

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Thursday, 7 November 2019 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.40 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE – in the Chair
Councillor Jenny Hannaby (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Nick Carter
Councillor Mike Fox-Davies
Councillor Liz Leffman
Councillor Charles Mathew
Councillor Glynis Phillips
Councillor Judy Roberts
Councillor Liam Walker
Councillor Jeannette Matelot (In place of Councillor Michael Waine)

By Invitation: Dr Rob Bale, Clinical Director & Consultant Psychiatrist for Oxford Health; Alison Chapman – Safeguarding Lead and Designated Nurse, Oxfordshire CCG.

Officers:

Whole of meeting Lauren Rushen, Policy Officer; Colm Ó Caomhánaigh, Committee Officer

Part of meeting

| Agenda Item | Officer Attending |
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| 5 | Lara Patel, Deputy Director Safeguarding |
| 6 | Lorna Baxter, Director for Finance; Ben Threadgold, Policy and Performance Service Manager; Steven Fairhurst Jones, Corporate Performance and Risk Manager |
| 7 | Rob MacDougall, Chief Fire Officer; Paul Bremble, Strategic Risk Assurance Manager |
| 8 | Jason Russell, Interim Director for Community Operations; Paul Fermer, Assistant Director – Highway & Transport Operations |

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

59/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Michael Waine (Councillor Jeannette Matelot substituting).

60/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - GUIDANCE NOTE ON BACK PAGE OF THE AGENDA

(Agenda No. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

61/19 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meetings of 5 September 2019 and 10 October 2019 were approved and signed.

62/19 SERIOUS CASE REVIEW AND MENTAL HEALTH HOMICIDE REVIEW

(Agenda No. 5)

Lara Patel introduced a presentation on the Serious Case Review relating to the death of a baby through abuse. It had previously been agreed to bring reviews to the Committee on an individual basis rather than in the annual report. The independent reviewer was chosen for their experience in the relevant area. The family was included in the review which was coordinated with the Mental Health review to avoid duplication.

Lara Patel, Dr Rob Bale and Alison Chapman responded to questions from Members as follows:

- The mother agreed to foster care in Swindon, having presented to hospital where she was assessed.
- In this case, as in others, there was a loss of information when the family moved. Information systems in different areas do not match. It's not believed that it made a difference to the outcome in this case, but it is an ongoing problem.
- A social care summary was passed on to Oxfordshire but did not include the key "at risk" information.
- The child was in foster care and not under a Child Protection Plan in Swindon. There was a gradual return to the mother and the professional judgement was a "child in need" and there is nothing to indicate that this was a wrong decision at the time.
- The mother did not want the extended family involved. Swindon had a letter from the grandparents saying that they would like to be involved but Oxfordshire did not have access to this.
- Immediate family members can be involved in cases but parental consent is required to involve the extended family.
- Extended family members and friends can contact social care staff but information cannot be shared with them without consent of the family.

- The mother's mental health issues went back to a number of previous locations where she lived. If a patient does not tell you about previous history elsewhere then there is no way for staff to find out as specialist health records do not automatically follow the patient.
- The problem is that every organisation has its own data system, for example the local authority, GPs, hospital trusts etc. The NHS has been working on this for 15 years. "Data warehouses" are the latest attempt to tackle the problem.
- At the last meeting with the family they felt that they had been heard and were reassured that lessons have been learned. The mother has been kept informed.

It was agreed to ask the Council Leader to raise the information sharing issue at the Health and Wellbeing Board and with the County Councils Network.

Dr Rob Bale added that mental health services and NGOs are not resourced enough. There are pilot schemes in some schools including families in mental health issues. CAMHS is changing its model. For adults with mental health issues it is important to know who they are caring for.

63/19 BUSINESS MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT REPORT

(Agenda No. 6)

Ben Threadgold introduced the report. Two 'red' assessments remain. Timeliness of assessments for children and young people with SEND have improved and are now closer to the national average. Delayed Transfers of Care remain high. This is due for a closer look at the Committee's January meeting. The report includes the Leadership Risk Register. These high level risks are reviewed each month and updates will be included in the Business Management and Monitoring Reports.

