

## **People Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Monday, 13th September, 2021.**

**Present:-** Councillors Qaseem (Chair), Kelly (Vice-Chair), Ajaib, Basra, Begum, Brooker, Matloob, Mohammad and Sandhu

**Also present under Rule 30:-** Councillors Gahir, Pantelic and Strutton

**Apologies for Absence:-** No apologies were received.

### **PART 1**

#### **1. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Basra declared that she worked with a number of organisations in the education sector.

Councillor Brooker declared that he was a Governor at schools in Slough.

Councillor Kelly declared that he worked for the Slough and East Berkshire CofE Multi Academy Trust (SEBMAT).

Councillor Mohammad declared that she was a Practice Manager at a GP Surgery in Slough.

They all remained and participated in the meeting.

#### **2. Minutes of the Health Scrutiny Panel and Education & Children's Services Panel meetings held on 31st March & 12th April 2021**

**Resolved** – That the minutes of the Health Scrutiny Panel and Education & Children's Services Panel meetings held on 31<sup>st</sup> March & 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 be approved as correct records.

#### **3. Appointment of Non-voting Co-opted Members of the Panel**

**Resolved** - That the non-voting co-opted members from the previous Health and Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Panels be Approved as follows:

Rafal Nowotynski - Healthwatch Representative

Paul Kassapian – Secondary School Representative

Fifi El Sayed – Slough Youth Parliament Representative

#### **4. Member Questions**

No member questions had been received.

#### **5. Provider Services Review**

The Executive Director of People (Adults) introduced the Adult Social care Providers Services report, which set out recommendations to Cabinet regarding the continued delivery of Adult Social Care, in-house provider

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services. The report contained feedback from public consultation and the reasoning for the preferred option and recommendations.

It was noted that the report had been presented to the Panel prior to it being reported to the Cabinet meeting on 20 September 2021 for a decision. Any comments from the Panel on the recommendations and proposal would also be referred to the Cabinet meeting on the above date.

*The Panel's discussion followed after the Lead Petitioner had spoken.*

The Associate Director Social Care Operations, highlighted that a review of the provider services had been conducted to understand how best to offer adult social care that did not rely on day centres and other building based services and centred more on strategic commissioning to meet the needs of all local people in order to deliver best value. The review also sought to ascertain the options that were available for local people. Service consultation had been undertaken to identify outcomes, which had resulted in establishing a number of available alternatives. Despite the process encountering challenges due to Covid, following consultation, key recommendations were made, which would enable the ability for services to be provided in different ways for local people.

The Cabinet Member for Social Care & Health was present to listen to comments of the Panel and she stated that the proposal would realise the ambitions for residents where services would be co-produced in the delivery of adult social care. She stressed that it was critical to ensure working with residents when progressing the second recommendation and taking into consideration the concerns that had been highlighted during the consultation of the proposed ambitious new way of providing services. Whilst she was satisfied with the recommendations put forward, she urged for the need for officers to work closely with service users.

Panel Members and Councillor Strutton, speaking under Rule 30, raised a number of points in the ensuing discussion, which are summarised as below:

In response to a number of questions, it was explained that there were two day centres which provided services for people with learning disabilities, including the provision of a range different activities. Additional respite had been bought from other providers to take account of a small respite unit which had not been opened for some time. The Panel was informed that the needs of the 107 users were now understood and highlighted that these needs would be susceptible to change over time and that different services may be required.

The Panel was advised that the consultation process had included focus groups, which had been attended by advocates. The consultation had demonstrated that the services were important for people's lives and the key indication was the need for stability and continuity. It was acknowledged that although services were needed, provision would not necessarily be council led services.

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Members asked whether the Council could provide the services that were needed, how it would manage external service provisions and ensure they were appropriate. The Panel was informed that the commissioning team had been put in place to provide the market that met the service needs of the people.

