

Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Active Communities

At 10.00 am on Friday 6th October, 2023 in the Council Chamber, The Cube, George St, Corby NN17 1QG

Present:-

Members

Councillor Helen Harrison
Councillor John McGhee

Councillor Russell Roberts
Councillor Geoff Shacklock

Officers

David Watts (Executive Director of Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing)
Shirley Plenderleith (Assistant Director Public Health)
Kerry Purnell (Assistant Director Communities and Leisure)
Emma Davies-Rota (Service Manager Provider Services North)
David Pope (Democratic Services)

36 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from co-Chair, Cllr Helen Howell as well as Cllr Ken Harrington, Jane Bethea, Ali Gilbert and Zakia Loughead.

37 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Geoff Shacklock declared a personal interest in relation to Agenda Item 6 – Greenway Strategy.

38 Minutes of the meeting held on 4th August 2023

RESOLVED that:-

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th August 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

39 Service Presentation - Safeguarding and Wellbeing Provider Services

The Panel received a service presentation by David Watts, Executive Director of Adults, Communities & Wellbeing on behalf of the Assistant Director for Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Provider Services, Zakia Loughead.

The presentation initially provided an overview of the service leadership and support structures, the Panel noting that one of the five direct reports to the Assistant Director was the Chief Principal Social Worker (CPSW), a statutory role for the authority under the Care Act, who acted as a conduit between the front-line social work force and the

Director of Adult Services. The CPSW was encouraged to challenge the Director on decision-making that could potentially have a negative impact on the workforce.

Reference was also made to the other four reports to the Assistant Director; service managers for the Out of Hours Service, Prevention and Occupational Therapy, Provider Services and Quality Performance.

The meeting heard that the key priorities across Safeguarding, Wellbeing and Provider Services were as follows:-

- Greater access to better quality Adult Social Care
- Value and support carers and volunteers
- Continue to provide support for Adult Risk Management Panel, Multiple Exclusion Homelessness, Multi Agency Risk Abuse Coordinator alongside the safeguarding agendas
- To develop a recruitment strategy in line with the 'new ways of working' that creatively demonstrates avenues of recruitment to improve intake of new staff. To develop and deliver a 'New Ways of Working' strategy that ensured the right approach to managing people, technology and operational premises.
- Invest in and value staff to become an employer of choice
- Provide good quality and efficient services valued by those receiving them
- Deliver on the Transformation Plan

The meeting heard that the vision for the service as a whole was to provide high quality Adult Social Care services and to ensure that practice and standards met statutory requirements, with all professionals working together to deliver "Making Safeguarding Personal" to shape and promote the safety of local residents. A series of key commitments to deliver this vision were detailed to the panel.

Members received details of the expected outcomes for the services as below:

- Confidence in providing a fully staffed day-time Approved Mental Health Practitioner rota
- Improvement in KPIs for Safeguarding and Provider services
- This includes improvement/achievement of KPIs
- Leadership development – coaching in practice
- Recruitment to hard-to-fill posts
- Operating safe services
- Ensure professionals work together to deliver Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) to promote and secure the safety of local residents.
- Application of safeguarding procedures in practice, MSP framework in place, auditing case work by Safeguarding and Quality Service Manager.
- Develop and embed a culture which delivers positive results through support, guidance, robust challenge, disciplined execution, and continuous improvement
- Provide strategic leadership and direction for the delivery and development of Adult Services and provide assurance that the best possible outcomes are being delivered for people who use services and family carers.
- Preparation for Care Quality Commissioner Assurance

The meeting received details of the projects across provider services, with specific reference made to Thackley Green, operation of which had been with the Council since July 2023, with exploration of opportunities to develop it into the most pro-active and supportive service possible. Also referenced were the latter phases of the

transformation programme, including day services and younger adult services and a review of job descriptions to better reflect the activities being carried out by staff.

Members noted the development of services at Pine Lodge - Phase 1, Deprivation of Liberty Service review and development of the Shared Lives Service. Disaggregation of services relating to Visual Impairment and Approved Mental Health Practitioner were reported as progressing.

An overview was provided to the meeting detailing the role, work and specific key priorities of the Safeguarding and Quality team, Community Therapy, Approved Mental Health Professional Service, Provider Services and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding Service.

Achievements made during 2022/23 across the aforementioned services areas were detailed to the meeting as follows:

- Successful disaggregation of Shared Lives Service which was now fully NNC lead
- The Specialist Support Team for Younger Adults rated 'Good' in all areas by the Care Quality Commission in April 2023
- Successful closure of Beech Close Care Home, where all residents had been successfully relocated and settled into alternative, more suitable, accommodation
- Principle Social Worker 2022-2023 report competition
- Significant reduction in the Deprivation of Liberty Service backlog
- Successful implementation of the new Cygnum Upgrade for the use of Provider Services, Community Therapy and Reablement teams in ASC in April 2023
- Strengthened relationships and successfully collaborative working with NNC and Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Members asked questions, and made comments in relation to the following aspects of the service areas' operations:

- The closure of the National Autistic Society in Irthlingborough and subsequent loss of support
- Single point of contact to allow members to report relevant concerns from residents as above
- Provision of day services as close to service users as possible
- Enabling support services
- Provision of examples of co-production
- Spot checks of service providers to ensure quality of service
- Waiting times for adaptations in homes
- Re-use and recycling of adaptive equipment
- Use of AI technology in Assistive Technology

The Chair thanked the Executive Director of Adults, Communities & Wellbeing for the presentation and stated that the Council needed to increase promotion of the positive news regarding service area operations, while noting that there were always

improvements to be made. The Chair also thanked the manager of Provider Services and offered congratulations to the whole team from the Panel for the work they had undertaken.

40 Draft Adult Social Care Strategy

It was agreed that this item be deferred to the next meeting on 1st December 2023.

41 Greenway Strategy

The panel received a presentation from Assistant Director of Housing & Communities, Kerry Purnell regarding the current position of the Greenway Strategy.

The meeting heard that the project had originally commenced under the former East Northamptonshire Council (ENC), with an ambition to create green infrastructure following the Nene Valley with delivery of connectivity including walking and cycling opportunities between Peterborough and Wellingborough, with a number of routes established around Rushden and Higham Ferrers.

Since unitarisation, a new Programme Board had been established with key external partners and stakeholders brought together including four NNC ward members to represent each of the former district and borough areas. The board agreed to develop a North Northamptonshire Greenway Strategy, with funding to undertake that work obtained through the Shared Prosperity fund, building on existing work and funding obtained in 2021 to undertake a feasibility study for the proposed Rushden to Wellingborough phase.

Lessons had been learned from the previous work completed by ENC, feeding into the new overarching strategy that had been created using a strong evidence base, with significant policy work, data collection and engagement with stakeholders undertaken. High level costings had been put together and complex issues considered, such as potential amendments to Rights of Way and where the proposed Greenway routes potentially crossed private land.

The process to develop the strategy had been undertaken utilising the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan process, following national best practice and a number of design recommendation booklets for the various proposed routes had been produced. More detailed feasibility studies could be undertaken using these as the project moved forward.

The meeting noted that consultants had been appointed early 2023, working alongside the Council and stakeholders to get the strategy to its current stage by undertaking significant data collection and policy reviews.

It was heard that the Greenway Strategy was currently out for public consultation for a period of six-weeks, seeking views from respondents particularly with regard to prioritisation of proposed routes.

The meeting received details of the vision and objectives of the strategy, a countywide rural network of safe, largely traffic-free walking, wheeling and cycling routes, connecting to towns and employment, leisure, tourism, and education

destinations. It was noted that delivery of the strategy would be more challenging than its development.

High-level costings for the strategy were provided to the meeting, that noted an approximate cost of £38.1m for delivery of the whole proposal. When funding opportunities arose, the Council would have feasibility studies in place to allow for positive funding bids to be made.

The meeting heard that four routes had been identified to include in the design recommendations child document accompanying the strategic masterplan. These routes had been informed by prioritisation scores, which routes have existing feasibility studies and the need to ensure a fair spread of routes across North Northamptonshire. The routes were:

- Rothwell to Kettering
- Wellingborough to Wollaston via Irchester
- Burton Latimer to Irthlingborough
- Kettering to Thrapston

Councillors asked questions in relation to:

- The public consultation process
- Road safety to encourage cycling and walking
- Connectivity with towns to employment/leisure/housing
- Links between Kettering and Corby; including Boughton House and Wicksteed Park
- Prioritisation of routes once funding was obtained
- Promotion of the public consultation
- Lighting of routes
- Whether the Greenway would go through Irchester County Park
- Whether S106 monies could be utilised for routes outside of the four prioritised routes if the opportunity arose
- Consultation details to be circulated to members
- Tempering expectations in relation to timescales in development of the Greenway

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director of Housing & Communities for the presentation and noted that promotion of the consultation was of great importance as the public had significant interest in the issue. The Chair stated that this type of strategy was of exactly the sort where councils should be leading the way, feeding into the Big50 priorities identified as part of that process, whilst noting the need to temper expectations of delivery times as a long-term project.

42 Executive Forward Plan

The Executive Forward Plan for October 2023 to February 2024 was considered and noted.

43 Forward List of Items for the EAP

The forward list of items for the EAP was considered. It was agreed that the following items be tabled at the next meeting on 1st December 2023.

- Adult Social Care Strategy
- Service Presentation – Adult Services
- Communities Strategy

44 Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 12.05 pm