

MINUTES OF THE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 3 September 2019 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Muldoon (Chair), Coral Howard (Vice-Chair), Tauseef Anwar, Peter Bernards, Octavia Holland, Jacq Paschoud and Kim Powell and

APOLOGIES: Nigel Bowness and Councillors Aisling Gallagher and Olurotimi Ogunbadewa

ALSO PRESENT: David Austin (Acting Chief Finance Officer), Joan Hutton (Director of Operation, Adult Social Care), Simone Riddle (Rushey Green Time Bank), Tom Brown (Executive Director for Community Services), Councillor Chris Best (Deputy Mayor and Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) and Robert Mellors (Finance Manager, Community Services and Adult Social Care)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2019

Resolved: the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr John Paschoud declared a non-pecuniary interest (in relation to items 4 and 5) as having a family member in receipt of a package of social care.

Cllr John Muldoon declared a non-pecuniary interest (in relation to one of the papers under item 4) as a volunteer at the Wildcat Wilderness, a community green space in Catford coordinated by the Rushey Green Time Bank.

3. Responses from Mayor and Cabinet

Resolved: the committee noted the response from the Health and Wellbeing Board to its referral on BAME mental health inequalities.

4. Asset-based approach to adult social care

Joan Hutton (Director of Operation, Adult Social Care) and Tom Brown (Executive Director for Community Services) introduced the report. A discussion followed and the following key points were noted:

- 4.1 Asset-based approach to adult social care is about working with people to identify their strengths rather than concentrating on their deficits.
- 4.2 It is about understanding what's important to people, what networks of support they have, and what opportunities there are in the community.
- 4.3 The objective is to keep people healthy and to promote independence.

- 4.4 It is a significant cultural shift, which has required training, monitoring and coaching to change practice.
- 4.5 The approach has been successful so far and is helping to manage demand and ensure financial sustainability.
- 4.6 While the number of people who make contact with the council is not decreasing, the number of people who need longer term support is.
- 4.7 Asset-based working is dependent on assets being available in the community.
- 4.8 The council is working to develop further opportunities in the voluntary sector and bring them together to work as a whole system.
- 4.9 Preventative services and short-term interventions are becoming increasingly important as people are living longer with more complex needs.
- 4.11 It is important to regularly review people's support plans to adjust their care as they recover and promote independence.
- 4.12 Many people are not accessing all of the welfare benefits they are entitled to, some of which can help people be more independent.
- 4.13 There are voluntary sector organisations that provide information, advice and support accessing universal benefits.
- 4.14 Packages of support are regularly monitored and user feedback analysed. Complaints and safeguarding issues are also monitored. Any risks are addressed on an individual basis.
- 4.15 The asset-based approach will only be for people who are able to be more independent and access other support at an early stage.
- 4.16 The emphasis is on early intervention and prevention, rather than waiting for people to meet care threshold.
- 4.17 Carers are entitled to their own carer's assessment.
- 4.18 The committee noted that the Wigan Deal for Adult Social Care, which features asset-based working, involved a major public engagement exercise.
- 4.19 The committee noted that there need to be sufficient temporary arrangements in place to support people while working out their long-term support needs.
- 4.20 The committee expressed concern that the council will be less able to support the voluntary sector.

Simone Riddle, Rushey Green Time Bank (RGTB), presented a paper on tackling loneliness and social isolation. The following key points were noted:

- 4.21 An asset-based approach has been found to work well with lower level need such as social isolation and loneliness.
- 4.22 It focuses on the skills people have and helps to build confidence.
- 4.23 Analysis has found that the most important factors for RGTB members are: working together in teams; having something to focus on and work towards; an opportunity to socialise.
- 4.24 The majority of RGTB members are older and from Rushey Green and Lewisham Central wards. There are also a number of members in Downham and Bellingham wards, and some projects, such as Food Cycle, have attracted a number of younger people.
- 4.25 The RGTB also uses wider networks to find opportunities for people.
- 4.26 A high proportion of members are not in work and have physical disabilities or are recovering from mental ill health.
- 4.27 The majority of the RGTB's funding comes from the council.

Resolved: the committee noted the report.

5. Budget cuts

David Austin (Acting Chief Finance Officer) introduced the report. A discussion followed and the following key points were noted:

- 5.1 Officers have followed the same budget cut process as last year.
- 5.2 There is some uncertainty about the level of cuts the council needs to find as the government is yet to provide guidance on funding after 2019/20.
- 5.3 The Medium Term Financial strategy assumes the need for further cuts.
- 5.4 There are four proposed budget cuts from the Community Services Directorate.
- 5.5 Three of the proposals (COM1a, COM2a, COM3a) continue on from proposals from last year.
- 5.6 The proposals from last year are being successfully delivered and finding the money anticipated.
- 5.7 Demand management and an asset-based approach is about preventing need.

- 5.8 The Care Act has enabled a refocus on prevention and early intervention.
- 5.9 Social care funding can be moved to other areas as long as it is not ringfenced.
- 5.10 This year, for example, additional social care grant received was put towards children's social care.
- 5.11 The committee noted that the increasing number of young people with high support needs transitioning from children's to adult social care services is going to create significant funding pressures.
- 5.12 Adult social care funding is under pressure from young people transitions and earlier hospital discharges.
- 5.13 There is a transitions task and finish group in place looking at the number of young people transitioning to adult social care and the type of care they are likely to need going forward.
- 5.14 There are longer term plans to develop more services in order to reduce reliance on more costly out-of-borough placements.
- 5.15 Proposal COM3a will increase revenue by carrying out prompt financial assessments and charging clients six weeks earlier.

Resolved: the committee noted the proposals but expressed concern about making further reductions to the adult social care budget at a time when the service is already facing difficulties meeting its obligations.

6. Select Committee work programme

The Scrutiny Manager introduced the work programme. The following points were noted:

- 6.1 The Chair noted that he was seeking guidance from the Head of Law in relation to the reform of Clinical Commissioning Groups across southeast London and that this issue will be discussed at the next committee meeting.
- 6.2 The Chair noted that he had received a briefing on NHS migrant charging from the Save Lewisham Hospital Campaign and that having an item on this issue on the work programme would be discussed further at agenda planning.

Resolved: the committee agreed the work programme.

7. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

There were no referrals to M&C.

The meeting ended at 9.50 pm

Chair:

Date:
