

SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 5 March 2020

PRESENT: Councillor G. Thomas (Chair)

Councillors:

S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, D.M. Cundy (In place of K. Lloyd), R.E. Evans, W.T. Evans, A.L. Fox, G.R. Jones, B.A.L. Roberts, E.M.J.G. Schiavone and D.T. Williams

The following Officers were in attendance:

J. Morgan, Head of Homes & Safer Communities
A. Bracey, Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
R. Page, Senior Business Support Manager
A. Jenkins, Social Worker Team Manager
A. Thomas, Group Accountant
E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer

Chamber, County Hall, Carmarthen, SA31 1JP - 10.00 - 11.20 am

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I.W. Davies, K. Davies, K. Lloyd and M.J.A. Lewis.

2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.

There were no declarations of personal interest or of any prohibited party whips.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS (NONE RECEIVED)

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

4. REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2019/20

The Committee considered the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report in relation to the Social Care and Health Service, which provided an update on the latest budgetary position as at 31st December, 2019 in respect of the 2019/20 financial year.

The Social Care & Health Service was projecting an overspend of £708K on the revenue budget and net variance of -£31K against the 2019/20 approved capital budget.

The following questions / observations were raised on the report:

Appendix B – Main Variances

- An explanation was requested regarding the partially delivered savings on the Cwm Aur contract.

The Group Accountant advised that she did not know but the relevant officer would be able to advise.

- Concern was raised regarding the vacancies within the Occupational Therapy team as the issue had been on-going for a significant time. The Committee was advised that Occupational Therapy vacancies was a National issue and also a priority for the Authority to resolve. While the issue was on-going, significant progress had been made.
- It was asked why the income on direct payments had remained level when the demand for service had increased. The Senior Business Support Manager advised that some direct payments received would be applied to the domiciliary care line. The report does try to reflect the movement between areas but this was not always possible.
- Officers were asked if service user were re-assessed following the reduction in double handed care. The Committee was advised that there was on-going evaluation of care and that the reduction in double handed care was not a cost cutting exercise. Double handed care would be re-instated should the carers advise that the users needed additional care.
- Clarification was requested on the overspend on staffing in the Coleshill Day Centre. The Head of Mental Health and Learning Disability advised that staffing arrangements had been changed with 3rd sector staff being replaced by the Authority staff which had increased cost. The most up to date equipment would reduce the need for double or treble handed care and the longer-term plan was to reduce staffing costs.
- Reference was made to the spend on agency staff at the Authority's care homes. It was confirmed that this was a particular issue for residential care homes, however a significant amount of work had been done to improve the staffing ratio. Agency staff would only typically be used if first line services were at risk.

Appendix C – Detailed Variances

- Officers were asked about the front loading principle as vast overspend would often disappear. The Committee was advised that figures could be changed quickly due to a number of reasons including, late income from Welsh Government (such as winter pressure payments) and client income. Client income being difficult to predict as based on affordability.

Appendix F – Savings Monitoring Report

- An update was asked regarding the review of Shared Lives Placements. The Head of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities advised that a significant review had been undertaken as there were concerns that the service would not meet future demands. The report had been received and the recommendations were being implemented. It was suggested that the Committee be provided with a full update at a future meeting.
- Clarification was asked regarding the Domiciliary Care Service line indicating that out of the £45K proposed savings, £0 had been delivered. The Head of Homes & Safer Communities advised that they had been overly ambitious with regard to the IT system implementation. Taking over Allied during the year had slowed down the introduction of the system,

however the system would be in place to over 400 users by the end of March which would result in efficiency improvements.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

5. TASK & FINISH GROUP 2020/21 PLANNING AND SCOPING DOCUMENT

The Chair reminded the Committee that, following a request for suggestions from members for potential Task & Finish projects, the Committee had considered a number of suggestions and had agreed to undertake a review into Suicide Prevention in Carmarthenshire.

The Committee's discussions relating to the key aims and objectives for the Task and Finish review were captured and developed into a draft planning and scoping document, which included the aims and scope of the review, and was being presented to Committee for consideration and endorsement.

The Committee was also required to confirm which members should sit on the Task & Finish Group, which should consist of up to 7 members on a politically balanced basis.

It was noted that the first meeting of the Task & Finish Group was held on 16th January 2020 when a Chair and Vice-Chair was appointed from the membership of the Group. Officers from the Communities Department and Democratic Services Unit will support the work of the Task & Finish Group.

RESOLVED

- 5.1 that the Task and Finish Scoping Document be received;**
- 5.2 that the aims and scope of the work of the Task and Finish Group be endorsed;**
- 5.2 that the membership of the Task and Finish Group be as follows:-**
 - **Councillor Ieuan Wyn Davies [Vice Chair]**
 - **Councillor Amanda Fox**
 - **Councillor Ken Lloyd**
 - **Councillor Louvain Roberts**
 - **Councillor Emlyn Schiavone**
 - **Councillor Gwyneth Thomas [Chair]**
 - **Councillor Dorian Williams**
- 5.3 That the Scoping Document be titled "Early Intervention & Prevention of Suicide in Carmarthenshire".**

6. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT

The Committee received an explanation for the non-submission of the following scrutiny reports:

- Learning Disability Strategy (2018/2023) – due to meeting approval cycle it was noted that the report would not be available until May.
- 5 Year Capital Programme Budget Consultation.

RESOLVED that the explanation for the non-submission be noted.

7. ACTIONS AND REFERRALS UPDATE

The Committee considered the update report detailing progress in relation to actions, requests and referrals emerging from previous meetings.

UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.

8. FORTHCOMING ITEMS

RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 15th April , 2020 be noted.

9. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 21ST JANUARY, 2020

UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 21st January, 2020 be signed as a correct record.

CHAIR

DATE