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Monmouthshire Select Committee Minutes

Meeting of Public Services Scrutiny Committee held at on Tuesday, 3rd October, 2023 at 10.00 am

Councillors Present

County Councillor Armand Watts (Chairman)
County Councillor Penny Jones, (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: Jill Bond, Jan Butler, Steven Garratt, Malcolm Lane, Dale Rooke, Frances Taylor, and Meirion Howells

Also in attendance County Councillors: John Crook, Peter Strong, Jackie Strong, Sue Riley, Alistair Neill, Emma Bryn, Simon Howarth, Angela Sandles, cabinet Member for Equalities and Engagement, Ian Chandler, Cabinet Member for Social care, Safeguarding and Accessible Health Services and Martyn Groucutt, Cabinet Member for Education

Officers in Attendance

Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Robert McGowan, Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Sharran Lloyd, LSB Development Manager
Nicola Prygodzicz
Chris Overs, Divisional Nurse
Tracey Pw, Assistant Director of Nursing at ABHB
Dan Davies
Lloyd Hambridge, Divisional Director for Primary Care & Community Services Division
Susan O'Brian, Early Years Integration And Transformation Lead
John Pearson, Local Democracy Manager
Paul Underwood, Interim General Manager for Unscheduled Care
Beth Watkins, Flying Start Manager

APOLOGIES: County Councillor Tudor Thomas

Note: the following minutes focus on the challenge from members – for the full discussion, the recording of the meeting is at www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjokQyqlXqc&list=PLLMqn4nAaFJCILetq56Hon4uJ3r_La-et&index=6**Declarations of Interest**

None.

2. Public Open Forum

None.

3. Early Years Integration and Transformation Pilot and Flying Start

Beth Watkins and Susan O'Brian updated the committee on recent progress. Nicola Prygodzicz and Chris Overs delivered remarks and answered the members' questions with Beth Watkins.

Key points raised by the committee members:

- Penny: we welcome positive outcomes. Health visitor courses used to be over-subscribed. 'HVs need better understanding of system' – does this come down to basic training?
- Jill: when is the date of WC?. Going to press, symptom of difficulty pilot had. Is lack of people becoming HVs related to the lack of staff in general? Is there anything that can be done, in terms of recruitment?

- Steven: recruitment and retention problem. In Covid, staff were seconded – is there a way for people to rotate and learn new skills, see it as a development opportunity? How are gaps being managed to ensure there are the necessary staff available?
- Armand: recruitment drive a few years ago for those in European countries, relating to transferrable qualifications. With Ukraine crisis, can we look there as a recruitment opportunity?
- Penny: secondments were part of training previously. Is that part of general training, or could it become so?
- Jan: HV caseload of 110 children doesn't compare well with Social Care, with caseload of 25-30. This is concerning. Can anything further be done to reduce that?
- Martyn:?
- Simon: Mentioned conversations with WG. What will it take to reorganise and go down a different pathway? Recruitment....?
- Jill:could help reduce childhood needs not being met in early years. No mention of attachment theory shared....

Chair's Summary:

Thank you especially to the officers, Beth Watkins and Susan O'Brian.

4. Dentistry Services (including those for young people)

Lloyd Hambridge spoke to the committee and answered the members' questions with Nicola Prygodzicz.

Key points raised by the committee members:

- Penny: foster carers expressed difficulty for their charges to access any services. They don't seem to be recognised in any of the categories.
- Dale: Severnside lost a dentist practice in Caldicot, little capacity for NHS in Chepstow. What's being done – is there an issue around newly qualified dentists going into private practice, rather than NHS? What can we do to incentivise them to stay in the NHS? Dentures: resident been without them nearly 2 years....can't get initial referral from dentist – what can be done about that? **ACTION – follow up individual case with details from Dale**
- Jill: how many NHS dental practices are in the clawback process? Is this being looked at? NHS dentists only doing emergencies but they want to be able to do preventative work too – leading to poor job satisfaction and practices not being viable **ACTION – can take away to look into and come back with details**
- Peter: a 'nearby' area might look close on a map but not necessarily the case on the ground e.g. no direct buses, etc. Are you aware of how desperate the situation is in Chepstow area? Why are referrals to Monmouth if services are already available in the community hospital in Chepstow? **ACTION – can take away and look into problem**
- Peter: who to speak to to get the relevant information?
- John: Magor and Undy will have 450 homes in next 3 years. Two dental surgeries already completely full – is there a plan for this area? Immediate plan would be needed.

- Armand: European recruitment was successful previously. How successful in the county was that, pre-Brexit? How will we address the potential deficit from recruiting overseas? Will local authorities be able to have an input to working groups?
- (Meirion: incentives for students to carry on in NHS and dentists to do more detailed work)
- Jill: can they think about using Llaes(?) for consultation?

Chair's Summary:

5. Minor Injuries Unit at Nevill Hall: Question and Answer Session

Nicola Prygodzicz spoke to the committee, Paul Underwood delivered a presentation, and they answered the members' questions.

Key points raised by the committee members:

- Penny: confusion – no-one knows where to go, at the moment. Different experiences at different hospitals. Why can't more minor injuries at the Grange be signposted to NH, utilising the unit there?
- Penny:?
- Jan:how many at public meetings? More education for what public can do, but go beyond a leaflet drop – can we be assured that there will be some sort of media campaign? Is NH MI Unit being cut because of the wider budget problems?
- Ian: what are the budget savings that this proposal will deliver, especially as there will be no staff reduction? Or is it just better deployment of existing staff? Consultation attendance demonstrates overall anxiety about emergency services and waiting lists....there were no ambulances for son – services are not always joined up. Links with English services? How is that being managed?
- Rachel:lack of demand at NH: if someone arrives with a serious problem, ambulance wait is too long, NH is closest – will NH not help that person? Great concern from residents that Grange is too far and there is no local provision that they can rely on. Surely there's a lack of provision in the north of county, and this will compound it?
- Sue: example of mother and x-ray, minor injuries etc.... **ACTION: COULD LOOK INTO THIS PARTICULAR CASE...?**
- Armand: broader issue of consultation:.....? What can be done to convince the committee and public that you will listen to what the people want?are the decisions as stark as you say?

Chair's Summary:

6. To note the date and time of the next meeting: 23rd October 2023

The meeting ended at **1.00 pm**

