THE COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE**

**A)    GATEWAY REPORT - TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION**

**Report CS16007**

The Committee considered a report outlining the activities being undertaken by the Local Authority to sustain an adequate supply of general needs temporary accommodation to meet existing and predicted future demand which was expected to continue to increase.

The Local Authority currently spent more than £4.5m (net) per annum to procure temporary accommodation for homeless households. This was procured through a mixture of block and spot contract arrangements and delivered through a mix of Housing Association arrangements and private sector leasing for which costs to the Housing Association or Local Authority were recovered through rental income, and through nightly-paid accommodation which was the most expensive option.

The main contract for provision of temporary accommodation with Orchard and Shipman would expire on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016, with smaller contracts with Dabora Conway and Theori Oak Housing Associations expiring on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. The Local Authority would continue to require the accommodation currently leased under these schemes to meet demand, therefore it was proposed that the Local Authority enter into a new contract with Orchard and Shipman for management leasing arrangements for a contract period of three years with an option to extend for a further two years based largely on existing terms of conditions. It was also proposed to seek a contract extension of three years with Dabora Conway and Theori Oak Housing Associations from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 with an option to extend for a further two years. These contracts would include provision to track temporary accommodation subsidy in light of forthcoming changes to benefits.

Extension of the existing arrangements would not be sufficient to meet the level of demand for temporary accommodation, particularly given the declining availability of leased properties. Therefore the need to acquire additional units, and where possible to avoid costly nightly-paid accommodation had been identified and it was proposed that the Local Authority work in collaboration with the South East London Housing Sub-Region as the Lead Borough to establish a Dynamic Purchasing System for the procurement of both private sector leased and nightly-paid temporary accommodation at Best Value. This would allow the Local Authority access to a range of providers that had been quality assured and who had submitted indicative prices, and would allow increased flexibility in meeting the changing demand for temporary accommodation. By working on a sub-regional basis, it was also anticipated that the inflationary impact of competition between boroughs would be reduced in favour of more stable longer term relationships which would slow the upward cost trajectory, and that this would increase supply and maintain access to local accommodation for boroughs across the sub-region.

In considering the report, the Chairman noted the robust processes in place to monitor all contacts for provision of temporary accommodation.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) Members' comments on the current action being taken to reduce the costs and improve the supply of temporary accommodation.**
- 2) The Council's Executive be recommended to agree that:**

- i) The Housing Division continues the current arrangements with Housing Associations to access temporary accommodation through formal notifications agreements;**
- ii) The Housing Division continue to pursue cost effective block contracts for temporary accommodation, both in private sector leasing and nightly-paid accommodation;**
- iii) Officers set up a Dynamic Purchasing System developed in collaboration with the South East London Housing Sub-Region with Bromley as the Lead Borough, from which the Housing Division can procure both private sector leased and nightly-paid temporary accommodation, and which all current providers would be expected to sign-up to.**
- iv) A new contract be entered into with Orchard and Shipman for a three year period starting 1st April 2016, with the option to extend for a further two years, and Orchard and Shipman would be expected to sign up to the Dynamic Purchasing System as a provider.**

## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER ITEMS**

### **60 DRAFT 2016/17 BUDGET**

#### **Report CS16001**

The Committee considered a report setting out the draft Care Services Portfolio Budget for 2016/17, which incorporated future costs pressures and initial draft saving options reported to the Council's Executive on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Members were requested to provide their comments on the proposed savings and identify any further action to be taken to reduce cost pressures facing the Local Authority over the next four years.

The Head of Education, Care and Health Services Finance advised Members that no additional growth pressures had been identified within the initial budget for the Care Services Portfolio for 2016/17, but that there had been an additional allocation of £300k placed in contingency for homelessness for 2016/17, rising to £2,040k for 2019/20. Subject to the finalisation of the Care Services Portfolio Budget for 2016/17, a request could be made to the Council's Executive for the draw-down of these funds if required.

