

Decisions of the Adults and Safeguarding Committee

6 June 2022

Members Present:-

Councillor Paul Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Marianne Haylett (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Ernest Ambe	Councillor Liron Velleman
Councillor Andrea Bilbow	Councillor Lucy Wakeley
Councillor Anne Clarke	Councillor Sarah Wardle

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Dean Cohen	Councillor Michael Mire
Councillor Edith David	

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2022 be agreed as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillor Dean Cohen who was substituted by Councillor Alison Cornelius.

Apologies were received from Councillor Edith David who was substituted by Councillor Khalick.

Apologies were received from Councillor Mire who was substituted by Councillor Jajeh.

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

Councillor Paul Edwards declared an interest by virtue of being on the Barnet Group Board in relation to item 9 of the agenda.

Councillor Sara Wardle declared an interest by virtue of being on the Barnet Group Board in relation to item 9 of the agenda.

Councillor Alison Cornelius declared an interest by virtue of being a Trustee of the Eleanor Palmer Trust in relation to item 7 of the agenda.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

6. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

None.

Guests from the Barnet Carers Centre:

The Chair introduced two guests who had been invited to the Committee from the Barnet Carers Centre – The Chief Executive, Mike Bridge and Poppy Halksworth.

Mike Bridge explained that most carers organisations were working to put carers on the map with around 40,000 carers in Barnet at any one time. The Barnet Carers Centre work with around 3,500 of those carers. Mr Bridge explained that they were a charitable organisation that had been in the Borough for over 30 years, supporting informal carers living in, or looking after someone living in the Borough, to provide them with support.

Poppy Halksworth explained that she was a young carer who had now moved onto work for Barnet Carers centre, mentoring young carers. She advised that school workshops were frequently run, and that they worked closely with schools to help identify young carers. Poppy outlined activities and opportunities that were available to young carers throughout the school holidays, giving them a chance to have fun and make new friends who could relate to their experiences.

Mr Bridge explained that their job was to identify carers, assess them, support them, and then review their support. He said that identification was through carers week, outreach projects working with other organisations including Barnet Mencap, Age Uk, Dementia Club Uk, and Alzheimer's society. The centre often targeted support within the community, including a project in Grahame Park library every 2 weeks. Mr Bridge explained that support included practical solutions, advise on benefits available, grants, tuition, personal development, and training. He also advised that support had been made available throughout the pandemic, including financial and wellbeing support. He said that the pandemic had led to hybrid options for support being made available and that these were set to continue.

Mr Bridge highlighted that the pandemic had led to an increased demand on services, as the isolation and difficulties experienced over the last couple of years had left some people not in a good place mentally or financially. Members were advised that they could complete a Councillor referral form for a carer to assist them in getting the help and support they required.

Mr Bridge outlined one of the biggest challenges was recruitment and retention of staff. He said that nationally staff shortages were around 13.5%. However, he explained the majority of their work was focused on supporting unpaid family carers in the borough.

7. DELIVERING THE ADMINISTRATION'S MANIFESTO COMMITMENTS

The Chair introduced the report which set out the proposed approach to bring forward the new Labour Administration's priorities in the areas of adult social care, mental health and healthy lives which fall within the remit of the Adults and Safeguarding Committee.

During the discussion on the report a Member asked for further detail on how the priorities set out within the report had been decided upon and how they would be met. The Chair explained that the priorities would involve building on the work that had already been commenced by officers, rather than starting from a blank canvas. One of the key priorities was to address the issue around keeping people in their own homes and another was to attract more people into the social care sector. Work would be focused on looking into providing qualifications as recognition for the skills required for social work jobs and to empower people to feel they are working in a qualified role. The Chair explained that a further priority was around developing a mental health strategy, the pandemic had highlighted the need for mental health support to be prioritised and to work towards making Barnet a more dementia friendly borough. The chair explained that the administration would be looking to engage more with residents to help build on the priorities, as well as establishing steering groups to investigate some of the issues. Officers would be asked to provide more detailed information at future committee meetings. The Executive Director for Adults and Health explained that steering groups were already established but these would be built upon to enable further co-production and consultation to take place. These groups would meet both virtually and face to face a minimum of once a month.

A member enquired about the dedicated project manager being employed. The Executive Director for Adults and Health explained that this would be a short-term paid role for a minimum of 6 months, it was felt that due to the extensive and wide-ranging work required a dedicated person was required. A report on the work would be brought back in September, with a final strategy proposed to be provided in November.

A member enquired about the cost pressure that would be associated with co-producing the strategies. The Chair advised that the administration would be working within the budget to deliver the proposals.

Following discussion, the Chair moved to vote on the recommendations within the report. All 3 recommendations were voted on at the same time, the votes were recorded as follows

For:7

Against: 0

Abstain: 4

RESOLVED that:

- 1) The Adults and Safeguarding Committee agreed the approach set out in the report and to bringing forward proposals to meet the manifesto commitments.**
- 2) The Adults and Safeguarding Committee agreed to the high-level plan for the development of the new engagement strategy and the charter, subsequent to the Executive Director of Adults and Health will implement the plan in consultation with the committee Chair.**
- 3) The Adults and Safeguarding Committed noted the Executive Director of Adults and Health will develop proposals for the delivery of the administrations' other adult social care commitments which will be presented to future Committee meetings.**

8. SOCIAL CARE REFORM IMPLEMENTATION

The Chair introduced the report which outlined the new adult social care responsibilities that would need to be implemented by all Councils over the next 12 to 18 months, because of the new Health and Care Act and the government's national plan for adult social care reform. The report outlined the next steps and planned implementation activity.

The Executive Director of Adults and Health presented the implications and steps that the Council would need to take in-line with the Health and Care Act which became law at the end of April 2022. The Executive Director Adults and Health explained the key changes which included a new CQC led assurance framework for Local Authorities, Cap on Care costs and Fair costs of care. The Executive Director Adults and Health explained there was still a lot of uncertainty, including what kind of demand there would be from residents, with the gap on care currently unknown. Also, the impact of staff resources for sufficient workforces to carry out additional assessments, reviews, case management and monitoring progress towards the gap. In addition, there would be increased costs in terms of system upgrades.

The Executive Director of Adults and Health advised Members that preparations were already in place based on what was known, including the development of an implementation plan and technology assessments.

The Chair advised that a further report would be reported to the September meeting.

Following discussion, the Committee unanimously noted the report.

RESOLVED that the Adults and Safeguarding Committee note the changes to social care and the requirements for the council arising from the Health and Care Act and national plan for social care reform.

9. QUARTER 4 (Q4) 2021/22 DELIVERY PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Chair introduced the Quarter 4 2021/22 delivery plan performance report which outlined the progress to date on performance and risk priorities.

The Committee unanimously noted the report.

RESOLVED that the Committee reviewed the performance, budget and risk information for Q4 2021/22 and made any referrals to Policy and Resources Committee in accordance with the terms of reference of the Committee, as it decides appropriate.

10. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously noted the work programme.

11. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

None.

The meeting finished at 20.30