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Health and Care Committee – 11 September 2020

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT TEAMS LIVE ON FRIDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER 2020

PRESENT

County Councillors G I S Williams (Chair), J Charlton, S M Hayes, A Jenner, S McNicholas, G Morgan, L Rijnenberg, K M Roberts-Jones, D Rowlands, A Williams and J M Williams

Cabinet Portfolio Holders In Attendance: County Councillors R Powell and MC Alexander

Officers: Alison Bulman, Corporate Director, Childrens and Adults and Sally Beech, Strategic Commissioning Manager

1.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors D E Davies and R Williams

2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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There were no declarations of interest.

3.	DISCLOSURE OF PARTY WHIPS
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There were no disclosures of party whips.

4.	MINUTES
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Documents:

- Minutes of the last meeting held on 22 July 2020

Discussion:

- The review of the CMHT had been held in confidential session but was now available to the public
- The Committee had been advised that there were no improvement notices. However, the Corporate Director had corrected this as there was an immediate improvement notice relating to WCCIS.
- The Committee had been advised that the cost reduction tracking system was being updated – Members asked for the information to be provided. The Corporate Director confirmed that of £4.07M target, £3.8M was projected to be delivered. However, budget pressures remain and work is ongoing. Transformation projects have been affected by the pandemic but the plans in place were robust.
- The Choice Policy had been discussed and Members had raised queries regarding the sustainability of the market. Whilst these topics were unrelated, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that conversations were ongoing.

Business plans and projections had been disrupted due to the pandemic, but the service was assisting providers wherever possible.

Outcomes:

- **The amendment to the Minutes was noted**
- **Cost reductions information would be provided to the Working Groups**

5. DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT

Documents:

- Director of Social Services Annual Report 2019/20

Discussion:

- Production of the report had been a challenge whilst maintaining vital services during the pandemic
- Some formatting and editing was still required
- The report was later than usual but there had been a relaxation of requirements
- The report shows the commitment to developing a sustainable, quality social services offer for current times and for the future
- The report highlights the challenges that the service faces
- The last year has seen the service continue to deliver and build upon improvements
- A permanent management team is now in place and all are committed to driving the service forward
- The Corporate Director has welcomed the constructive challenge and support from Cabinet, Members and the Improvement Board
- Covid 19 has caused significant disruption with the service invoking Business Continuity on 16 March 2020 – the Corporate Director paid tribute to managers and staff for their support over the period
- The Chair noted that the Improvement and Assurance Board was coming to an end and a new structure was being put in place. A number of Corporate Improvement Boards had been set up – the Social Services Improvement Board has already met and includes an independent member who had previously sat on the Improvement and Assurance Board.
- The Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services informed the Committee that a report had been prepared. The pandemic had provided an opportunity to work creatively but a qualitative perspective was also in place.
- The Corporate Director acknowledged that the performance data was now 6 months old, but the service continued to improve, maintain and sustain during the period
- It was noted that the number of agency workers had reduced to 29 from 43 in Children’s Services. Adult Services had less than 10 agency workers which was typical of business as usual. A recruitment drive had been undertaken and some agency staff had been recruited to permanent posts. New social workers speak positively of their experience within the service.

- It was suggested that the report should inform the scrutiny work programme for the coming year
- Both the Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director recognised the need for scrutiny to hold them to account and to ensure constructive challenge continued once the Improvement and Assurance Board ceases to ensure that improvement continues
- A query regarding the cost of rebranding was raised – this was important for ownership. Whilst there had been a cost there had been benefits which outstripped those costs.
- A significant number of organisations work with the service. They have differing roles and duties but are coming together to align services. Honest discussions continue in finding ways to move forward and partnerships are improving continually.
- The Committee were aware that a Performance and Evaluation Inspection across Children's and Adults' Services was imminent. The Corporate Director was looking forward to showcasing the work of the service. An Improvement Conference was to be held on 9 October and a self-assessment had been completed
- An outcome letter would be provided in due course which would be shared with Committee. During the process, the Corporate Director would meet with the Inspectors at the end of every day for immediate feedback

Outcome:

- **The Director of Social Services Annual Report for 2019/20 was noted**

6. CARERS RESPITE POLICY

Documents:

- Report of the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services

Discussion:

- Carers have been consulted alongside Credu during to compilation of the report
- The emphasis will be on what individuals want – individual families will be at the heart of any discussions
- This is the right philosophy and the way forward and may also have a positive impact on budgets
- It was suggested that the document was not really a policy although its contents were welcome. There was scope for greater innovation in developing a policy in due course.
- The document was clearly aimed at those taking up the service and it was suggested that the format could be improved to resemble those included in the Health and Care Strategy and be more visual and user friendly
- The Corporate Director acknowledged that the document identifies current provision but did not reflect future aspirations
- The service is committed to delivering personalised care
- This policy is distinct from carer's respite breaks
- Young carers had also been represented in discussions. Schools have been included to ensure no-one slips through the net. Carers of all ages are entitled to an assessment.

- It was noted that the service would be relying heavily on Credu to implement the policy
- A future item for scrutiny could be how the service consults with people
- Credu provides commissioned services and regular contract management meetings are held. More creative solutions may not be subject to formal contract management but would have formal reviews and feedback etc.
- Two projects have arisen from carer forums – respite and raising awareness. ICF funding had supported these two projects which would be subject to evaluation by Business Intelligence. Quarterly meetings are held with other local authorities to share learning and good practice.
- Although day centres have been closed due to the pandemic, regular contact is being maintained to ensure clients, wellbeing. Alternative provision is in place and clients are currently being reassessed.
- There has been an increase of 62 Direct Payments

Outcomes:

- **The policy was noted**

7.	ACCESS TO INFORMATION
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RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 3 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

8.	VALUING CARE (RESIDENTIAL)
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Documents:

- Report of the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services

Discussion:

- Approval to review fees was sought
- A fair cost exercise had been undertaken in 2017/18 and Cabinet had agreed in March 2018 that the exercise to review the model and fee rate should be undertaken every three years
- The outcome of the review will be reported to scrutiny and Cabinet

Outcomes:

- **It is recommended that the review be undertaken**

County Councillor G I S Williams (Chair)