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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Adults Select Committee held
at County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Tuesday, 11th April, 2017 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor P. Farley (Chairman)

County Councillors: R. Edwards, P. Jones, A. Wintle and A. Easson

ALSO PRESENT:

Mrs. D. Hudson – Co-Opted Member

Mrs. S. Gilbert – Member of Public

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Nicola Perry

Senior Democracy Officer

Julie Boothroyd

Head of Adult Services

Chris Robinson

Lead Commissioner - Quality Assurance

Angela Mutlow

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Community
Health Council

Hazel Ilett

Scrutiny Manager

APOLOGIES:

County Councillors R. Harris, R. Chapman, M. Hickman and D Hill.

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

2. Public Open Forum

No Members of the public were present.

3. To confirm the minutes of the following meeting:

4. Joint Select Committee (Budget Scrutiny) - 31st January 2017

The minutes of the Joint Select Committee (Budget Scrutiny) meeting held on 31st January 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

5. Joint Children and Young People and Adults Select Committees: 6th February 2017

The minutes of the Joint Children and Young People's Select and Adults Select Committee meeting held on 6th February 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

6. Special Adults Select Committee (Affordable Housing) - 14th February 2017

The minutes of the Special Adults Select Committee (Affordable Housing) meeting held on 14th February 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

7. Joint Select Committee (Alternative Delivery Model) - 27th February 2017

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The minutes of the Joint Select Committee (Alternative Delivery Model) meeting held on 27th February 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

8. Adults Select Committee: 28th February 2017

The minutes of the Adults Select Committee meeting held on 28th February 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

9. Supporting People Grant Spend

Context

The purpose of the report is for Committee members to consider the Supporting People Programme Grant (SPPG) proposals for 2017/18 and to agree the proposed Spend Plan.

Key Issues

The Indicative Allocation of Grant for 2017/18 suggests that the level of funding will be the same as for 2016/17 - £2,039,175.00. The majority of Monmouthshire's SPPG contracts have an end/review date of 31 March 2019.

The guidelines associated with the Grant require Authorities to ensure that Grant Funding is both tenure and age neutral in nature. Demand for older people housing-based support has declined with the allowable 10% contract variation already being implemented in the main older person contract. During 2017/18, the main older person contract will end, the provider having given notice to terminate the contract.

Support to older people will then be available through the place-based model and the Gateway. This is a generic floating support service and an analysis of the outcomes delivered by the generic services demonstrates that support is provided to all the support categorisations and therefore all the protected characteristics. The transition arrangements will be managed through the Gateway who will ensure that all people currently being supported have their needs reassessed and are then referred to the appropriate service delivery that will meet their needs.

In 2016/17, two important pilot initiatives were developed – Homeless and well-being support and social inclusion support, both within the place-based initiatives. Whilst the initiatives did not get fully underway until September/October 2016, there has been a significant increase in the numbers of people supported within the overall static grant funding, with an associated increase in the outcome being achieved.

Access for older people will now be predominately through our Gateway service with its associated support workers in the place-based teams.

There have been situations identified recently in which the needs of younger people and care leavers have not been fully met by the SP programme. It is important that positive action is taken to ensure that this vulnerable and protected characteristic is supported appropriately. A designated resource is assigned in the spend plan.

The majority of contracts run until March 2019; funding levels remain unchanged; and the place-based initiative is making a very positive contribution to those requiring support in the communities. This new way of working allows support to be provided based on need and not be associated purely with where a person lives.

Monmouthshire's demographics have made older people a priority need, however, the support needs for this category have changed over time and decreased. Closer working across the Adult and Younger Person services has identified that further, targeted support is needed for the young care leavers.

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Member Scrutiny

The Supporting People Lead and the Head of Adult Services introduced the context of the report. Following the presentation, Members made observations as follows:

A Member asked if the Welsh Government (WG) continues to reclaim funding not spent or for ineligible projects. In response it was explained that a service review is conducted every year and it is known that other authorities have had to refund money when it has been spent on ineligible projects.

In answer to a question from a Committee Member, it was explained that the categorisation of people receiving support can be problematic. Generic service and floating support is the main thrust of service provision and generally, housing based support is the same across any of the protected characteristics. For reporting purposes, the Council has been asked to categorise clients receiving support and this can then be confusing when comparisons are made.

In response to a further query, it was confirmed that 1400 is the number of people requiring support (as opposed to a smaller number of people with lots of different disabilities).

Clarification was sought about categories not reported, specifically that whilst there are figures for domestic abuse of women, there is no mention of domestic abuse of males, also people with physical disabilities and long term conditions. It was explained that these are included under generic floating support not under a specific category. It was added that some local authorities have specific projects for these types of groups but Monmouthshire provides more needs-based, generic support. It was explained that over the last period eleven males received support due to domestic abuse not recorded separately as this is a discrete service provided predominantly, but not exclusively, for women and is a service based on need.