Officers responded to issues raised by Members as follows:

- They will take on board the point that the commentary could be more challenging, particularly on 'achievement of planned savings', 'levels of energy use' and children's reviews.
- Air quality indicators are being reviewed, including recognising that decisions in other areas could reduce air quality.
- The overspend on Children's Social Care countywide services is not related to direct service delivery. Forecast savings on third party spending have not been achieved in full. We are currently reviewing how to address this.
- It is not anticipated that the overspend will increase significantly during the year. Demand is not currently increasing. The Family Safeguarding model will address this for future years.
- Variations are reported against the latest budget. Changes from the original budget are reflected in Annex C-1. Virements related to service delivery and are for tidying up purposes. Virements relating to any change in policy are reported to Cabinet.
- The overspend on the in-year High Needs Block Dedicated Schools Grant is still presented but the Department for Education consultation sets out that Councils should not be using their own resources to meet any overspend. The consultation implies that the Department for Education will pick it up but it is still not clear. The Council is still lobbying central government on this.

- Regarding areas where no targets have been set – for example volunteering rates – officers will look at how measures can show whether they are improving or not.
- The latest carbon emission figures will be in the October report.

64/19 HMICFRS REPORT ON THE INSPECTION OF OXFORDSHIRE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE 2018/19

(Agenda No. 7)

The Chief Fire Officer introduced the report. The inspection did not turn up any surprises. Any issues of concern noted were already known to OFRS. It is planned to do another full inspection in 18 months and after that inspections will be focussed on certain areas.

The work done with Oxford City Council on the installation of sprinklers in high-rise residential blocks was mentioned in the report and this was particularly relevant as a kitchen fire had been extinguished by sprinklers on the fourteenth floor of Plowman Tower just the day before this Committee meeting.

Members raised a number of issues on the report and officers responded as follows:

- The issue of unwanted fire alarm calls is being examined with Thames Valley Fire Control Service. Businesses are encouraged to update their systems as older systems are more susceptible to false alarms which cost the business time and money too.
- The “requires improvement” ratings were related to risk information on hardcopy being out of date, although the information was correct on the system. This has already been tackled. Also, while the service had a good record of developing leaders, there was no specific policy on identifying talent.
- Co-responding is down because, as part of the national pay negotiations, the union is not supporting co-responding. Changes at the South Central Ambulance Service have also led to less demand.
- Co-responding is ongoing with one on-call crew.
- The reference in relation to uniforms relates to an inappropriate comment by a fitter. A new uniform contract has been awarded. Religious issues are taken into account.
- Although there is a high proportion of females in the cadets they are not coming through into the service at the same rate. This is being examined. The service has a policy of utilising existing female members in mentoring roles.

65/19 HIGHWAYS DEEP DIVE FOLLOW-UP

(Agenda No. 8)

Jason Russell introduced himself as the Interim Director for Community Operations. He was previously an Executive Director at Surrey County Council.

Paul Fermer introduced the report which gave an update on the actions following the Highways ‘Deep Dive’. A new suite of documents on future highways plans is outlined in Annex 2. These will reflect better engagement with councillors and the increasing priority being given to walking and cycling.

Officers responded to Members questions as follows:

- It was agreed that communications with Skanska regarding coordinating works needs to be one of the focusses in deciding whether to extend the contract.
- An updated Highway Maintenance 'who does what' factsheet will be circulated to Members. If Members are having different experiences of response, then that is likely to be a training issue, this will be looked into and addressed as appropriate. A new software update will address some of the issues with Fix My Street. The high rate of reports that result in no action indicate that there needs to be some kind of triaging. It's also being examined as part of the wider customer service improvement programme across the Council.
- A pilot with 40 'superusers' is being tried. Members will be updated on its success at the end of trial, and if rolled out asked to help promote it.
- Officers will look at the problem of A34 diversions through rural roads/market towns. They are Highways England diversions and the options for alternatives are limited.
- The introduction of a permit system for roadworks next year will give the Council more control.
- The Oxford City locality meeting will be party to setting future highways programmes the same as other locality meetings. It was confirmed a senior officer from the County Council will now start to attend in addition to City/ODS.
- There is no specific budget for small scale improvements. Parish Councils can raise their own funds should they wish though.
- The guide in Annex 3 has just been finalised and will be publicised shortly.
- Condition surveys and other highway data can be made available, and perhaps a good way to report would be a regular end of year report.

66/19 WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda No. 9)

The meeting of 12 December 2019, which was due to consider budget pressures and savings, has been cancelled due to the General Election being held on that day. The meeting on the 9 January 2020 will be extended into the afternoon to discuss those matters as well as capital, investment and review of charges.

The Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service have asked if the Community Risk Management Plan could be taken at the March meeting. This was agreed.

The Chairman also suggested taking the Young Carers Review at the March meeting. She will work with the Policy Officer to allocate other items on the Work Programme to Committee dates.

67/19 TRANSFORMATION SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

(Agenda No. 10)

For information only.

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Date of signing 20