

Adult Social Services Review Panel

Meeting of held on Wednesday, 6 November 2019 at 5.30 pm in F10, Town Hall, Katharine Street, Croydon CR0 1NX

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Jane Avis (Chair);
;
Councillors Margaret Bird, Janet Campbell and Yvette Hopley

Also Present: Guy Van Dichele (Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults)
Annette McPartland (Director of Operations Adult Social Care)
Nick Sherlock (The Head of Adult Safeguarding and Quality Assurance)
Sean Rafferty (Category Manager)

PART A

31/19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2019 were discussed by the Panel.

Councillor Hopley felt the minutes did not accurately reflect the meeting and incorporate all of the points raised. Councillor Hopley secondly raised that materials promised to be attached to the minutes were absent.

The Chair informed Councillor Hopley that the proposed amended paragraph shared with the Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults and the Director of Operations could not be included in the minutes because the wording was not reflective of events and requested a meeting after the Panel be arranged to agree a revised paragraph. It was stated that the proposed wording lacked distinction between the aspects of Quality Care Commission (CQC) and London Care which should be amended to clearly establish the timeline of events.

The Panel agreed that the amended minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 June 2019 would be considered at the next meeting of the Panel.

32/19 Disclosure of Interests

Councillors Hopley and Campbell declared they worked with the Wellbeing Centre at the Whitgift Centre. Councillor Hopley worked with the Centre by helping support the set-up by providing advice as the Vice-Chair of the South East Cancer Help Centre. Councillor Campbell worked with the Centre by

helping open the Centre as part of the steering group of the BME Forum and would continue to support the Centre.

33/19 Urgent Business (if any)

There were no items of urgent business.

34/19 Extra care Housing (Special Sheltered Housing)

The Director of Operations Adult Social Care introduced the report and presentation which provided an update on the Extra care housing offer within Croydon including the progress and the future plans for insourcing the transformation programme. The moved in-house provision would commence on 4 January 2020 and council staff were already introducing and familiarising themselves with the contracted sites and staff. Tenant liaison had occurred which included communications with all tenants, evening tenant meetings and tenant reviews and full social worker allocation to residents.

In response to a Panel Member asking where service users were predominantly referred from and whether there were concerns with oversubscription, the Director of Operations Adult Social Care stated that housing services was the main pathway to care services and oversubscription did exist on particular sites.

In reference to housing issues that required improvement, a Panel Member raised that building repair work should be the council's responsibility and asked whether Mears or London Care had previously flagged the repair work needed. The Director of Operations Adult Social Care replied that the work was supported by volunteers and results were achieved by cross department efforts, the listed contractors had reported repair tasks which were now being delivered.

In response to the Chair stating that London Care had experienced a situation where kitchens were completely out of use due to regulation restrictions, the Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults said that those issues related to regulations surrounding standards of commercial vs communal kitchen spaces and they intended to get areas back in to use and to install kitchenettes into every communal area.

A Panel Member described that during end of life care there was a maximum of four visits per day for patients, which did not include night visits. This meant that patient care requirements would exceed this offer, becoming an unviable option, and therefore the patient's end of life care would be better placed in a hospice.

The Director of Operations Adult Social Care stated the improvements would initially look to all sites and then would focus on the needs of individual users. They were working with council employees and looking to engage with

London Care employees which would include transfer care and Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) arrangements. Approximately 150 employees would be eligible for TUPE however not all London Care employees may choose to transfer to the council, but high numbers were expected to opt in due to the favourable staff benefits offered by the council.

In response to a Panel Member asking whether meals would be cooked on-site in the new scheme, the Director of Operations Adult Social Care stated that currently meals were delivered to sites however commissioners were working with providers and analysing costs for on-site preparation to begin in the New Year.

In response to a Panel Member asking if there would be an exit charge for the council from the Care UK contract, the Director of Operations Adult Social Care stated there was no exit charge and Care UK profits were generated from residential care.