A further query was raised about recognition of elder abuse and it was confirmed that there are figures for this area but not a separate service due to funding constraints. It was challenged that elder abuse is a significant category to be reported and it was confirmed that when the strategy is written, specific information will be provided on how support will be provided.

A Member asked about the implications of the older person contract ending. It was explained that resource has been given to the place based service and during the transition until the end of the contract, everyone will have their needs reassessed. If needs identify the person as eligible, they will be referred through the Gateway to an appropriate provider to a place based support worker or other provider based on need and priority. In response to a question, it was refuted that there will be cutbacks; instead people will be supported but in a different way.

A Member asked a question about the Careline Community Alarms and it was explained that SPPG can only fund part of the alarm service (51p per week per alarm). It was added that the operator has reduced the weekly charge to 41p and demand has fallen (300 units won't now be funded due to reduced demand). It was explained that some local authorities in Wales don't now pay for community alarms and this could possibly be considered in the strategy going forward. It was questioned if there was a more efficient, up to date method available but explained that the call centre charge will remain similar regardless of the technology used. It was also explained that new housing schemes have the technology built in. Additionally, individuals utilise their own technology such as mobile phones so technological advances may overtake the need for such alarm services.

The Chair commented that there is confusion amongst e.g. residents in sheltered housing regarding alarm services and also regarding floating support. He advocated the need for all providers to work together and identified a need to simplify who is providing what services and for whom. It was confirmed that there are diversified services and support that can come from a

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variety of sources but confirmed that all service providers are talking to each other and have the same purpose and principles. The Officer suggested that there is an argument that WG could consider the removal of the ring fencing of Supporting People funding being that it is person centred support (to avoid confusing the individual).

A Member of the Public commented that she understood that the existing older persons' strategy was not due for review until 2023 and also commented about the underspend being used to fund a Young People's Co-Ordinator post. It was noted that the underspend only affects one contract and would be available for supporting people. It was queried if publicity would be provided to identify what money will be spent for over 55s. The Officer explained that WG stipulates that spending on supporting people has to be age and tenure neutral and support therefore will be allocated according to housing based support need and priority. It was added that when one of the main providers gave notice of termination, it was timely to move towards these types of contracts. It was confirmed that the publicity will not specify housing need irrespective of age, disability etc.

Chairs Comments

The Chair thanked the Supporting People Lead for his report.

The Chair stated that the Committee agreed to recommend that the approach outlined in the report was approved. It was requested that the strategy is scrutinised by the Select Committee when drafted.

10. Pr
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from

the Community Health Council

Key Issues

The Chief Officer for Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) Community Health Council (CHC) was invited to the meeting to provide an update on the work of Community Health Council.

Member Scrutiny

After receiving a presentation, Members commented and asked questions as follows:

A Member referred to the role of the CHC representing the interests of the public to the ABUHB and questioned what its stance was on the removal of minor injuries units in Monmouthshire to Nevill Hall Hospital. It was responded that the CHC is heavily involved, working with the ABUHB, in the implementation of any service changes to ensure that patients' views are taken into account.

It was additionally queried how members of the public obtain and input information as the CHC meetings are not open to the public. In response, it was explained that awareness of the CHC is a challenge and high on its agenda but added that when people need its services, they tend to find it (evidenced by the fact that over 500 complaints about ABUHB services are dealt with per year). Additionally, it was explained that CHC has 42 members (10 living in Monmouthshire) and they are expected to engage with the public as part of their role. There is an engagement schedule for the year to encourage interaction at e.g. local forums, luncheon clubs etc.

It was confirmed that quarterly CHC meetings are open to the public and are advertised to encourage attendance. It was added that there are vacancies currently and new members are sought.

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A Member asked how effective the CHC is when dealing with patients' concerns (e.g. GP surgery hours, vacant practices and out of hours cover) and what realistically can be done. In response, it was explained that when CHC is aware of issues, it can make recommendations to ABUHB which will provide an action plan to rectify the problems raised. It was confirmed that GP sustainability is a key issue and that CHC is heavily involved in panel meetings with Primary Care and sits independently on the local medical committee to ensure that there are fair processes concerning these matters. It was added there is also a GP access survey available online and some responses may lead to further investigation and engagement with patients.

A Member suggested provision of a monthly health clinic at the Raglan livestock market for basic health assessment. It was agreed that the CHC would pass this suggestion on to ABUHB.

It was observed that the CHC holds the role of supporting people with complaints about ANUHB services. It was reported that some patients had reported that it can be difficult to make complaints, and had added that the CHC is too close to ABUHB so there was no point in complaining. The Member further referred to some research previously undertaken by the CHC on waiting times in hospital clinics questioning the standard of the work.

In response, it was confirmed that the CHC is an independent statutory organisation. It was recognised that there is an ongoing need to demonstrate the CHC's independence providing the example that the name itself causes confusion. This fact is acknowledged across Wales and is under current consideration. It was explained that the CHC has a critical friend role and ABUHB takes note of the issues raised and addresses concerns accordingly. It was explained how complaints are made and the support provided by four advocates who will guide the patient through the process. It was emphasised that the advocates will not, however, offer an opinion on the complaint. If the individual is unhappy with the outcome from the ABUHB, the patient will be supported to elevate the matter to the Ombudsman.

It was agreed that the query regarding research will be considered outside of the meeting and assurance was provided that research and projects are undertaken thoroughly.

A Member observed that the CHC needs more publicity. It was agreed that more publicity would be beneficial, in particular for the advocacy role. It was confirmed that three elected members are members of the CHC. They undertake visits on its behalf and can also convey comments to the CHC. The Member reported on the success of patient participation groups in the south of the county and encouraged this approach.

It was queried why some CHC meetings are not open to public. In response, it was confirmed that the CHC is constituted according to regulations which denote which meetings are open and those that are not. It was suggested that a higher level of scrutiny (similar to Select Committees) in CHC meetings to better hold the ABUHB to account.

In response to a question, it was confirmed that CHC continues to have involvement with the media and also has members from town and county councils. The CHC also participates in national projects that have included ophthalmology, children and adolescents, dementia and care of the elderly.

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The Chair responded to a Member's question that the ABUHB minutes of June 2011 referred to the closure of the Minor Injuries Unit in Chepstow and it was clear that the CHC advised that there was no need for public consultation. It was added that if the CHC is serious about maintaining an overview of services in the area, it should be less biased on patients and should concentrate on the needs of populations. It was suggested that the CHC should ask ABUHB, why nothing has happened since the withdrawal of services and why there has been no communication to residents regarding what to do in the event of minor injuries.

Chair's Comments

The CHC Chief Officer was thanked for attending the meeting and confirmed that there was a willingness to maintain a dialogue between the Adult Select Committee and the CHC. He welcomed the development of ongoing engagement at meetings with the Select committee separate from or with the ABUHB.

The Chair acknowledged that the Community Health Council's is working to overcome communication issues.

It was confirmed that elected members will be happy to work with the CHC to enable individual people and population views and needs to be represented. It was agreed that elected members need to know how best to help develop and improve services for the citizens of Monmouthshire.

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t Committee representative on Usk Prison Older Persons Health and Wellbeing Forum

Key Issues

The Select Committee Members had conducted a useful visit to Usk Prison and subsequent to that a Member had attended a meeting of the Usk Prison Older Persons Health and Wellbeing Forum and had written a report for consideration by the Select Committee.

Member Scrutiny

Following presentation of the report, Members made observations:

A Member commented that prisoners reported being bored for significant lengths of time and queried the availability of arts and crafts. A representative of the Prison explained that a number of different activities and initiatives have been started and have been well received. It is hoped that interest in these activities will increase.

It was explained, in response to a question regarding specialist clinics, that the ABUHB have agreed to submit a business case for a physio clinic to be provided at the prison. It was added that a mindfulness programme has started and is proving popular as are yoga sessions. It is also hoped to introduce sessions in Prescoed. It was explained that the Prison has invested in buddy training with Recoup and training of staff, and for prisoners who wish to undertake the role, will be arranged in due course. The information provided was welcomed.

Chair's Comments

The Member was thanked for providing a clear and constructive report. It was noted that there appeared to have been progress made. It was suggested that the importance of these issues merited inclusion on future work programmes. The representative of the prison was thanked for attending the meeting.

12. Acti
on List

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The Action List was noted.

13. Adult Select Committee - Forward Work Programme

It was noted that there were a few items not covered during the year that will be added to the Forward Work Programme such as an ongoing dialogue with the ABUHB, ongoing scrutiny of stroke services and maintaining a dialogue with the CHC. Efforts will continue to invite relevant officers, stakeholders and service users to provide the fullest perspective of each topic and meaningful and relevant meetings.

The Committee thanked the Chair for his excellent Chairmanship of the Committee, his knowledge and sense of humour. The Chair responded that it had been a privilege to be Chair of the Committee. He thanked his Vice Chair, County Councillor R. Harris, Members and Co-Opted Members. He thanked Julie Boothroyd and the entire Social Services team and welcomed the honesty exhibited in exploring and shaping services. He thanked the Democratic Services Team for clerking the meetings and especially expressed gratitude to Hazel Ilett, Scrutiny Manager for her guidance and planning the Committee's work in an exemplary manner. Julie Boothroyd acknowledged the work of the Committee.

County Councillor P. Jones, in her role as Chair, also expressed gratitude to Hazel Ilett and Richard Williams for their work with the Children and Young People's Select Committee.

Committee Members responded in agreement with the comments made.

14. Cabinet and Council Work Programme

The Cabinet and Council Work Programme was noted.

15. To confirm the date and time of the next meeting

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm

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