

HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE HEALTH SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 JUNE 2021 AT ONLINE.

Present:

Diane Gooch, Irene Kohler, Lindsey Burke, Sue Denmark, Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Dr Monica Devendran, Cllr Johnny Kidney, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr Mike Sankey, Cllr Clare Cape, Cllr Caroline Corbin, Cllr Gavin Grant, Cllr Howard Greenman, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jack Oatley, Cllr David Vigar and Cllr Antonio Piazza

Also Present:

Cllr Liz Alstrom, Cllr Richard Clewer, Elizabeth Disney, Emma Legg, Rachel Kent and Claire Edgar

1 **Apologies**

Cllr Caroline Corbin was unable to attend the start of the meeting. Corporate Director of People Lucy Townsend and Chief Executive Terence Herbert also offered their apologies. Lindsey Burke, rather than Joanne Burrows, was attending on behalf of the South West Advocacy Network (SWAN).

2 **Election of Chairman**

Resolved:

To elect Cllr Johnny Kidney as Chairman for the forthcoming year.

3 **Election of Vice-Chairman**

Resolved:

To elect Cllr Gordon King as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year.

4 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2021 were presented for consideration, and it was,

Resolved:

To approve and sign the minutes as a true and correct record.

5 Declarations of Interest

A declaration of interest was made by Cllr Clare Cape who disclosed that she worked for NHS Digital but that she would participate in the debate and vote with an open mind.

6 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman thanked the Committee and said that it was a privilege to be elected for the forthcoming year. He also took the opportunity to thank Cllr Chuck Berry for his hard work in chairing the Committee in the previous Council.

It was reported that the Committee had received three sets of quality accounts requiring a response by mid-June, those being from Wiltshire Health and Care, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership and Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust. Due to the next meeting of the Committee not being until July it was proposed that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman formulate a response, but Members were also invited to contribute should they wish to do so.

7 Public Participation

The Chairman noted that written questions had been received by a member of the public, Ms Anne Ward Ongley, relating to potential scrutiny activity on the impact of Covid-19 on carers. He updated the Committee that a written response had been provided outlining that this area has been given high priority on the draft work programme.

8 Covid-19 Update

In Agenda Supplement 1 the Committee was provided with a report from Wiltshire Council's chief executive containing a summary of activity undertaken by the Council to mitigate the impact of Covid-19. It was noted that the report had previously been considered by Cabinet on 1 June as well as the OS Management Committee on 25 May.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Richard Clewer, briefly spoke to say that he hoped the report would be the final Covid-19 report but that he was continuing to monitor the number of cases extremely closely. He also explained that the report highlighted that amount of work done by officers throughout the pandemic.

The Committee took the opportunity to commend officers as well as the extraordinary work done by front line staff. Concerns were raised about the recent rise in the number of Covid-19 cases in Wiltshire and it was asked if there were any

immediate implications. It was noted by a Public Health representative that a small rise had taken place, but numbers were still relatively low in relation to the rest of the South West and were broadly similar to those at the time that the report was written. She also noted that it was important to monitor the figures closely, but a slight increase was to be expected given the easing of restrictions on 17 May.

Furthermore, questions were asked about a number of measures being taken at a local level to assist with the vaccine roll out, including a proposal to open a vaccination centre at the Neeld Hall in Chippenham and the possibility vaccination bus coming to Trowbridge. Members asked what they could do to encourage the use of the bus. It was also suggested that a vaccine centre based at the Neeld Hall would improve local accessibility and take pressure off of GP surgeries.

It was noted by officers that the vaccine programme was being run by the local Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and that further queries would be taken back to find out more information. They reported that vaccine busses were targeted at areas with a low uptake but that further details could be provided in the form of a written response.

The Committee took time to discuss the impact of the pandemic on mental health, including the use of safe spaces and mental health first aiders. It was reported by officers that information about the number of referrals to mental health will be provided as a future update. Members were reassured that mental health first aiders were embedded in a number of the CCG's organisations and that support was being sign posted to staff, especially given the increased pressure that they had faced in recent months.

Resolved:

To note the update on The Council's ongoing response to Covid-19.

9 Overview and Scrutiny Work Priorities and Approach: Recommendations from the 2017-21 Council

The Health Select Committee received a report detailing ongoing work recommended by the former Management Committee as part of the development of a work programme for the new council. The recommendations from the 2017-21 council were considered and approved by Management Committee on 25 May 2021.

The Chairman notified the committee that it had no current task groups, but he was proposing to meet with directors, cabinet members & key partners to improve understanding of immediate priorities. He then invited comments on the work programme.

A number of comments were received in relation to the order of priorities with it being noted that the list was set by the previous council and considered to be the most pressing issues at the time. The Chairman agreed and emphasised the importance of needing to align it with the Council's future strategic priorities.

Members discussed giving high priority to mental health related issues and spoke about the possibility of giving higher priority to recruitment and retention of staff given the additional challenges caused by the pandemic. It was also suggested that greater priority could be given to scrutinising the work of the Shared Lives Service. Concerns were also raised about the revenue gap in adult social care given that it is a large part of the Council's budget.

Questions relating to the terms of reference of the Committee were raised as members suggested that many of the Committee's priorities seemed to focus around the issue of adult social care. The Senior Scrutiny Officer noted the government's proposal to bring forward a Health and Care Bill, which was expected to set the terms of reference of the Committee.

Reference was made to the previous meeting of the Select Committee where the possibility of setting up a rapid scrutiny exercise into the closure of Furlong Close. Cllr Clewer noted that a tender exercise was ongoing so it would be difficult to undertake an OS activity at this stage.

Resolved:

- 1. To note this Council's agreed core values for its OS function.**
- 2. To note OS's key strengths and development areas as highlighted by the previous council, and to note Management Committee's resolution to include these in any review of OS's approach and effectiveness in the new council.**
- 3. To note the forward work programme agreed by Management Committee, delegating authority to the Chair and Vice-Chair to develop this further (including the timing of activities), with proposals brought back to Committee.**
- 4. To support early discussion between the Chair and Vice-Chair with Cabinet members, portfolio-holders, directors and partners to gain a more informed understanding about executive and partner priorities, with outcomes reported back to Committee.**
- 5. To delegate authority to Chairman/Vice-Chairman to agree with their counterparts in the Children's Select Committee a date to commence the work of the Joint Whole Life Pathway Task Group, as approved in March 2020 and endorsed by the Management Committee in May 2021.**

10 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items, although members did take the opportunity to praise Cllr Kidney for chairing his first meeting and once again commend the previous Chairman Cllr Chuck Berry. A query was submitted in relation to press releases and social media posts about the vaccine bus. The Senior Scrutiny Officer agreed to investigate the issue and provide further information.

11 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next ordinary meeting of the Committee was to be held on 6 July 2021, at 10:30am.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.30 am)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Matt Hitch, of Democratic Services,
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