The Director of Operations Adult Social Care informed the Panel that a rolling cycle of pest control biannually was now in place in blocks and empty apartments were being treated before the homing of any new tenant. There were still some areas of concern for problem cases where enforcement, which had to be aided by social workers, was necessary to clear apartments due to breach of tenant contracts. There was a meeting planned with Housing to align the pest control strategy. In response to a Panel Member, the Director of Operations Adult Social Care confirmed that the pest problem was not related to the cleanliness of areas and in extreme cases hazmat suits were required.

A Panel Member asked what was available to tenants in terms of social prescribing including the status and levels of external support. The Director of Operations Adult Social Care replied that there were activities planned for all care units during December 2019, including school children visits, and when services came in-house the number of activities provided would be increased, such as hosting coffee mornings which would enable tenants to socialise. The Chair suggested that councillors should be encouraged to take part in the drive to support tenants in the homes.

Councillor Avis nominated Councillor Campbell to be appointed as Vice-Chair for the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year. This was seconded by Councillor Hopley.

Councillor Jane Avis left the meeting at 6.29pm

Councillor Janet Campbell was thereafter the acting chair for the meeting.the acting chair for the meeting.

The Category Manager introduced the report and presentation which provided an update on the council's progress towards extending Direct Payments (DP) to more residents which supported the council's priority to enable Croydon people to live long, healthy, happy and independent lives. They noted that Croydon was behind to implement Direct Payments (DP) comparatively to other authorities.

The Category Manager explained that many people in Croydon wanted a PA, however they were low in number and Personal Assistant (PA) training was difficult to access. Policy and guidance for DP was dated, the last update being in 2010, and processes had changed which meant the system was in need for refreshing and modernising. The Panel noted that 56% of parents of children with a disability used DP therefore it was necessary to try and replicate this success for services to help adults live at home.

The council aimed to be in a position where they managed a lower number of adults by encouraging greater flexibility and choice to users enabling them to find care and support locally using the new directory. There would also be the Contract Personal Assistant Support Service which supported users to recruit and to employ PAs, therefore retaining their service. DP moving forward aimed to reduce red tape and would introduce an online system which would mean people could manage their own direct payments online paperlessly, without the need to retain receipts. This agency system had been tried and tested in other local authorities and was delivered by Independent Lives, a user led charity, who had won awards for their results. The agency commission was the council in partnership with the Croydon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which meant that there was one market for PAs, removing competition and promoting integrated care.

The strategies would be implemented through a community led approach where residents would be supported in their individual choices by social workers working on a case-by-case basis. DP in the past had been working alongside the central service and the new scheme would enable integration of the whole process enabling continued relationships through each stage, particularly with social workers.

In response to a Panel Member asking where the Croydon Personal Assistant Support Service would operate from, the Category Manager stated that a face-to-face service could be offered homebased or in the Community Support Office, Cherry Hub. The service would initially use Crawley based staff, however throughout the transition period staff would be recruited from Croydon and would eventually lead to the employment, training and accredited status of 200 Croydon residents.

The Category Manager described the consultation for DP which was in effect widely through meetings and surveys from the guidance produced and respondents predominantly focussed opinions on the implementation of policies. Themes raised from the consultation would be incorporated in to the policy guidance and developing the implementation plan.

The online payment system was due to be introduced which would be connected to the directory and users were able to carry out cashless transactions using the Virtual Wallet. In response to Members asking how pre-paid cards would be integrated in to the system and whether users would be able to monitor their own balance, the Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults stated that the account would be connected to the online systems enabling users to check their accounts. Using the new system the council was better able to audit usage and officers were able to restrict transactions in particular circumstances, whereas currently with the pre-paid card users were able to overspend and the council would only be aware afterwards when receiving a statement. The Virtual Wallet was seen to be a user friendly platform however there were still further tests to be completed and this would be an optional service for users.

Members asked who would be managing the Virtual Wallet and the Category Manager responded that beyond January 2020 the support would be predominantly community led and social workers would set up the user profiles for residents. Members asked if there would be social worker audits and they replied that they would be included in part of the review to additionally include annual audits. The Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults told the Panel that resulting from the flexibility for residents to choose services suited to their needs, approximately £250,000 would be saved.

