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## **Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)**

**Report of the meetings held on 3rd July and  
4th September 2012**

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### **Matters for Information**

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#### **7. UPDATE ON REDESIGN OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The Panel has received an update on the redesign of mental health services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough from representatives of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust, NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and Hunts Health. This has included a breakdown of the steps that are to be taken to address each of the points raised during the earlier consultation on the changes.

Members have discussed the travel implications of the service redesign and queried whether the transitional arrangements are operating as effectively as had been intended. There are some issues still to resolve; however, efforts are being made to work closely with service users and carers in this respect. Evidence from a GP in the Ramsey area on the experiences of his patients, suggests that half of them prefer the care in the community approach, whilst the others have been affected to some extent by the travel requirements of the new service design. Members are aware that patients' views differ according to their own personal circumstances. Patients and their visitors can now be reimbursed for their travel costs. Precise details of the scheme have been circulated to Members outside of the meeting.

The Crisis Resolution Home Treatment Team plays a significant part in the overall structure of mental health services and there are no plans to cease this service in the future. It will primarily deal with cases that do not require an immediate response. Any calls for service taken by the Advice and Referral Centre that require a 4 hour response time will be directed to the Team.

The Panel has received information relating to the Advice and Referral Centre, including the purpose of establishing the Centre, the key issues to be addressed and the current status of its establishment. The Advice and Referral Centre will be available to patients, carers and their families from January/February 2013 onwards. Referral routes will be largely as they are at present. However, the public will be able to access services through the dedicated website which has been set up specifically for this purpose.

The website contains a comprehensive directory of all Primary Care Trust services. It will be staffed with both reception staff and gateway workers. The latter will undergo a comprehensive training programme and acquire extensive knowledge and experience within the mental health field.

The Panel has discussed the availability of other community services such as Caresco, the population growth projections for Cambridgeshire together with the subsequent impact upon demand for services and the operation of the transitional arrangements.

The Panel will continue to monitor this matter. The invited representatives will be asked to attend a future meeting for this purpose.

## **8. VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING 2013/14 ONWARDS**

The Panel has been acquainted with details of the new scheme for the allocation of funding to support the voluntary sector in Huntingdonshire. The future funding model will be a grant based system which is intended to be more flexible than the previous commissioning model.

There is a proposal that financial support is tapered to encourage voluntary organisations to match fund any grant that they receive from the Council over a three year period. This will mean the budget set by the Council will stretch further. The Panel has expressed reservations over this because it prescriptive on the voluntary organisations' part. It has been suggested that the Council should explore alternative ways of supporting the voluntary sector such as assisting organisations behind the scenes in their search for match funding opportunities. The Deputy Executive Leader has concurred with these comments and indicated that it will be up to each individual organisation to determine how they wish to match-fund their activities and achieve additional value for money.

It has been stressed to Members that the success or otherwise of any applications that are received will be determined by the criteria against which applications are assessed. The application process will be open to the whole of the voluntary sector and not just those organisations that currently hold commissioning agreements with the Council. Executive Councillors T D Sanderson and J A Gray will be responsible for determining grant applications.

At the Panel's September meeting, Members have received a report from the Cabinet outlining its deliberations and decision on this matter.

## **9. JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT – AWARENESS RAISING**

The Panel has received the Phase 6 Summary Report for the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The report has played an integral part in the development of the draft

Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and identifies key information about the health and wellbeing needs of the Cambridgeshire population, together with information about local health inequalities for specific population groups. Of particular interest to Members are the findings relating to road deaths and statutory homelessness in Huntingdonshire.

**10. DRAFT CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2012-17 – CONSULTATION RESPONSE**

Dr L Robin, Director of Public Health for NHS Cambridgeshire, has attended the Panel's meeting in July to present the draft Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17, which is currently subject to consultation by NHS Cambridgeshire. It is a statutory requirement that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is in place by April 2013; however, it is intended to publish the Cambridgeshire Strategy in October 2012. The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the priorities the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and Network believe will improve the Health and Wellbeing of local people. The Strategy also contains details of how Partners will work together effectively to achieve the priorities.

Dr L Robin has delivered a presentation on the background to the work and membership of the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and Network. She has drawn Members' attention to the Strategy's vision and principles and mention has also been made of the tools utilised to assist with the development of the Strategy, which include the Cambridgeshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, existing local strategies and a stakeholder event. The stakeholder event had been held to identify the current priorities of local partnerships and organisations together with the findings of a recently completed Community Impact Assessment.

