

**REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMUNITY HOUSING AND HEALTH (OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY) COMMITTEE**

PRESENT:

Councillors Marshall (Chairman), Warfield (Vice Chairman), Mrs Woodward (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Allsopp, Mrs Bacon, Mrs Bland, Mrs Evans, Humphreys, Pearce, and Salter.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs Flowith, Isaacs, Ms Perkins and Mrs Richards

(In accordance with Council Procedure No. 17 Councillor Greatorex attended the meeting).

Also Present:

Geoff Neild - Head of Estates & Head Of Facilities, Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Julie Walker (Head of Neighbourhoods, Bromford Housing)
Elaine Brown (Bromford Housing)
Sandra Payne (Support Staffordshire, Lichfield District)
Wayne Mortiboys (District Commissioning Lead, Staffordshire County Council).

At the Meeting of the Community Housing and Environmental Health (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee held on 24th March 2014 the following matters were considered.

1 CHARGING FOR HOSPITAL CAR PARKING
--

- 1.1 Members received a presentation by Geoff Neild - Head of Estates & Head of Facilities, Burton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust on the current arrangements for car parking over the three sites of Samuel Johnson, Sir Robert Peel and Queens Hospitals.
- 1.2 It was reported that the current system was an automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) system that took pictures of the number plates on entrance and exit and the user, when leaving pays by entering the number plate and the tariff for time spent. Mr Neild reported that there were enhanced ANPR systems available but at a far higher cost to the one chosen. He then reported that an ANPR system was chosen as barrier systems are not easy for disabled people to negotiate and pay and display was not practical as appointments could run over. It was noted that there was a 20 minute free parking policy and if blue badge users pre registered with the Trust, they could have an extra 30 minutes free to allow them to get to and into their vehicles.
- 1.3 It was then reported by Mr Neild that a review had been carried out and as a result, a number of changes had been implemented including better lighting of the pay machines, easier instructions for use of the machines and paying process and a trial of two heights of machines for both disabled and able bodied users. It had also been introduced that parking could be paid by chip & pin, phone and phone app and users could leave and have to the rest of the day to pay by these means.
- 1.4 Members asked if total free parking could be provided for disabled users and it was reported that the need was more improved accessibility rather than free parking. The

new system seeks not to disadvantage disabled drivers by giving additional free time for registered blue badge holders.

- 1.5 When asked, it was reported that barriers could not be used at Samuel Johnson Hospital due to the layout of the site and when used in the past, there had been accidents and abuse from the train station users.
- 1.6 When asked, it was reported that there were on average 55 complaints a month over the three sites which was a rise from the 10 to 15 complaints per month before the introduction of the ANPR system but a rise was expected as it was new and was anticipated that this would reduce in time. The Committee agreed to receive an update on the amount of complaints in six months to monitor this.
- 1.7 Members asked what percentage level of recovery of fines were being experienced and it was reported that it was in the region of 80% recovery rate. It was noted that there was now regulation and enforcement legislation that helped this.
- 1.8 Members felt there was much dissatisfaction with the introduction of the ANPR system by residents and as Councillors, they receive many complaints. Members felt the communication of the new system could have been carried out more effectively. Members thanked Geoff Neild for his attendance and help.
- 1.9 The information received was noted and it was agreed that an update of the number of complaints received be reported to Members in six months.

2 WORK CLUBS

- 2.1 The Committee received a report on activities to help unemployed people to get into work by supporting and developing Work Clubs across the Lichfield District. Members heard from Julie Walker (Head of Neighbourhoods), Elaine Brown (Bromford), Sandra Payne (Support Staffordshire, Lichfield District) and Wayne Mortiboys (District Commissioning Lead, Staffordshire County Council).
- 2.2 It was reported that times had changed and employment was sought through agencies and online applications along with other technologies. It was reported that the role of Work Clubs was to get people 'job ready'.
- 2.3 It was then reported that there were many partners working together to develop the five local work clubs which were run on a fortnightly drop in basis providing help on CV's, job searches and development needs as well as volunteering opportunities. It was reported that to date there had been 3,000 users with the known outcomes of 49 going into volunteering, 274 receiving training and 124 gaining employment.
- 2.4 It was then reported that 18 months ago, Bromford started the 'Bromford Deal' where all new customers signed an agreement setting out their responsibilities to their home, landlord and community at large. Bromford has used the Deal to encourage tenants into work starting with the provision of skills coaches and now through the establishment of the Connects Hub based at Stowe Road. It was reported that the Connects Hub centred around employment and overcoming any barriers people may have in finding work including childcare or transport issues. It was noted that the Connects Hub had the advantage of bringing agencies together.
- 2.5 Members asked if there was any evidence of value for money in providing this type of service especially as the success rate was less than 10%. It was reported that the tracking of users of the work clubs had not been very formal in the past and so success figures were not necessarily accurate. It was noted that a new registration system was being devised to remedy this. It was also noted that a recent job fair at the Connects Hub had been very successful with 227 job seekers attending, 1400 jobs on offer by 34 employers attending resulting in 286 expressions of interest being made.

