

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERSHIPS) held in the Civic Suite 0.1A, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Thursday, 9th January 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs A Dickinson – Chairman.

Councillors T D Alban, B S Banks, R E Bellamy, S Bywater, S J Criswell, J W Davies, Ms A Diaz, D A Giles, Mrs S Smith and Mrs J Tavener.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs S R Wilson.

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor K I Prentice.

48 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2019 was approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

49 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were received.

50 NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel received and noted the current Notice of Key Executive Decisions (a copy of which has been appended in the Minute Book) which has been prepared by the Executive Leader for the period 1st January 2020 to 30th April 2020.

(At 7.02pm, during the consideration of this item, Councillor Mrs J Tavener entered the meeting.)

51 CLINICAL WASTE COLLECTION BRIEFING REPORT

With the aid of a briefing note (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel received an update on clinical waste collection by the Council. In introducing the briefing note, the Recycling and Waste Operations Manager informed the Panel that it was down to the individual pharmacy manager to sign their pharmacy up to scheme. As a result, no Tesco pharmacy has been signed up to the scheme. In addition, the Council conduct 11 free of charge collections because the recipients of the collections have met eligibility criteria.

Councillor Smith noted that take up was limited, however Mr Rogan informed the Panel that a slow take up has meant that the service has not cost the Council as much as anticipated. Members were informed that NHS England only recorded the number of prescriptions issued and not how many sharps received back. This means there is a risk that uptake might increase, meaning costs will rise.

Following a query, the Panel was informed that clinical waste gets incinerated. It was confirmed that offensive waste can go into black bin but that clinical waste must be incinerated. However, a health care professional changing dressing is commercial waste and should not be disposed of in domestic waste. The Panel suggested that additional information is issued to health managers which explain that health care professionals changing dressings is commercial waste and should be disposed of commercially.

In response to the question of what options are there to expand the pharmacy element beyond the existing 18 pharmacies, Mr Rogan stated that the Council pays pharmacies £600 per year to be part of the scheme and that there isn't any options to expand the service if the pharmacy managers refuse to join. It was noted that the 18 pharmacies within the scheme cover a good geographical spread.

A Member asked how should residents dispose of unused medicines, in response the Panel was informed that medicines can be taken back to a pharmacy and that the pharmacy will send them off to be destroyed.

It was noted that what the Panel was witnessing with the presentation of the briefing note was how a decision by a partner organisation has meant that the costs have been shunted on to the Council. The Annual Governance Statement highlighted how financial pressures on external partners is a risk for the Council. The Panel was informed that there were 10,000 sharps boxes issued to Huntingdonshire residents the previous year.

A Member asked if there was any opportunity for recycling any part of the clinical waste, however it was confirmed that there wasn't as it is classified as a biological hazard.

Some Members stated that the Council should do all it can regarding communicating the clinical waste service.

RESOLVED

that the Panel receive an update report at the meeting in July 2020.

52 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

With the aid of a report by the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme was presented to the Panel.

In considering other topics for a potential study, the Panel decided to look into environmental enforcement. The Panel resolved to establish a task and finish group comprised of the following Members: Councillors T D Alban, B S Banks, Mrs A Diaz, D A Giles and Mrs J Tavener.

Chairman