The Panel has received a detailed explanation of each of the proposed priorities, which are as follows:-

- ◆ ensure a positive start to life for children;
- ◆ support older people to be safe, independent and well;
- ◆ encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours in all actions and activities whilst respecting people's personal choices;
- ◆ create a safe environment and help to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health; and
- ◆ create a sustainable environment in which communities can flourish.

Once the Strategy is ready for publication, work will commence on developing an action plan for the delivery of the agreed outcomes.

In discussing the proposals, comment has been made on the need for enhanced levels of community involvement on health and wellbeing matters, particularly in light of the forthcoming transfer of public health services to County Councils. It has further been suggested that local

GP surgeries and health providers should more actively engage with their local communities.

With regard to it's involvement in infrastructure planning for large scale housing developments, it has been reported that NHS Cambridgeshire contributes to the planning process in two ways: through its own public health planning arrangements and through a nominated estates lead at NHS Cambridgeshire. It has been confirmed that during the planning phase consideration is always given to the health facilities available within neighbouring communities and that a significant increase in the population would be needed to justify the establishment of a new GP practice.

During discussion on the methods of communication that NHS Cambridgeshire employs to generate awareness of the consultation, Members have noted that details of it are circulated to all Town and Parish Councils, local GP surgeries and libraries. Further discussion on the availability of resources to deliver against the Strategy's priorities, has established that the Health and Wellbeing Board has been mindful of the financial constraints placed upon Partner organisations and the Strategy is not intended to need additional resources. The Strategy will be refreshed at some point during its life.

As the consultation period lasted until 17th September 2012, Councillors S J Criswell, M Oliver and J Pethard, together with Mr R Coxhead, have been appointed onto a Working Group to formulate the Panel's response to the Strategy for consideration at the Panel's September meeting.

The Panel has endorsed the Working Group's response, which has been supported by the Cabinet. It includes comments made by Officers from Housing Services and Environmental and Community Health Services.

**11. NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUMS –  
PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEES IN  
HUNTINGDONSHIRE – CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

The outcome of a consultation on the proposed establishment of Local Joint Committees in Huntingdonshire has been reported to the Panel. The Working Group appointed to undertake the review has responded to each of the points made in the consultation responses received.

Matters discussed by the Panel include how communities' views would be represented at meetings, the likely administrative and Officer costs associated with the proposals and a suggestion that a review of the Local Joint Committees is undertaken after 12 months.

A meeting between the District and County Councils has been held on 6th July 2012 to discuss the proposals in advance of its consideration by the Cabinet in July. The Cabinet subsequently has agreed that a pilot scheme should be trialled in the Norman Cross

County Division for a twelve month period. The Executive Deputy Leader has also been tasked with reviewing urgently the format of the existing Neighbourhood Forums. Furthermore, the Panel has been requested to undertake a review of the pilot scheme.

## **12. HOUSING BENEFIT CHANGES AND THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON HUNTINGDONSHIRE**

The Panel has continued to monitor the effect of Government changes to the Housing Benefits system arising from the Welfare Reform Act. Members have suggested that the Council should make clear that the changes are Government led and that they will not benefit the Council.

There appears to be general acceptance amongst claimants that they will experience a reduction in their Housing Benefit. There has been little contact from claimants on the changes to date. Customers falling into arrears as a result of the reforms are encouraged to contact the Council immediately for assistance and efforts continue to be made to contact those who are now reaching the end of their transitional protection arrangements.

## **13. REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S LETTINGS POLICY**

The Panel has been presented with an opportunity to comment on the Council's draft Lettings Policy, which is undergoing consultation with Members, current housing register applicants and a wide range of stakeholder organisations. The review of the Policy has been prompted by the Localism Act and Welfare Reform Act. All partners within the sub-regional Home-Link Choice Based Lettings scheme are similarly consulting on their own Lettings Policies. It has been necessary to review these policies together to ensure that a consistent approach is adopted across the sub-region.

Members' attention has been drawn to the changes introduced by the Localism Act and welfare reforms together with proposed revisions to the Policy. It will be a challenge to prioritise between households with similar levels of need. There will be further difficulties if additional categories are introduced.

The most significant proposal is that relating to occupancy levels. Households with spare bedrooms will be regarded as under-occupying their homes. However, consideration will be given to the age and sex of children in the household. Same sex children will be expected to share bedrooms. Work has commenced in conjunction with housing providers to identify affected households and to put in place an incentive scheme to assist with moving costs.

The Panel has discussed the impact that the proposals will have upon homelessness, environmental health regulations relating to the sharing of rooms and the methods utilised to generate awareness of the consultation.

At the request of Members, it has been agreed that an Executive Summary will be incorporated within the Lettings Policy document.

**14. ANNUAL REPORT ON ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTED BY GRANTS THROUGH SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS 2011-12**

A report on the performance of voluntary organisations in receipt of funding from the Council through service level agreements has been received and noted by the Panel. All organisations that have a service level agreement with the Council are monitored against a set of agreed performance indicators and other organisational criteria on a quarterly basis. These agreements are due to end in March 2013.

Members' attention has been drawn to the five indicators where the performance targets set by the Council have not been achieved in the previous year and the reasons for the performance reported. The Panel has expressed their overall satisfaction with the performance of the voluntary organisations referred to in the report.

Evidence of need and demand is a matter that will be addressed next year, when the Council transfers from the present commissioning model to a grants based system. Organisations that apply for grant funding to the Council will be asked to demonstrate how their services are able to meet demand. However, Members are mindful of the need to keep to a minimum the demands placed on voluntary organisations by the Council.

**15. DOMESTIC ABUSE JOINT MEMBER LED REVIEW: FINAL REPORT**

The findings of a joint Member-led review on domestic abuse by Cambridgeshire County Council and Huntingdonshire and Fenland District Councils have been reported to the Panel. Attention has been drawn to various statistics which have been collated as evidence to assist with the study. Members have been encouraged to note that the County Council's Cabinet has fully or partially accepted all the recommendations, with the exception of one which relates to the stricter regulation of incidents categorised as "Level 3" by appropriately trained staff. This issue is currently under review by the Lead Member, Councillor Ms S Hoy.

One of the main outcomes of the investigation is that the County Council now collects data on domestic abuse in a consistent way. This data can be used to influence its budget setting process.

The Panel has discussed the under-reporting of domestic abuse incidents and expressed the view that communication in this respect should be improved. It has also been acknowledged that across Cambridgeshire, authorities and partner agencies have in place different systems and data collection practices. It is felt that they should be harmonised to facilitate understanding of this matter and joint working. Some progress has however been made to improve these systems.

The report will be considered at the next meeting of the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership. The Partnership's comments will be submitted to a future Panel meeting.

**16. LEADERSHIP DIRECTION**

The Panel has considered the content of the Council's Leadership Direction which has been prepared by the Executive and Deputy Executive Leader to set out their intended direction of travel and key milestones for the Council. The Corporate Plan Working Group is currently working with Officers to produce the Council Delivery Plan, which will sit beneath the Leadership Direction. A performance monitoring reporting system has yet to be developed but it is intended that the Overview and Scrutiny Panels will play a part in monitoring the Council's performance.

The Panel has discussed the outcome of the recent Employee Opinion Survey and are concerned at some of the findings. Councillors S J Criswell and R J West have undertaken to raise these matters at the next Corporate Plan Working Group meeting.

**17. CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULTS, WELLBEING AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

At each of its meetings a brief update has been delivered by Councillor R J West on matters currently being considered by the Cambridgeshire Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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**Other Matters of Interest**

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**18. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (SOCIAL WELL-BEING) – PROGRESS**

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies at each of its meetings. Councillors S J Criswell and R J West have been appointed to assist Mr R Coxhead with the One Leisure (Social Value) Sub-Group study. Brief updates have been received on recent meetings of this Working Group and of the Equality Working Group.

**19. WORK PLAN STUDIES**

The Panel has received details of studies being undertaken by the other Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

**20. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000: FORWARD PLAN**

The Panel has been acquainted with the current Forward Plan of Key Decisions at each of its meetings. The item entitled "Gambling Act 2005 – Revised Statement of Principles" has been circulated electronically to Members for information purposes. Reports on the

Town and Parish Council Charter and the Housing Strategy – to include Tenancy Strategy will be presented to the Panel in October 2012.

**21. SCRUTINY**

The Panel has considered the latest editions of the Decision Digest and discussed matters contained therein.

S J Criswell  
Chairman