

Minutes of a meeting of the Shared Services Joint Committee

At 2.00 pm on Wednesday 17th January, 2024 in the
Council Chamber, Corby Cube, George Street, Corby, NN17 1QG

Present:-

Members

Councillor Jonathan Nunn
Councillor Jason Smithers
Councillor Lloyd Bunday

Councillor Matt Golby
Councillor Mike Hallam

Officers

Also in attendance – Councillor

31 Apologies for non-attendance

Apologies for non-attendance were received from Councillors Adam Brown and Helen Harrison. Councillor Matt Golby attended as a substitute member.

32 Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 October 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

33 Members' Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited those who wished to do so to declare any interests in respect of items on the agenda.

Councillor Mike Hallam and David Watts declared that they were related through Councillor Hallam's cousin.

34 Notifications of requests to address the meeting

There were no requests to address the meeting.

35 Chair's Announcements

There were no Chair's announcements.

36 Commissioning Healthwatch in Northamptonshire

The Joint Committee received a report which outlined the intention to separate the countywide Healthwatch service and for each authority to develop and commission their own Healthwatch models for West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) and North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) respectively.

Both councils jointly commission a local Northamptonshire Healthwatch organisation, with the existing contract due to expire on 31st March 2024. Both authorities now wanted to develop and commission their own Healthwatch service to make it more local for their respective areas, as per national guidance. Healthwatch was a statutory duty for each local authority. Councils have a responsibility under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to make arrangements to establish and maintain a local Healthwatch service.

The current contract value was £195,000 per annum and was split 48.6% North Northamptonshire and 51.4% West Northamptonshire.

RESOLVED:

To delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health and the Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing, in consultation with the Executive Director of People Services and Director of Public Health & Wellbeing to:

- Commission a separate more local North Northamptonshire Healthwatch and a West Northamptonshire Healthwatch services, that will have the interests of its own population served.
- Each authority reviews their service specification to include Healthwatch England's current recommendations and any revised national quality framework.
- The guidance states that local authorities should establish a contractual arrangement with an independent organisation that should be a social enterprise that delivers Healthwatch activity. Social Enterprises are defined as:

Community Interest Companies (CICs), Industrial and Provident Societies (IPSS) or Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs).
- The recommended financial model for Healthwatch asks councils to provide additional funding to bolster the core grant. A 12-month waiver would offer each authority time to re-assess the contract value as they develop their own model.

Reasons for Recommendation

To ensure that each council has appropriate Healthwatch arrangements in place which have the interests of its own population served.

Alternative Options Considered

The only alternative would be the existing model, that both councils had the intention of moving away from.

37 Options Appraisal for Recommissioning Public Health Services for Children and Young People and Integrated Sexual Health Services

The Joint Committee received a report which sought agreement to approve the recommissioning approach of:

- The 0-19 Health Visiting and School Nursing Service
- Strong Start Service
- Northamptonshire Integrated Sexual Health and HIV Service
- Youth Counselling Offer (REACH)
- Oral Health Promotion Service
- Dental Epidemiology Survey

An initial decision was sought as to whether the North and West contracts (total estimated annual value of £17.4m, North £8.5m and West £8.9m, should be contracted separately from April 2025 following disaggregation. These contracts were currently funded from Public Health Grant by each local authority.

Both councils were working closely with providers to regularly review the contracts and assess them against service improvement plans as a mechanism for driving up performance and monitoring progress.

RESOLVED:

- (i) For services described in the report that are currently commissioned jointly by NNC and WNC, to continue to be commissioned in this way until 31 March 2025.
- (ii) For joint commissioning arrangements to cease of 31 March 2025, with both NNC and WNC commissioning and procuring services independently from this point onwards.

Reasons for recommendations

The separate recommissioning of these services will ensure that the process meets the statutory duties of both NNC and WNC and provides an opportunity to improve and transform the current services and target more resources locally where they are needed, especially in those areas most in need.

Both NNC and WNC have sufficient commissioning staff and time to increase market interest, by carrying out soft market testing creating competition, and opening up dialogue with current, new and emerging providers through market engagement events. These may be different in NNC compared to WNC.

Commissioners will ensure that engagement and involvement of current service users, families, practitioners and providers are considered to develop the service model and pathway for Children and Young People services.

Commissioners will ensure that the Children and Young People services are better aligned with current services in different parts of Northamptonshire (e.g. integrated Family Hub ambitions (hub and spoke) and the youth offer).

Alternative options considered

To maintain the existing commissioning arrangements.

The Joint Committee received a report which provided the quarter two performance report for services delivered via the Inter-Authority Agreement (IAA) arrangements and covered the period between July and September 2023.

Performance was report on those services provided by NNC to WNC:

- Approved Mental Health Providers
- Countywide Traveller Unit
- Digital Infrastructure
- Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Learning and Development
- Minerals and Waste Planning
- Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre
- The Virtual School
- Public Health Intelligence
- Adult Learning

along with those services provided by WNC to NNC:

- Archives and Heritage, including Historic Environment Records and Portable Antiquities Scheme
- Assistive Technology
- Library Support Services
- Streetlighting
- Visual Impairment.

Members noted that there had been good performance across the IAA services.

RESOLVED:

To note the Quarter 2 performance report, as shown in Appendix A.

39 Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked members and officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 2.10pm.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at Time Not Specified