
Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being)

Report of the meetings held on 6th October, 3rd November and 1st December 2015.

Matters for Information

18. VOLUNTARY FUNDING UPDATE PRESENTATIONS

Six voluntary and community sector organisations in receipt of three year funding awards (Strategic Grants) from the Council have each given presentations to the Panel and have answered questions arising from Members.

The Head of Community has provided the Panel with a brief introduction to the process for awarding Strategic Grants, concentrating on the following key points:

- The current Strategic Grants have been allocated for a three year period from 1st April 2013 to 30th March 2016;
- The Council's budget for voluntary and community sector funding should be considered in line with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy to ensure the sector is not disproportionately affected;
- The presentations are intended to inform Members about what each of the organisations have delivered, how they consider they have assisted the District Council in addressing its corporate objectives and what they consider their future challenges to be;
- Further reports will be presented to the Panel in advance of the Council setting its budget for 2016/17 in February 2016; and
- An application process for future grant funding will be opened once the budget available for this has been confirmed for 2016/17.

The Head of Community has re-iterated that the budget available for future voluntary and community sector grant funding will not be finalised until February 2016. Members have stated that they would expect an application process for this but have expressed some concern about timescales for those organisations with funding arrangements due to finish in March 2016. The Head of Community will bring a further report to an upcoming meeting of the Panel.

19. HINCHINGBROOKE HEALTH CAMPUS PRESENTATION

The Panel has received a presentation from Mark Cammies, Estates and Facilities Director, Trust Board, Hinchingsbrooke Healthcare NHS

Trust on the Hinchingsbrooke Health Campus Development Plans. Mr Cammies has informed the Panel that the Trust has invested £20m in the site since 2012. The following development plans have been proposed:

- the building of staff residencies and medical student accommodation;
- the creation of a dementia and elderly care village;
- a health and well-being facility;
- private patient unit;
- support function building; and
- a new GP Surgery.

In addition to the proposed developments, the Trust is to rationalise the size of the acute hospital element in order to have the additional care facilities.

In response to questions submitted by Members regarding the size of the acute hospital Mr Cammies has informed the Panel that there is no agreement on what acute services could be impacted although he has confirmed bed numbers would be reduced. It was hoped that by focussing on specific acute services the hospital will be in a form that is more sustainable.

The Panel has asked why the number of acute beds would be reduced when Huntingdonshire is a growing District and the population is ageing. Mr Cammies has informed Members that the Treatment Centre is currently running at 65% capacity so there is room for efficiencies. In regards to elderly patients, the Trust and the patients themselves do not want elderly people in acute beds where possible, but rather a different type of bed more suited to their clinical and social needs.

Mr Cammies has informed the Panel that the idea for the location of a GP surgery at Hinchingsbrooke was in response to a suggestion from GPs.

The Panel has requested that Mr Cammies provide regular updates to the Panel on progress.

20. SPORT AND ACTIVE LIFESTYLES ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15

The Panel has received the Sport and Active Lifestyles (SALT) Annual Report 2014/15. Members have been informed that in addition to 10 paid members of staff, SALT uses 50 part time volunteers to help deliver the service. The cost of SALT is £1.50 per head of population per annum. The Panel has been advised that 2014/15 was the best year in terms of attendance and the service continues to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction.

In response to Members' concerns over the changing financial circumstances at the County Council and the potential withdrawal of funding Members have been advised that funding has not been

withdrawn at the time of the meeting. As a result, SALT will be able to offer a free Exercise Referral service for the ensuing year, however if funding is withdrawn the service will probably revert to a chargeable service.

The Panel have been informed that SALT will raise its profile in the wider community by launching a communications campaign. The introduction of clothing and merchandise for some activities will have the additional benefit of increasing income and advertising of the service.

21. AFFORDABLE HOUSING WORKING GROUP REPORT

The Panel has received the Affordable Housing Work Group Report. Members have been informed that the Working Group has covered everything within their remit and has made the following recommendations:

- The Council should actively promote the provision of affordable housing on exception sites to Town and Parish Councils;
- Where a Parish Council does not support an exceptions site, the Council should continue to fulfil its duty to meet identified affordable housing need;
- A systematic assessment should be carried out of all land to identify potential sites for affordable housing to then be matched to needs (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment); and
- The threshold for developments on which affordable housing can be sought should be lowered from 15 to 10 dwellings.

Members have identified that the affordable housing threshold proposed by the Working Group appears to be different to Government policy. The reference to Government policy states that on-site affordable housing can be sought on developments over 10 homes meaning on developments sized 11 homes and above as opposed to the Working Group's suggestion of developments sized 10 homes and above.

22. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL STRUCTURE

In conjunction with the other two Overview and Scrutiny Panels, a proposed new Overview and Scrutiny Panel Structure has been presented to the Panel. At the Scrutiny Away Day in February 2015, the structure of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels has been reviewed and alternative arrangements have been explored. The Panel has endorsed Option 2 which includes the following:

- Replace the 'Social Well-Being' Panel with a scrutiny panel focussing on 'Communities and Customers';
- Replace the 'Economic Well-Being' Panel with a scrutiny panel focussing on 'Finance and Performance'; and
- Replace the 'Environmental Well-Being' Panel with a scrutiny panel focussing on 'Economy and Growth'.