Members asked how the Council would guarantee that alternative provider of alternative provision would be identified for the 7 residents with special needs, who had been together for 25 years at Lavender Court, particularly as residents were claiming that they had not received details regarding the consultation. It was explained that during consultation, significant effort had been made to try and personalise ways for people to engage, which included the Council website, advocates and a number of other means based on the information that was available at the time. Reassurance could be ascertained from people's needs being met and if the provision was not meeting the needs as required, it would be adapted to meet those needs. It was highlighted that there had been a shrinking provider market for a number of years in addition to reduction in the Council's accounts. However, subject to Cabinet decision, the Council would continue to work with others to meet needs. Members were reassured that social workers would work with residents to ensure that they were engaged in the service provision and officers would ensure that the Panel was also provided with updates on the on-going process.

Members asked what percentage of the 107 people currently registered to use the services had responded, and expressed concern about the loss of 61 post potentially impacting on the shortage of social workers. It was explained that the social workers had conducted the review of services to ensure the right service provision and did not however, provide the services. It was pointed out that the shortage of social workers was a national issue. Of people who had responded, 55 had been via online surveys, 31 had signed up for Focus groups, 2 had been by PSPC mail, one person via telephone and the largest response had been received via a petition. With regards to verification of data on the responses that had been received, 100% of people had been contacted from the detail available at the time of people accessing the services. It was highlighted that the statistical analysis response in respect of 107 people was significantly higher than most return rate of other questionnaires.

Members requested officers to report back to the Panel, on the on-going progress and sought assurances that those affected would all be involved in the proposed actions. It was acknowledged that residents did not wish for the provider services to be closed but the Council was recommending that they be closed in place of services being provided by alternative service providers to meet people's needs. Members were reassured that people would be involved in the next stage, subject to Cabinet approval. Further commitment would be made to ensure that communication was enhanced and centred on the families.

Members indicated that a recommendation be made to Cabinet to ensure continuity of service as a key requirement as highlighted by petitioners, and

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asked about the number of services that had been or could be set up prior to the closure of the centres. It was explained that the clients' needs would be identified at the next stage prior to progressing and confirmed that assessments would be undertaken in person by relevant professionals.

The Cabinet Member advised that the proposals outlined in the report sets out how the needs of service users would be met and that the Council had a duty to ensure those needs were met. Work was being undertaken with users to ensure the right service provision by reviewing people's care needs to ensure they were met in the community rather than being provided directly by the Council.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Panel noted the report and added an additional recommendations, to the recommendations to Cabinet.

**Resolved** – That the recommendation to Cabinet be approved as follows:

- i. That Cabinet be made aware of the petition and asked to ensure officers give some reassurance to stake holders.
- ii. That if a decision is taken to close the following Provider Services currently operated by the Council:
  - Lavender Court
  - Respond (short-term breaks service)
  - Priors Day Service
  - Phoenix Day Service
  - The Pines Day Service

Suitable alternative provisions should be provided before any such closure.

- iii.
  - a) That the needs and aspirations of all people who use the services currently be reviewed to identify alternative options, building on people's strengths, across the provider market and through direct payments.
  - b) That flexible and more personalised support be delivered, relying less on providing activities or services that are based at the day centres.
  - c) That individual choice and independence is promoted through accessing services that are being delivered by charities, community groups and other organisations in the voluntary and independent sector be promoted.
- iv. That implementation of these recommendations be delegated to the Executive Director of People (Adults), in consultation with the Lead Member for Social Care and Public Health.
- v. That a report be presented back to the Scrutiny Panel on the outcome

- vi. of the one-to-one officer assessment of each of the affected residents with confirmation that appropriate solutions for each person had been found, if Cabinet decides to close these centre.