#### **RESOLVED that:**

- 1) The financial forecast for 2017/18 to 2019/20 be noted;**
- 2) Members' comments on the initial draft saving options proposed by the Executive for 2016/17 be noted; and,**

**3) Members' comments on the initial draft 2016/17 Care Services Portfolio Budget be provided to the meeting of the Council's Executive on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2015.**

**61           UPDATED DEBT REPORT**

**Report FSD16003**

The Committee considered a report providing an update on the current level of Education, Care and Health Services debt and the action being taken to reduce the level of long term debt.

The level of Education, Care and Health Services debt as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015 was £9.23m which was reduced by £5.45m as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, with the reduction of £3.78m including write-offs which totalled £175k. The outstanding sum of £5.45m was expected to be reduced to less than £3m by end of 2015/16, with further reductions in 2016/17.

To support the continued reduction in the level of Education, Care and Health Services debt, a policy for the management and recovery of social care debt was introduced within Education, Care and Health Services, Finance and Liberata in June 2015, with consideration given to the possibility of requesting payment in advance for certain identified services where appropriate, and providing a range of payment options. Although the number of statutory homeless households placed in temporary accommodation had continued to increase which, together with the effect of welfare reforms and the benefit cap had resulted in an increase in the volume of debt, work to reduce the level of debt relating to rent arrears continued which included a quarterly reconciliation exercise undertaken with Orchard and Shipman following which arrears would be paid from the previous quarter. Officers were also working with Liberata to review the housing process from the initial sign-up for temporary accommodation through to eviction and debt recovery to ensure that it was robust.

Local Authority Officers continued to meet with Liberata on a regular basis to discuss arrears and proposals for process changes in order to improve the service to customers and to increase income generation. Liberata, which was responsible for the collection of Education, Care and Health Services debt as part of the Exchequer Services contract, was undertaking a range of targeted recovery activities which included improved reporting, targeting large and older debts and monitoring payment arrangements to ensure that customers were adhering to their payment plans. As part of the continuous improvement process, the Local Authority had also reviewed the existing recovery systems and had expanded the scope for the Single View system to include a debt management system which was expected to be implemented within the next nine months and would allow improved reporting on the debt position of individual customers across a range of areas.

In considering the report, the Chairman was pleased to note the progress in reducing Education, Care and Health Services debt.

With regard to the outstanding debt relating to 16-18 year olds placed in temporary accommodation, the Exchequer Manager confirmed that support was given to this vulnerable client base to assist them with claiming the Housing Benefit they were entitled to, and where this had not happened, every effort was made to recover Housing Benefit before the debt could be written off.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) Members' comments on the level of Education, Care and Health Services debt over a year old and the action being taken to reduce this sum be noted; and,**
- 2) Further reports on Education, Care and Health Services debt be considered by the Care Services PDS Committee on an annual basis.**

**62 EDUCATION OUTCOMES FOR LBB CHILDREN IN CARE**

**Report CS16010**

The Committee considered a report outlining the annual attainment and attendance of the Bromley Virtual School.

The Bromley Virtual School was established in 2008 to focus on improving outcomes for children looked after by providing additional support to students, tracking progress, attainment and attendance, and ensuring that any concerns were identified and acted upon as they were identified. Since 2014, the virtual school had also been tasked with ensuring that the Pupil Premium for children looked after, including children in early years' settings, was used in a way that actively supported positive outcomes.

During the academic year 2014/15, the Bromley Virtual School had over 300 children on roll, with every child over the age of three years who became looked after being entitled to a service, regardless of the length of time they spent in care.

In considering the report, the Portfolio Holder for Care Services noted the historic gap in attainment between children looked after and other pupils and was pleased to see the work being undertaken to increase the levels of attainment of children looked after, including twelve young people who were currently attending university. The Chairman underlined the excellent progress made by children looked after which included significantly improved attendance and achieving age-appropriate levels of attainment after a period of disrupted education and low attainment.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Virtual Head Teacher confirmed that the Bromley Virtual School worked hard to develop a good relationship with schools across the Borough. Training was provided to designated teachers on a termly basis which was very well-attended, including by teachers in independent schools. Whole school attachment awareness training had recently been delivered using Pupil Premium funding. The Bromley

Virtual School would be hosting a conference on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2016 and there had been a high take-up by schools across the Borough.

