

ADULT SERVICES AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WEDNESDAY, 20 JUNE 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Mohammed Ilyas, Marion Mills and Asghar Majeed

Also in attendance: Councillor Stuart Carroll

Officers: Andy Carswell, Alison Alexander, Hilary Hall, Lynne Lidster and Angela Morris

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Ilyas nominated himself for the role of Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Mills and agreed by Members. Cllr Ilyas was therefore elected Chairman.

Cllr Majeed nominated himself for the role of Vice Chairman. This proposal was not seconded. Cllr Ilyas nominated Cllr Diment for the role of Vice Chairman. This was seconded by Cllr Mills and agreed by Members. Cllr Diment was therefore elected Vice Chairman.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Diment, Lenton and Yong.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on May 17th 2018 were agreed as an accurate record, subject to a minor amendment to state that Members had requested that they be informed of any future complaints that had been referred to the LGO.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the order of business as detailed in the agenda be amended, so that item 6 be considered before item 5.

LGO REPORT

The Director of Operations – Optalis introduced the item, explaining that a complaint had been made against the Council to the LGO and outlined the background of the case and the circumstances of Ms C's situation. The Director of Operations – Optalis stated that in hindsight the Council's approach did fall below standards and a different approach would be taken should similar circumstances occur again.

Members were informed that it had been difficult to engage with Ms C for a number of reasons, including her not being at a set address and due to her drug and alcohol dependency. She attended a number of multi-agency meetings and had received emotional and housing support from the DASH charity. She was also in receipt of clothing and food vouchers from RBWM Customer Services. She was housed for a period by voluntary groups; however due to repeated breaches of her residency she was asked to leave her accommodation.

The Director of Operations – Optalis informed Members that social workers had found it difficult to engage with Ms C because of her background, chaotic lifestyle and her immigration status, and stated that this had been an unusual case for Social Services to deal with. However it was acknowledged that enquiries regarding Ms C's safeguarding should have been made from the outset of the case. It was also acknowledged that although the social worker had attended a number of multi-agency meetings regarding Ms C, there had been no clear strategy to co-ordinate them all. The Director of Operations – Optalis informed the Panel that a lessons learned process had been implemented to ensure that in future staff knew when to activate a safeguarding procedure and that recordings of meetings were carried out properly. It was noted that in some cases there were no formal recordings of the multi-agency meetings. The lessons learned process had also highlighted a need for the Council to better engage with groups in the voluntary sector who were better placed to help people who had issues with substance misuse.

Responding to a question from Cllr Majeed, The Director of Operations – Optalis stated that she did not know how Ms C had come to live in the Royal Borough and it was not known whether her child was still in local authority care in Birmingham, where she had been living previously. The Managing Director stated that it was her belief that it was likely the child would have been put up for adoption, and the local authority in Birmingham would have been unlikely to have looked to reunite the family. She added that the Council would try to bring families back together where possible, but that in this case that had not been sought by Ms C. Members were informed that there was no communication between the Council and local authority in Birmingham regarding Ms C.

Cllr Majeed noted that a safeguarding referral was made on August 5th 2016 but no assessment was carried out until August 26th. The Director of Operations – Optalis stated this was because it was difficult to engage with Ms C, and that on one occasion she had not been in the location she said she would be in. It was also not possible to make a formal diagnosis of whether Ms C suffered a physical or mental impairment due to her continued misuse of alcohol and drugs. The Director of Operations – Optalis stated that Ms C's case should have been taken on as a clear safeguarding issue much earlier in the process. This would have meant a Human Rights Assessment would have been made earlier; however Members were informed that carrying out such an assessment was rare and there wouldn't have been many members of staff that would have done one before.

Cllr Majeed stated that he had contacted the DASH charity regarding this case and had been told they held more than 400 case notes relating to Ms C, and that DASH had come up with a list of five recommendations for future cases. It was agreed that this list of recommendations would be circulated to the Panel, and would be discussed at the next meeting.

Members noted that it had been determined Ms C had no recourse to public funds. The Panel was informed that advice was for people in this situation to receive help from social services but not to receive additional support from the Council; however this did not prevent people from working with voluntary groups who would be able to provide assistance. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health stated that frameworks restricted what the Council were able to do. He added that Council staff had the right attitude and wanted to help people

It was highlighted that Ms C had been housed under the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol for a prolonged period of time. The Director of Operations – Optalis stated that this reflected the seriousness of Ms C's case and how vulnerable she was, as she had been housed under the Protocol for longer than would usually be the case.

Members were informed that closer links with experts in the voluntary sector were being sought in order to provide better support for residents, and that this would help to improve the knowledge base of Council staff. It was noted that Ms C has allocated a place at the Sisters of Southall to find support. Members were told that some centres that provided the right support

for people with complex needs were sometimes out of the Borough, and that residents would be given assistance in the form of travel warrants to get them to a specialist centre.

The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and Director of Operations – Optalis both left the meeting at 7.41pm.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2017/18

The Deputy Director Strategy and Commissioning reminded Members that 25 performance indicators had been identified in order to help the Council measure achievement of its six strategic priorities. Of these, four related to Adult Services and all of them had been rated green as they had surpassed their targets for 2017-2018. In terms of projects, the report highlighted that the transfer of adult services into Optalis was one of the key milestones to have been met.

Cllr Mills suggested that a key should be provided for the performance indicators listed in the appendix. The Deputy Director Strategy and Commissioning said that this had already been actioned and a key would form part of the final report.

Regarding the two indicators that had been rated red as they had not met their targets, Members were informed that one related to the percentage of reviews that had been undertaken for children aged two to two and a half years. The Deputy Director Strategy and Commissioning informed Members that this indicator had fallen significantly below its target and an improvement programme had been implemented. The other indicator to have missed its target related to the percentage of phone calls to the Council answered within 60 seconds. There had been significant improvements on meeting this indicator since the first quarter of 2017-2018; however due to the poor performance in the first quarter it had not been possible for the indicator to achieve the annual target.

It was UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that Members noted the report and:

- i) Noted the progress towards meeting the council's strategic objectives.**
- ii) Endorsed the Annual Report 2017/18, appendix A, to be reviewed at a meeting of the Full Council.**
- iii) Requested the Managing Director and Executive Directors, in conjunction with Lead and Principal Members, to progress improvement actions for areas that were off target.**

WORK PROGRAMME

Cllr Majeed asked for an indication on when the presentation on A&E waiting times would be given. The Managing Director informed Members that she was meeting the new Chief Executive of the NHS Frimley Health Foundation Trust and would be asking him to attend the Panel along with his officers. Cllr Majeed said there had already been a request for data on waiting times to be circulated to Members. The Deputy Director Strategy and Commissioning confirmed that the data had been received and it was agreed that the clerk would distribute this to Members.

The Chairman reminded Members to contact the clerk if they had any additional items that they wanted to be considered at future meetings.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 7.52 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....