The Panel has been informed that the preferred option is considered to have the clearest links to the Corporate Plan's strategic priorities and objectives. It is also expected that the preferred option will result in a more balanced workload for the Panels with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman meeting regularly to review the Agenda Plan.

Members have been informed that the Chairmen of the Panels are keen to see greater use of the Task and Finish Groups. Two new Task and Finish Groups have been proposed, with the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Social Well-Being) taking the lead with both Groups. The first will investigate the impact of Cambridgeshire County Council Budget Proposals upon services in Huntingdonshire and the second group will investigate Registered Social Providers and the challenges faced by them in the future.

In response to a query regarding the assessing of skills and strengths of each Member to ensure that they will be on the correct panel and to maximise their skills the Managing Director has indicated that a skills audit will be useful to be carried out.

The Panel has appointed Councillors D Brown, S Criswell, M Francis, T Hayward and P Kadewere to the Impact of Cambridgeshire County Council Budget Proposals upon Services in Huntingdonshire Task and Finish Group. The Panel has appointed Councillors D Brown, R Fuller, T Hayward, P Kadewere, M C Oliver and Mrs D C Reynolds to the Registered Social Providers Task and Finish Group.

23. CAMBRIDGESHIRE HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY (CHIA) SHARED SERVICE REVIEW AND DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT BUDGET

The Panel has received a report on the Cambridgeshire Home Improvement Agency (CHIA) Shared Service Review and the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). Members have been informed that:

- the CHIA delivered on 437 enquires in the District for the year 2014/15;
- the End of Year 3 (2014/15) figures show that the shared service delivered a surplus of £18k;
- customer satisfaction in the District at 89% is lower than both Cambridge City (97%) and South Cambridgeshire (100%);
- the average time taken to complete works following a referral within the District is 26.3 weeks on cases costing below £10k and 69.6 weeks on cases costing above £10k. Both are above their respective key performance targets of 26 weeks (below £10k) and 45 weeks (above £10k); and
- the Partnership Agreement runs out in March 2016 and will require renewing for a further two year period.

In response to a query regarding the timescales Members have been informed that the targets include the whole progress from assessment to sourcing quotes to carrying out the work. For low level work such

as the installation of a rail, CHIA provides a handyman service so that the work can be carried out swiftly.

The Panel have been informed that the District has more DFGs and the reasons for this are that the size of population of the District, especially the elderly population, is larger than Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire and therefore there is more demand for DFGs.

The Panel identified that there is an opportunity with the Better Care Fund to alleviate pressure upon Social Care budgets however noted that the Fund can be difficult to access for social care and preventative treatments.

Following a query regarding the 11% of customers dissatisfied Members have been informed that most of those customers cite workmanship issues as the reason they are dissatisfied.

24. HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL UPDATE 2014/15

The Panel has received the Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership (HCSP) Annual Update 2014/15. Members have been informed that the Council has reduced its financial input into the Partnership as a result of the Chairmanship transferring over to the Police Constabulary.

The Panel have been informed that the HCSP received £24,225 from the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner for the year 2014/15. The Partnership has spent the funding on projects linked to their priority 'Victims and Vulnerabilities'.

When discussing the crime statistics Members noted that crime in the District has fallen in line with national trends however there has been an increase in violent crime within the District. In addition the Panel have been advised that the ward of Huntingdon North has seen the highest repeat victimisation.

In response to a query regarding the increase of weapons and sexual offences and the nationalities of the perpetrators the Panel have been advised that there is currently no statistics to suggest that the increase in those offences is as a result of an increase in immigration.

Members have been informed that the Breakfast Club for EU residents living in Huntingdon North Ward which has received HCSP funding is no longer running as a result of a lack of volunteers. The Panel expressed concern that the focus on EU residents could have put off non-EU residents from attending the club.

Following a query regarding the lack of Police response to Pub Watch's concerns in St Ives the Panel has discussed the use of a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) in the town however Members preferred the enforcement of the existing legislation not the creation of new legislation.

The Panel has agreed that they would like to invite Chief Inspector Laura Hunt to a future Panel meeting in order to discuss the crime statistics in more depth and the working relationship the Council has with the Police Constabulary.

Other Matters of Interest

25. NOTICE OF KEY EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Panel has been acquainted with the contents of the Notice of Key Executive Decisions which has been prepared by the Executive Leader.

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

The Panel has reviewed its programme of studies at each of its meetings. Members have asked to receive from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group statistics on the number of young men aged 16 to 23 who have been receiving treatment for a mental health issue.

27. WORKPLAN STUDIES

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

28. SCRUTINY

The Panel has considered the latest edition of the Decision Digest and discussed matters contained therein. Members have noted that the Decision Digest has appeared for the final time at the meeting in November 2015. The Decision Digest will be circulated electronically and discussed under the Overview and Scrutiny Progress Agenda Item at future Panel meetings.

S J Criswell
Chairman