The Category Manager told the Panel that the Adults Social Services Users Panel (CASSUP) had the view that residents should have the choice in making a financial contribution towards the service and the Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults stated that lawfully there must be a financial assessment. There were other concerns raised that the council and DP needed to operate on a level playing field which would be reviewed.

Panel members commended the recent work to plan and implement the new arrangements, in comparison to previous years, by increasing the level of choice to complex groups. In response to a Panel Member asking whether Respite Centres were connected to DP, the Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults stated that they were, however the Centre was meant for residents who were not suited to mainstream services. There needed to be a culture change for more people to use mainstream services and normalise their requirements. A Panel Member agreed and stated that people should be supported in a complete capacity only when absolutely necessary. This was part of broader conversation about care provision and in their opinion a good model facilitated by the community was required, which would also consequently save costs.

The Category Manager described the ability to commission more creative activities for users. It was noted that Mencap residents were able to organise exciting trips or holidays that were an alternative to old fashioned institutional homes. A Panel Member added that there had been a mental cultural shift in recent years in what activities were deemed safe, secure or appropriate for vulnerable people. The Category Manager explained that the DP was

researched and developed throughout the 1990s-2000s and was already common practice in countries such as Australia and New Zealand.

In response to the Vice-Chair asking whether social workers were familiar with DP, the Director of Operations Adult Social Care stated that at this stage the system as it currently stood was too clunky and that they were still in the testing phase. The community led support was to encourage and inspire.

The Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults stated that in the past there was distrust between the council and providers which caused undesirable outcomes, the whole system needed a culture change to bring back the key aim to improve outcomes for users which would be supported by introducing new staff. In response to a Panel Member asking where carer centres fit into the picture, the Category Manager stated partner centres were in favour of the new system but supported the opinion that more ground work would be needed to perfect it. There was training planned for council staff which would be rolled out externally at a later stage; this meant that knowledge and advice provided to residents would be standardised across care providers.

36/19 **Annual Report of the Croydon Adult Safeguarding Report (CSAB)**

The Head of Adult Safeguarding and Quality Assurance introduced the Croydon Adult Safeguarding Adult Board (CSAB Annual Report 2018/19) and presentation. Key improvements identified over the last year were identified. There is still challenging in addressing the under representation in BME Communities.

Currently the national data had not been published, which couldn't allow the council to make comparisons with neighbours.

The report set out priorities to engage more with residents and users. Issues had been flagged with the online referral process which were being investigated and they would seek support from the Partnership Board.

The Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults informed the Panel that the report had already been to Health & Social Care Scrutiny Sub-Committee, Informal Cabinet and would be reported at 18 November 2019 Cabinet. The Head of Adult Safeguarding and Quality Assurance stated that guidance was unclear as to where the CSAB Annual Report should primarily report.

The Executive Director for Health, Wellbeing and Adults said that the Independent Chair for CSAB had been asked for synergy between the adults and the children's boards for future changes and improvements and told the Panel that the independent Chair of the Boards had been working closely.

Panel Members asked where the main priorities lay and where officers felt improvements could be made accounting for the fact that similar issues were

raised each year. They secondly raised concern over the statistic highlighted in the report that 3 in 5 were allegedly experiencing abuse from someone they knew. The Head of Adult Safeguarding and Quality Assurance agreed that statistics were worrying and added that 1 in 3 were allegedly experiencing abuse from a formal carer, which was a decrease of 1% compared to 2017-18, however still high. They stated that these issues were national problems, not unique to Croydon, and other complex difficulties were experienced such as domestic and financial violence.

37/19 Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following motion was moved by Councillor Campbell and seconded by Councillor Hopley to exclude the press and public:

“That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within paragraph 1 indicated in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.”

The motion was put and it was agreed by the Committee to exclude the press and public for the remainder of the meeting.

38/19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Panel agreed that the amended minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 June 2019 would be continued at the next meeting of the Panel.

39/19 Adult Safeguarding in Croydon

The Head of Adult Safeguarding and Quality Assurance introduced the update on key developments and current positions in Croydon on Adult Safeguarding in regard to Provider Concern Issues.

The meeting ended at 7.25 pm

Signed:

Date:

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