

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday 7 September 2021. The meeting was held as a virtual meeting via webex..

PRESENT:

Cllr Stephen Hirst (Chair)	Cllr Lisa Spivey
Cllr Alastair Chambers	Cllr Pam Tracey MBE
Cllr Cate Cody	Cllr Suzanne Williams
Cllr Mark Mackenzie- Charrington	Cllr Steve Robinson

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllr Terry Hale.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at the meeting.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 6 July 2021 were confirmed as a true record of that meeting.

4. GLOUCESTERSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Paul Yeatman, (Independent Chair of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board), and Sarah Jasper, (Head of Safeguarding (Adults) at Gloucestershire County Council), presented the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020/21.

Seeking to protect and empower adults with care and support needs and at risk of abuse and neglect, the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board was established in April 2009 in response to Government, (Department of Health), Legislation.

The Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (GSAB) Strategic Plan focuses on several key priorities, enabling the Board to strategically review and plan its work. The priorities reflect the direction set out in current national drivers for change and are based on the six key principles that underpin all adult safeguarding work, (as defined by the Care Act, 2014).

Working in partnership with local communities, the Board aims to:-

- prevent abuse and neglect;

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- identify and report abuse and neglect;
- respond to abuse and neglect;
- support people who have suffered abuse or neglect to recover, and to regain trust in those around them; and
- raise awareness of safeguarding adults and the role everyone can play in responding to, and preventing, abuse and neglect.

From April 2015, the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Adults Board has a statutory responsibility to produce an annual report into the effectiveness and quality of multi-agency safeguarding practice. The purpose of the GSAB Annual Report is to review progress in relation to the actions set out in the GSAB Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan covers a three year period, as recommended by the Care Act Statutory Guidance. A new Strategic Plan was being produced, covering the period 2021-2024. Replacing the 2015-18 Plan, it is hoped the new plan will go live in September 2021

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the report acknowledged that the past year had been an unprecedented year in the demands placed on delivering Adult Social Care services. The case studies included in the report highlighted some of the challenges that had been evident both nationally and throughout Gloucestershire.

In noting the report, members sought clarification on several areas of concern, including what action was being taken to ensure the positive multi-agency work being carried out did not cease at a certain point in a person's recovery. Questioning how the committee might support this work and help signpost people to seek the help they need, it was suggested members continue to strive to raise awareness in local communities of the services available to people in need of support and to become involved whenever they feel intervention and support is required.

Unable to comment or discuss individual cases at the meeting, it was suggested members with specific concerns email Sarah Jasper after the meeting to raise their concerns.

It was acknowledged that, as a result of the pandemic, a significant number of services had 'shut down', clearly impacting on the lives of vulnerable people and those at most risk. It was hoped the introduction of new government interventions would help address some of the issues that had evolved during this time, including the initiative to reduce the number of people from rough sleeping.

Reflecting on the number of people suffering from alcohol abuse, a member enquired why there had been no reference to people affected by drug abuse included within the report. It was noted that drug abuse did not just relate to young people, (people aged between 18 and 24), but to people from all age ranges. It was confirmed that people suffering from substance misuse had not gone away and explained that there had been a large number of alcohol related deaths during the pandemic, hence the focus on alcohol abuse in the report. Going forward, it was hoped government funding and new initiatives would help address issues relating to both alcohol and substance abuse.

Highlighting the need to maintain the momentum of the work involved in safeguarding vulnerable adults with specific needs, the report was noted.

5. MARKET MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Professor Sarah Scott, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health, introduced the report and gave an overview of information relating to the challenges of managing adult social care in Gloucestershire.

It was explained that the Care Act 2014 sets out the law around market development in adult social care. Under the Act, Gloucestershire County Council, (GCC), has a duty to not only meet and fund the needs of people eligible for care, but also to shape the local care market to encourage quality, choice and sufficiency of provision. This duty applies to the whole local population, including those who pay for their own care. Equally, it extends beyond care which is commissioned, and includes the informal care and support provided by families, networks of support and in communities.

In addition to the statutory requirement under the Care Act to manage care markets, GCC also has duties to improve the quality of care under the Health & Social Care Act 2012. It was explained that the key focus of achieving this is to ensure care is integrated around the needs of patients/people. It was reported that, in the past, the handover of responsibility between the NHS and social care had often been problematic. The Care Act aimed to ensure greater integration between services, including community based commissioned services from the independent and voluntary sectors. Market management includes services that support both health and social care delivery, whether purchased by public authorities or by private individuals.

As well as the statutory duties outlined in the Care Act, the County Council also has responsibilities under the Transforming Care Programme and the Gloucestershire Transforming Care Partnership. Transforming Care aims to improve health and care services for people with learning disabilities and/or autism, by allowing them to live, with support, closer to home.

The report set out a brief assessment of the current care market, the challenges and changes faced by the County Council and its response to such pressures.

The report confirmed that the County Council was committed to working with the care market to provide high quality, affordable care and support and promote independence. To deliver these aims, the council recognised:-

The need to increase the availability and range of care and support delivered in people's own homes and communities;

The need for more specialist care from which to support people with complex needs across all settings, including the predicted rising demand for nursing care;

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The need for fewer long-term residential placements, from which it was anticipated that the shrinking market was likely to result in the closure of some establishments;

The importance of increasing the availability and responsiveness of home care and short-term care provision to support hospital discharge and achieve better long-term outcomes for people.

It was confirmed that the council aimed to share intelligence about shifting choices and the demands across the Integrated Care System. The council to work collaboratively with the market to support and grow a skilled and sustainable workforce which will ensure access to quality care. Emphasising the need to ensure that the county's care offer remained sustainable within the current financial context, the council aimed to continue to invest in supporting the development and sustainability of the care market.

Noting the impact of demographic changes on the demand for care and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was confirmed that such consequences had had a profound effect on the care market, including increasing demands on the domiciliary care market. Although too soon to assess the full impact of the pandemic, it was noted that the next few years would require careful and strategic management of the care market. The need to consider demand and supply factors and to address the ongoing issue of recruitment would be essential.

Responding to questions on how to address the challenges presented to the Gloucestershire care market, it was suggested that the committee continue to receive regular updates on the 'Adult Single Programme', including updates on the use of the three tier model, as part of the regular reporting to the committee. Acknowledging the need to respond to the government announcement anticipated later that day, it was agreed the issue would need to be brought back to a future meeting.

The report was noted.

6. ADULT SOCIAL CARE REPORT

The committee received a detailed update from the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health, (Gloucestershire County Council), on matters relating to adult social care for the county, including the response to the COVID-19 Emergency.

The report included detailed information on the county's park home project. The update was noted, with a request for a presentation on the progress of this project in the new year.

7. CHIEF FIRE OFFICER REPORT

The committee received an update on matters relating to the delivery of services within the portfolio of services of the Interim Chief Fire Officer of the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service as included in the remit of the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee. The report included updates on services and performance relating to delivery of Trading Standards, Civil Protection and Coroners Services.

The report included a detailed update on Animal Health and Welfare across Gloucestershire. Responding to concerns about the welfare of animals and livestock in the Forest of Dean and Gloucester City areas, the Interim Chief Fire Officer noted the comments and agreed to monitor the concerns.

The report was noted.

8. PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

The committee received an update from the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health, (Gloucestershire County Council), on matters relating to public health, including the response to the COVID-19 Emergency.

A Covid-19 intelligence summary update was circulated prior to the meeting and presented to the committee to provide members with the latest data and information.

The committee received updates on the following matters: -

- Mental health support/services for children and young people
- Anchor Institutions
- Changes to the vaccine of the HPV immunisation programme
- Professor Dame Carol Black's Review of Drugs: prevention, treatment & recovery
- Children's Weight Management Support
- COVID-19 Update (Step 4 of the 'roadmap')
- COVID-19 Prevention Grants 2021
- Mandating COVID-19 vaccinations in care homes

The update was noted.

9. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

Members were presented with an analysis of performance relating to the delivery of services within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee. The report was prepared by the County Council's Performance & Improvement Team covering Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

The report was noted.

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10. WORK PLAN

The committee was asked to suggest items to add to the committee work plan.

Highlighting the impact of the pandemic on the delivery of services going forward and the likely outcomes of pressures being placed on the NHS and Public Health Team over the winter months, it was suggested that the committee engage with the members of the Health Scrutiny Committee in considering the NHS Winter Plan proposals for 2021/22. An in-depth review of the Winter Plan 2021/22 to be considered at a joint committee meeting on the date of the scheduled Health Scrutiny Committee meeting on 8 March 2022. The date of the Adult Social Care and Communities Committee meeting scheduled on 15 March 2022 to be held in reserve (if required).

The following items were added to the committee work at the meeting: -

- Executive Director of Public Health (DPH) Annual Report – Jan 2022
- Children's Weight Management – March 2022

CHAIRPERSON

Meeting concluded at 12.15pm