## **6. Petition**

*(With the agreement of the Panel, the Chair agreed to consider this item in tandem with item 5, which followed immediately after the petition representative had spoken).*

The lead petitioner spoke about a petition to Abandon Planned Closure of Day Centres and raised the following points:

- Had lived in Langley for 23 years.
- Daughter had severe learning disability (27 years old) – attended college and concerned that she would be personally affected by the planned closure of a number of day centres.
- Services provided at Phoenix Day Centre delivered stability, structure, and supported the planning of continuous learning and personal care support.
- As well as providing a social life, it also operated as hub and provided access to other services.
- Day centres also provided respite for carers.
- Commended report from the consultation which clearly outlined what the community felt about the planned changes.
- Concerned about the impact and loss of the continuation and quality of service, including the administrative assistance, which provided help and support to users.
- Highlighted that the proposal would lead to 50% cut in budget, 75% cut for day centres and 100% cut in front line staff.

The Panel noted the points that had been raised by the lead petitioner.

**Resolved** – That the petition be noted.

## **7. Health and Care Plan**

The Panel received a report on the draft Health Care Plan for Slough, which set out the proposed changes to the running of the Health and Social Care Partnership Board (HSCP), in order to improve integration between health and social care and delivery of the care plan in Slough.

It was noted that the proposed changes included a new terms of reference (TOR) to reflect the amalgamation of the HSCP and the Slough Place Based committees working jointly by having their meetings together, while remaining as two separate boards.

Members discussed the report and raised the following questions and comments:

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Members asked how the issue of off licenses, betting and take away shops located in close proximity to schools were being considered to promote collaborative working between departments, to ensure incorporation of a healthier environment for children in their plans. It was explained that work in this area had been on-going to make improvements over the years but highlighted that the current Health and Care plan was for adults and confirmed that an equivalent plan also existed for children. The proposed changes to the running of the HSCPb was to have just one meeting, rather than the current position where different departments were discussing the same issues at different meetings. The new public health board now set up, included representatives from planning, housing, social care departments and public health. The HSCPb would be responsible for delivering public health outcome.

A member asked about the current position of public health in supporting the wider community. It was explained that public health was still dealing with the issue of the pandemic, with the rate of infection in Slough still rising. Wexham hospital had seen a rise in younger group being hospitalised, as most had not received the vaccines. People were also staying longer in the wards and compounded by the increased concern about the impact of long Covid. Part of the health partnership was in ensuing how people could be supported and delivering the support in an integrated way. The new plan would explore how best to demonstrate progress. Regular updates would be provided to the Panel, the first of which would be looking at the impact in six months' time.

Councillor Strutton addressed the Panel under Rule 30 and expressed concern about the Health Care Plan being at risk, given the Council's current financial pressures and asked how the proposed collaborative working would manage the sharing of personal information. He was also concerned that many residents had been unable to get through to their doctors' practices and questioned how the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would be able to resolve this issue. He stressed that it was imperative to ensure a joint plan was set up in order to establish an integrated model of delivery of service and asked whether the Council could ring fence funds in order to protect vulnerable adults.

The Panel noted that the officer from the CCG was not present at the meeting to respond to some of the questions that had been raised. However, members were reassured that precepts funding was used for adult social care and advised that the decision of how money was prioritised was made by the Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member for Social Care & Health added that the priorities of the integration and partnership working across health and social care in Slough would continually be reviewed by the Slough Wellbeing Board.

The Panel requested the representative from the CCG to attend future meetings.

**Resolved that:**

- i) The draft Health and Care Plan for Slough be noted
- ii) The proposed changes to the running of the Health and Social Care Partnership Board
- iii) That an impact assessment be reported back to Panel in six months' time.

**8. Adult Social Care Local Account 2019-20**

The Panel was provided with an update on the Adult Social Care Local Accounts 2019/20. It was noted that the accounts were old but they had been presented at the meeting for new Panel members to be provided an insight of the range of issues that were nationally reported on.

It was noted that a survey had not been conducted in 2020/21 and the next survey would be in 2022.

**Resolved** – That the Adult Social Care Local Account 2019/20 be noted.

**9. Forward Work Programme**

The Panel discussed the forward work plan and included the following items for consideration at future meetings:

- School Place Strategy
- Outcome with Children
- Annual Education Standard report
- Health Plan for children

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.24 pm)