With regard to extra tuition for children looked after, the Virtual Head Teacher advised that a wide range of providers bid for tuition requests through the Dynamic Purchasing System, which helped to meet individual children's tuition needs. An issue had been identified with providers bidding prior to identifying a tutor which could delay the start of extra tuition to the pupil, and this had been raised with the owners of the Dynamic Purchasing system.

A presentation on the role of the Virtual Head Teacher would be provided to the next meeting of Care Services PDS Committee. Further information around the number of children looked after who were 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) would be provided to Members following the meeting.

**RESOLVED that the annual attainment and attendance report of the Bromley Virtual School be noted.**

### **63 EXTRA CARE HOUSING UPDATE**

#### **Report CS16012**

The Committee considered a report outlining the current void status within both the commissioned and Local Authority Extra Care Housing schemes.

Extra Care Housing was provided across the Borough through six schemes which had had total of 283 apartments. Of these, 271 apartments were available for long term tenancy lets with 12 set aside for assessment purposes. Two of the Extra Care Housing Schemes were owned and managed by Affinity Sutton, and one by A2 Dominion for which the Local Authority's Direct Care Service provided the care and support. The other three schemes were owned and managed by Hanover Housing Association with two external providers delivering the care and support, and a policy was in place governing nominations which gave priority to the Hanover Schemes to meet the aims of a zero void target due to financial implications.

As of 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015, there were 23 voids across the six Extra Care Housing schemes, which comprised 13 voids in Hanover Housing Association schemes and 10 voids in Local Authority schemes. Of the 13 voids in the Hanover Housing Association schemes, all tenancies had now been allocated and agreed with residents due to move in shortly. The ten voids in Local Authority schemes had a nominated person against them who were in the process of being assessed, and two people were on the waiting list for an extra care housing tenancy.

**RESOLVED that the Extra Care Housing Update be noted.**

**64 QUESTIONS ON THE CARE SERVICES PDS INFORMATION BRIEFING**

The Care Services PDS Information Briefing comprised two reports:

- Portfolio Plan Mid-Year Update
- Contract Monitoring Activity Update

**RESOLVED that the Information Briefing be noted.**

**65 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 listed below as it was 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.**

**66 EXEMPT (PART 2) MINUTES OF THE CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2015**

**RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the Care Services PDS Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 be agreed.**

**67 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF PART 2 (EXEMPT) CARE SERVICES PORTFOLIO REPORTS**

**68 SOCIAL CARE ELECTRONIC INFORMATION UPDATE**

The Committee considered the report and supported the recommendations.

**69 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF PART 2 (EXEMPT) REPORTS TO THE COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE**

**A) GATEWAY REPORT - TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PART 2 (EXEMPT) INFORMATION**

The Committee noted the Part 2 (Exempt) information relating to the report on Gateway Report: Temporary Accommodation.

The Meeting ended at 9.26 pm

Chairman

**CARE SERVICES PDS COMMITTEE**  
**12<sup>th</sup> January 2016**

**ORAL QUESTIONS TO THE CARE SERVICES PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

**Oral Questions to the Care Services Portfolio Holder received from Mrs Kay Miller**

1. Are the Committee confident that they are receiving all the relevant information regarding Manorfields from the Portfolio Holder and other sources which would allow informed decisions to be made?

***Reply:***

The Committee has considered the full business case for Manorfields and also receives regular housing reports setting out ongoing pressures and priorities regarding homelessness and housing in Bromley. This includes updates regarding Manorfields and the range of housing options and initiatives as applicable.

As previously confirmed the Committee will also consider a post-works completion report for Manorfields.

***Supplementary question:***

*How does the Local Authority condone an additional £450k refurbishment cost for Manorfields being agreed on top of the previous funding, which is significantly more than the cost of the refurbishment of Bellegrove and will offer fewer family units?*

***Reply:***

*The £450k funding from the Greater London Authority for the provision of temporary accommodation will be used to fund the cost of the planned refurbishment of Manorfields in place of the Local Authority funding rather than in addition to it. Although some further costs have now been identified around the replacement of the boiler and health and safety requirements, the £450k funding from the Greater London Authority will allow a significant proportion of the Local Authority funding to be returned to contingency.*

2. Is it a) morally acceptable or b) legally allowable for the Council to create a hostel with the intention/outcome of making a profit from housing homeless people?

***Reply:***

The scheme has not been developed to create a profit. The financial and business case model has been designed to produce a saving against the current cost of alternative temporary accommodation provision with running costs met through the rental stream that can legitimately be charged. There is a small surplus against the baseline running costs which is held as a contingency to cover ongoing cyclical repairs/maintenance and required

improvements. Should any small sum remain from this contingency this can legitimately be used to cover a small contribution towards the overall administrative costs of homeless service provision.

***Supplementary question:***

*No supplementary question was asked.*

**Oral Questions to the Care Services Portfolio Holder received from Mr Bill Miller**

1. What is the minimum level of occupancy of Manorfields which would allow the hostel to be viable from a neutral funding perspective?

***Reply:***

The current unit levels have already been set at this neutral funding level.

***Supplementary question:***

*The report for Bellegrave talks about additional savings of £250k which could be seen as profit made by the scheme. For the temporary accommodation schemes to cover their costs would they therefore not need to be at full capacity?*

***Reply:***

*The additional savings of £250k reflect the savings the Local Authority has made by placing families in Bellegrave rather than far more expensive overnight accommodation. The cost of providing the temporary accommodation units at Bellegrave and Manorfields to the Local Authority is cost neutral and no profit is made.*

2. Will the Committee please review again the number of households which are being planned to be housed in Manorfields?

***Reply:***

The unit and occupancy levels set comply with the appropriate guidance and planning permission granted.

***Supplementary question:***

*No supplementary question was asked.*

3. in the light of the 'Orpington Gossip' comments regarding Bellegrave provided to the Committee via email on 24 December, is the Committee confident with the quality of the administration which will be delivered at Manorfields by Orchard and Shipman?

**Reply:**

The contract sets out the required level of service and standards. This will be robustly monitored as part of the contract monitoring arrangements. Outcomes will be reported through the regular housing reports.

**Supplementary question:**

*No supplementary question was asked.*

**Oral Questions to the Care Services Portfolio Holder received from Mr Bob Thatcher**

1. There have been at least two break-ins to Manorfields over recent weeks which have been attended by the police. Is the Committee aware of these? and confident on the security arrangements? Have the Council suffered any uninsured losses or excesses as a result?

**Reply:**

Since the refurbishment work commenced there have been 2 break-in attempts – both during bank holiday/weekend periods. The Council has not incurred any loss or damage as a result of either incident. In the case of the latest attempted break-in on 28<sup>th</sup> December, as Security were on site they were able to disturb the intruder who ran off before any damage could be done. In view of the fact that there have been 2 break-in attempts and the advanced stage of refurbishment work, arrangements have been made for overnight and weekend security presence.

**Supplementary question:**

*Out of the additional funding of £450k from the Greater London Authority, how much has been attributed to the need for further security measures or as a result of local residents' concerns?*

**Reply:**

*Additional security has been provided for the Manorfields site over a three week period to ensure it remains secure overnight and at weekends. The cost of this will be confirmed following the meeting.*

2. The comment in the Minutes (17 Nov) of Item 46 'Officers confirmed that no formal complaints had been received, and where concerns had been reported these had been investigated' is at odds with the 17 pages of 'Orpington Gossip' comment. Will the Committee request that an independent 'satisfaction' survey be conducted of Bellegrave residents, please?

**Reply:**

The extract which was provided by Mr Miller focuses in the main on the current pressures around housing and homelessness which the Council has reported on through the Committee and Executive. The extracts do highlight the

frustration felt by residents around the lengthy timescales they face in temporary accommodation waiting to secure settled accommodation, but reflect that this situation is not limited to Bromley with homelessness and housing need outstripping the available supply of accommodation that is affordable. It is this housing pressure which was directly referred to in the business cases for the refurbishment and use of both Manorfields and Bellegrave. Whilst still temporary accommodation, this does provide much needed accommodation for homeless households in the local area which is not available through alternative provision.

Satisfaction surveys are regularly undertaken across the service and will include Bellegrave in the next financial year.

**Supplementary question:**

*Does that reflect you are happy with the service provided by Orchard and Shipman?*

**Reply:**

*As far as the delivery of the contract is concerned, the Local Authority is currently satisfied with the way that Orchard and Shipman are carrying out their duties. The Local Authority understands the frustration of people being placed in temporary accommodation, but it takes time to place people in suitable permanent accommodation and does provide a better alternative to being placed in nightly paid accommodation, possibly outside of the Borough.*

3. In the light of Councillor Evans response to Bob Thatcher of 5 January (provided below at \*), will the Committee accept that there has been at least 24 police call outs to Bellegrave since it opened in May 2013? Will the Committee also accept that the number of affected local residents to Bellegrave are insignificant (because of its siting) compared to the number who would be affected by issues at Manorfields?

**Reply:**

The breakdown provided confirmed 24 calls within approximately a 2 year period. Of these 24 calls:

- 7 were of a medical nature
- 7 were of a planned nature to interview/take statements from residents in their home settings
- 3 were planned calls to offer a presence in the event that a disturbance was caused by a resident asked to leave the premises.

Of the remaining 7 calls of a more immediate nature:

- 2 were for investigations regarding an attempted break-in
- 5 were to diffuse arguments or incidents within Bellegrave.

In all of these cases the issue was dealt with immediately with no arrests or requirement for further action, nor did any incidents have any impact on the

surrounding area or local residents, having been contained in all cases within the unit itself. I can find no evidence to suggest that there would be a more significant impact with regards to Manorfields.

**Supplementary question:**

*Would you confirm that it was stated at the meeting of Care Services PDS Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015 that Members were not aware of any trouble at Bellegrove when there must have been feedback from Orchard and Shipman?*

**Reply:**

*As previously stated, none of the incidents at Bellegrove relating to the 24 calls during a 2 year period had any impact on the surrounding area or local residents. The Local Authority accepts that Bellegrove and Manorfields have different surrounding communities, but if similar incidents to those at Bellegrove had taken place at Manorfields, there should have also been no impact on the surrounding area or local residents. There are a number of vulnerable residents living closely to Bellegrove and the reported incidents had no impact on these communities. The Care Services PDS Committee will continue to monitor the situation regarding Bellegrove and Manorfields and will consider any issues that arise.*

*\* Councillor Evans response to Bob Thatcher of 5 January*

*Dear Mr Thatcher*

*Regarding your comments about police call outs to Bellegrave. I have been puzzled for some time about the discrepancy between the figures that you quote and what I have been told by staff.*

*Several weeks ago I asked for a complete detailed breakdown of these calls- verified by the Met. I have finally received the results which I am happy to pass on to you.*

*The figure of 65 CAD calls you quote actually covers a wider area and period. They date back to May 2013 and are not a figure of calls out specifically to Bellegrave.*

*The actual figure for Bellegrave since its opening is 24 not 65.*

*These 24 (Twenty-four) may be further broken down as follows:*

*7(Seven) were for police attending with medical staff- not crime/incident related. In fact 6 of these 7 were police attendance with ambulance relating to one vulnerable individual who was at Bellegrave for a very short time before being moved to specialist accommodation.*

*7(Seven) were for police attending in relation to incidents/investigations not directly related to Bellegrave. 1 was a safeguarding investigation relating to a child of a resident and whilst resident was no longer on site police attended to take witness statements. 5 were police attending to take statements from residents regarding domestic abuse which had taken place before they moved to Bellegrave. 1 was police attending to interview a resident about an incident in another area.*

*2(Two) were for police attendance due to a break in to the building.*

*8(Eight) were for police attendance to diffuse/prevent arguments/incidents inside Bellegrave. 3 of these were for police to be present for eviction/termination of licence. 1 for police to intervene due to an argument between two residents- Quickly calmed and no further action taken. 3 for police attendance to diffuse a domestic argument between partners- Again no further action taken. 1 for police attendance to deal with an incident of abuse towards a member of staff. Again no further action.*

*No calls have been made relating to any incidents/crimes/ disturbances which would have impacted on local residents.*

*I hope this clarifies the situation a little.*

*Regards*

*Robert Evans Cllr*