- 2.6 When asked, it was reported that users were from all age groups and sexes. It was reported that projects were being used to help young people into employment including Talent Match and vulnerable people who would find it difficult to seek employment was being picked up through the Building Resilient Families and Communities programme.
- 2.7 Members asked what funding would be available after September 2014 as the LDC agreement with Support Staffordshire would expire at this point. Members were advised that only 50% of the available budget would be spent, that the outcomes would be reviewed and a decision taken whether to continue with the current arrangement. It was also noted that getting people into work is one of the outcomes of the current Service Level Agreements and therefore this may also be taken into account when considering LDC investment in this area of work. Members thanked Julie Walker, Elaine Brown, Sandra Payne and Wayne Mortiboys for their attendance and help.
- 2.8 The following was agreed:
- (1) That the activities of the Work Clubs and the future proposals for their support until September 2014 be noted; and
 - (2) That the establishment of the Bromford Connect Hub be noted.

3 BURNTWOOD HEALTH CENTRES

- 3.1 The Committee received an update on the progress of the Burntwood Health Centres and it was reported that there had been no real change. It was reported that discussions were continuing with the practices which had an interest in a health centre at Greenwood House site. Members noted that the current practices were under considerable stress and urgent action was required to remedy this situation.
- 3.2 It was then reported that the lease on the temporary Health and Wellbeing Centre would expire later this year and that discussions with NHS England would be proceeding shortly on this matter. In relation to the long awaited permanent development on the BLC site, the Director advised that she was seeking a meeting with NHS England to ascertain the current position since there had been little apparent progress for some months. Unfortunately, progress on this development appeared to have been hampered by the recent NHS reorganisation and ongoing pressure on NHS resources.
- 3.3 Members were pleased that Officers were lobbying on behalf of the District and requested that the item be kept on the work programme to help push the situation forward.
- 3.4 It was agreed that the information received be noted and the item remain on the work programme.

4 HEALTH UPDATE

- 4.1 Councillor Mrs Constable gave a verbal update to the Committee on the new 111 help number that was being rolled out across Staffordshire and it was noted that Health Watch and Councillors had been on a tour of the call centre. For those unable to attend, another visit was being arranged. She also reported that the 111 line was for urgent care and not emergencies where 999 would still be appropriate. Councillor Mrs Constable asked the Committee to let her have any feedback they may receive from users of the 111 helpline.
- 4.2 Councillor Mrs Constable then reported that there had been concerns for the A&E Service as it had become apparent that the service was used unnecessarily because

people felt it was easier to go to A&E or there was a perception that the care was better there. It was noted that better education of the need and use for A&E was required.

- 4.3 It was then reported that the surgical ward and operating theatre at Sir Robert Peel Hospital was to be decommissioned as it was underused and that day cases would now go to either Burton or Good Hope Hospital.
- 4.4 Councillor Mrs Constable then reported that Health Watch was to look at acute care and would be seeking feedback from patients.
- 4.5 She then reported that there would be more Community Nurses through a recruitment drive and there would be training pathways and specialist qualifications available.
- 4.6 The information received was noted.

5 POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER'S COMMUNITY FUND 2014/15

- 5.1 The Committee received a report on the priorities for action contained within the Lichfield District Safer Community Partnership Delivery Plan and the related investment proposals for using the Locality Deal Fund. It was noted that the total number of crimes reported had reduced, although there had recently been a 10% rise in anti social behaviour in the Burntwood area.
- 5.2 The four priorities of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) were noted and that the PCC was providing funding at local level to address these priorities. It was reported that Lichfield Safer Community Partnership had been allocated £72k Locality Deal Fund and could also access the Proceeds of Crime Fund and the People Power Fund. It was noted that the Locality Deal Fund would now cover three years, not one, as had previously been the case.
- 5.3 There were some concerns that there had been a rise in anti social behaviour in Burntwood and it was felt the reduction in Police Officers and Police and Community Support Officers was a large factor in this. Members also felt that the planned cuts to youth services by the County Council could exacerbate the situation and that more cooperation between agencies was needed for the area.
- 5.4 Members then focused on the proposed projects which had been identified for Locality Deal Funding in 2014/15. Members felt that the Prison Me No Way project had been successful at Netherstowe School and should be rolled out across the District. Members also felt that the 'Officers on Bikes' initiative was important and residents preferred to see officers on the 'beat'. Members also felt the 'Sexting and Social Media' project should be extended to all schools.
- 5.5 The report was noted and agreed that the views of the Committee be passed to the District Board.

6 FIT FOR THE FUTURE – HOUSING SERVICES REVIEW

- 6.1 The Committee received a report on the Service Review of the Housing Service that was taking place as part of phase two of the Fit for the Future programme. Members noted that this was the start of the process and that the Project Initiation Document (PID) had been submitted with the report.
- 6.2 Members felt that the Officers worked as effectively as they could and so the question was one of whether the Council is prepared to accept a lower level of service and that would be explored in the process of the review.

- 6.3 Members also felt that many of the Dependencies as reported in the PID were already crumbling away including the availability of capital for Disability Facilities Grants.
- 6.4 Members noted that further reports would be forthcoming in June and September 2014.
- 6.5 The Project Initiation Document was noted.

7 FUNDING THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

- 7.1 Members received a report from the Chairman of the reconvened Member Task Group, Councillor Mrs Woodward on the outcome of the first meeting of the Group looking at future funding for the community and voluntary sector. Members were also introduced to Susan Bamford, Partnerships and Policy Manager.
- 7.2 Councillor Mrs Woodward reported that the current Service Level Agreements (SLA) were due to end in March 2015 and so it was necessary to consider the level of funding and nature of investment again. She reported that the aim of the process was to ensure the best outcomes for the District.
- 7.3 Councillor Mrs Woodward then reported that the Member Task Group had their first meeting recently and the main objectives of that meeting were to consider options for the future level of investment. As part of this process, the Group had reviewed previous performance information received from the organisations with which the District Council had current SLAs.
- 7.4 It was then requested for Members to contact Councillor Mrs Woodward if they had thoughts on the weighting that should be given to the different outcomes (section 2.5 of the report) in the next funding round.
- 7.5 The following was agreed:
- (1) That it be recommended to the Cabinet Member for Community, Housing and Health that a budget of at least £176k per annum be retained for investment in the community and voluntary sector having regard to the environment of public cuts and the increasing expectation that the community and voluntary sector will be able to step in and meet any gaps in service provision;
 - (2) That comments made on the tender themes as set out on paragraph 2.5 in the report be noted and it be considered whether there are any additions/deletions which should be considered by the Task Group; and
 - (3) That it be noted that owing to timescales involved, it may be necessary for the Member Task Group to provide advice direct to the Cabinet Member in relation to the key milestones within the commissioning process; this advice being reported back to the parent Community, Housing and Health (Overview & Scrutiny) Committee at the next scheduled meetings.

8 WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD PLAN

- 8.1 The Work Programme and Forward Plan were considered. It was noted that as it was the end of the municipal year, a new work programme would be required. Members asked for an item on the change to the Bromford Service Charge and its impact on residents. The Cabinet Member for Community, Housing and Health said he would take this up with Bromford directly.
- 8.2 The Strategic Director for Community, Housing and Health reported to the Committee forthcoming items that may be included in the work programme and suggestions from Members comprising of Staffordshire County Council Review of Supporting People,

Burntwood Health Centres, Performance Reports, SLA Progress, Housing Service Review, Complaints Update on Hospital Car Parking, Fuel Poverty and Affordable Warmth.

- 8.3 It was then reported that an item would be considered by the Cabinet in April that was not on the Forward Plan which was to request to accept funding over £50k from the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 8.4 The Work Programme and Forward Plan was noted.

T. Marshall
Chairman
Community, Housing and Health (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee