

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

Monday, 5 February 2024

PRESENT – Councillors Jacque Slater in the Chair, Ali, Humphrys, Slater, Smith and Whittingham.

ALSO PRESENT – Executive Members Jackie Floyd and Damian Talbot.

OFFICERS – Mark Warren, Claire Richardson, Chris Bradley and Phil Llewellyn.

RESOLUTIONS

17 **Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed all to the Meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillors Derek Hardman, Dave Harling and Anthony Shaw.

The Chair, noting that this was the last meeting of the Municipal Year, thanked all for their contributions over the meetings cycle.

18 **Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

Under Matters Arising, Mark Warren provided an update the Council's readiness for a forthcoming inspection by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) on how the authority is delivering on its statutory responsibilities, advising that the Council was around 85% ready in terms of its evidence base.

The LGA had been helping staff prepare for the inspection, as frontline staff and service users were the main focus of the inspection. Some risks still existed, particularly relating to the requirement for a Carers Strategy, and work was ongoing with BwD Carers on the development of the strategy.

The date of the inspection was not yet known, and it was noted that no North West local authorities had been announced to date.

Members commented on the positive progress, and it was also noted that the recent additional funding of £5M for social care would be spread across both Children's and Adults portfolios, some of which would help provide an uplift to providers to assist with paying the national living wage.

It was also noted that the Healthwatch updated requested at the last meeting had been circulated and Councillor Tony Humphrys advised that he had requested that he be invited to Healthwatch meetings as Chair of the Policy and Resources Overview Committee, and Phil Llewellyn agreed to follow this up with Sarah Johns, the Chief Executive.

19 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Elaine Whittingham declared an interest in agenda items 4 and 5 – Care Homes – Personal Interest due to recent inquest hearing and findings.

Councillor Whittingham then left the meeting.

20 Scrutiny of Care Homes in the Borough

A report was submitted that provided feedback from the visits of the Task and Finish Group to three care homes in the Borough.

The membership of the Task and Finish Group comprised of Councillors Jacquie Slater, Tony Humphrys and Anthony Shaw. Council officers helped facilitate and arrange the visits and helped select three care homes that were all different in order that Members could see the different types of care offers available in the Borough.

The Task and Finish Group visited the following homes in Autumn 2023:

- Thorncliffe
- Eachstep
- Moorland View

The care homes selected provided a good overview of the diverse range of care home provision and quality status within the Borough. The feedback from the Task and Finish Group was detailed in the report, with a response from Quality, Commissioning and Finance provided to each issue raised. Mark Warren also provided updates on the work of his staff in following up areas of concern with the Care Homes themselves, with satisfactory evidence and processes in place.

Members discussed the report, with Mark Warren also providing additional information on care homes in the Borough, with good progress being made in terms of the ratings for care homes, with 22 ranked as 'good' and 10 'requiring improvement', which equated to out of a 1000 beds in the Borough, 574 beds classified as 'good' and 389 'requiring improvement' which was a significant improvement on the position in June 2022.

Issues still remained in terms of recruitment and retention, and use of agency staff, and uplift funding would focus particularly on staffing. Members noted that the NHS offered better pay and career progression, and that the domiciliary care market also attracted staff. It was also noted that a large 77 bed care was currently being built, which would offer nursing care, and Members discussed the optimum size for a care home, and were advised that this depended on the operating model in place, with costs incurred needing to be taken into account, with viable businesses needing a 6% profit margin.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and Officers and Care Homes including residents be thanked for their input and assistance into the the scrutiny by the Task and Finish Group.

21 Integrated Care Partnership Update

Claire Richardson, Director of Health and Social Care Integration (Blackburn with Darwen) at NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) provided an update on progress since the last meeting.

In terms of Darwen Health Centre, an ICB led health centre utilisation review was underway. Darwen Primary Care Network commenced their review in November. The review would identify current and future predicted demand, key clinical priorities and estimated estate requirements.

Updates were also shared on the following:

- BwD Place-based Partnership – Strategic Alignment of BwD place based priorities
- Focus on Population Health – reducing inequalities and engaging communities
- Refreshing Integrated neighbourhood working
- Enhancing Community based care – this included Albion Mill – move to single provider model- first floor 16 beds, second floor – total 35 beds operational.

In terms of the ICB:

- Budget challenges
- The vision – moving from acute to community centric
- Areas of Focus
- Recovery and Transformation Programme

Claire Richardson advised that she would share the presentation slides to the Committee.

Members of the Committee commented on the issues with Darwen Health Centre (DHC), in particular access and future demands arising from new home building. Claire Richardson advised of the ongoing review of usage of DHC and Barbara Castle Way (BCW) and planning for the future, this also included other areas of the Borough, and involved work with the Growth Team on identifying land in West Blackburn and North Blackburn and of new ways of working generally, which included a digital approach, including Virtual Wards.

Members also asked questions relating to the receptiveness of staff to the integration changes generally, and were advised that this was a mixed picture, but that successes would be built on and rolled out, working together with staff.

In response to a question on Griffin Health Centre, Claire advised that revenue funding was a current issue, and if this site proved not to be viable, other sites would be investigated.

Clair Richardson agreed to provide an update on NHS Dentists, and acknowledged recruitment and retention issues, whilst also advising of improving statistics relating to early intervention for children and young people.

Members also commented on support for Mental Health Groups, and the funding and support available for them from various sources.

Additionally, concerns were raised about housing conditions in Blackburn South East, and it was noted that a Housing Strategy was required for the Borough, and a Housing Survey was needed, and work was ongoing in this regard, with outcomes being considered. Members also noted that no Borough Councillors sat on the Together Housing Board, which was now covering several regions.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed