

**ADULTS AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 APRIL 2021**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR C E H MARFLEET (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors E J Sneath (Vice-Chairman), R L Foulkes, R J Kendrick, Mrs C J Lawton, Mrs M J Overton MBE, C E Reid and M A Whittington

Councillors: attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Kiara Chatziioannou (Scrutiny Officer), Roz Cordy (Interim Assistant Director of Safeguarding), Gareth Everton (Head of Integration and Transformation), Glen Garrod (Executive Director - Adult Care and Community Wellbeing) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs J E Killey.

54 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

55 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 FEBRUARY 2021

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2021 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

56 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR AND LEAD OFFICERS

There were no announcements made.

57 ADULT CARE OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Consideration was given to a report which provided an update to the Committee of the progress to date, including the impact of Covid-19 and the next steps to continue the service improvement.

ADULTS AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 APRIL 2021

It was reported that the Adult Care Occupational Therapy Service was approaching the end of a two-year transformation programme with the broad intention to improve the experience of Lincolnshire residents who needed to access the Service. The priorities of the transformation were to:

- Increase the proportion of people who received a service without delay, at the first point of contact;
- Reduce the length of time people had to wait for an assessment;
- Increase the quality of service provided;
- Maximise independence at home through implementing a holistic support to overcoming barriers to everyday living;
- Increase appropriate referrals for re-housing, equipment and/or adaptations utilising the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and Discretionary Housing Assistance.

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Integration and Transformation which provided detailed information in relation to the transformation project, the Occupational Therapy service performance dashboard, Covid-19, assessments completed and the Disabled Facilities Grant. The Committee had the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present and some of the points raised included the following:

- It was confirmed that the Principal Occupational Therapist did have patient contact, and it was considered very important that they did have this contact. The Committee was pleased to learn this.
- The involvement of the district councils was welcomed and it was believed that this was the way forward for the county and its residents.
- It was queried whether there was a 'branding issue' with Occupational Therapy, as it was commented that this did not describe everything that was included within the service. The Head of Integration and Transformation advised that he had been involved with the Royal College of Occupational Therapists which had recently been examining the rebranding of the service, and had run some promotional campaigns, but there remained work to be done nationally on how to raise the profile of the Service.
- The Committee was pleased to hear that there had been a large reduction in the waiting list, especially the numbers of people waiting for more than 12 months. Whilst it was acknowledged that there would always be a waiting list for this service, it was queried what it was thought to be an acceptable amount of time or number of people waiting, and how long it would be until that level was reached. It was noted that the wait time to see an Occupational Therapist was up to 18 weeks, the Council was aiming for it to be 14 weeks (or 100 days). For comparison, in some neighbouring authorities, the wait could be years. Ideally, the Service would be aiming for people to be seen within 28 days, and the target was for 50% of people to be seen within that timeframe. Where the need was more straightforward for example where pieces of equipment or minor adaptations were required, it was hoped that these cases would be resolved quickly. It was recognised that there would also be some more complex or urgent cases where things would need to be prioritised and progressed quickly.

- It was commented that in some cases 28 days would still be a long time if someone was in discomfort. It was suggested that the increased use of virtual first assessment would be a good way to speed up the process. Members were advised that the current process was that everyone would have an initial phone call within 4 weeks, and the straightforward cases could be resolved quickly. Those cases which may require further assessment, such as on-site measurements, would be the ones that required more time to resolve.
- In terms of a sense of the level of ambition the authority had, the Service wanted to be the best in the country. The challenge was that there was currently no national benchmarking available, and so the authority did not know what the best looked like. Members were advised that the government intended to have a process of assurance for social care in the future.
- In the next administrative round, members would receive a further update on the Occupational Therapy Service, and would need to consider the next steps for maintaining and progressing further, once satisfied that a 'good' status had been achieved. One of the key questions for the Committee in the future would be what integration with health would look like.
- Covid-19 had highlighted that there was a need to change how some things were done and had speeded up this process.

RESOLVED

That the Adult Care Occupational Therapy report be noted.

58 ADULTS AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD PLANNING - WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with an opportunity to consider and outline the forward plan from June 2021 until April 2022.

During discussion of the report, the following was noted:

- It was queried whether it was known how many White Papers may be coming up in 2021/22. Members were advised that there were five or possibly six, as the government's legislative programme for 2020/21 had been delayed so the government could focus on dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic. It was expected that later in 2021 there would be papers on procurement, and the future of social care, as well as the Deprivation of Liberty Standards which were planned for implementation in 2022;
- Digital and IT projects will need to be included in future agendas;
- Wellbeing and other prevention services would also be a priority in the future;
- There would be some significant procurements coming up for the Committee to consider; these would include residential care, homecare, carers services and equipment procurements which would be coming forward. It was requested that the procurement items be programmed into the Committee's work programme on a provisional basis;

- The Committee commented that they would like to see space made available on the agenda to discuss outcomes for post-Covid issues, in particular those relevant to mental health;
- The voluntary sector was identified as another area to be looked. The Committee was advised that there was a lot of work underway to ensure that the level of volunteering and engaging with volunteers seen during the lockdown would be maintained with a view to continue offering support to a diverse voluntary sector and connecting them better with the organisation. It would be possible for the Committee to have a presentation on this in the future;
- It was highlighted that there may also be a White Paper on the Better Care Fund.

The Chairman congratulated everyone involved in Adult Care and Community Wellbeing across the Council, for all the hard work that had taken place over the years. He also thanked the Executive Director of Adult Care and Community Wellbeing, the Director of Public Health and their teams for all the support which had been given to the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the comments made in relation to future agenda items be noted.

The meeting closed at 11.04 am