

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 6th December, 2017 at 10.00 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE (Chair)

County Councillors

A Atkinson
M Green
H Khan

P Buckley
Mrs S Charles

1. Apologies for Absence

No apologies for absence were received.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

No pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th September 2017

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on the 12th September 2017 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4. Customer Access Performance Report

A report was presented by Sarah Jenkins, Head of Service – Customer Access providing an update on the operation and performance of the Customer Access Service.

The Customer Access Service (CAS) was the first point of contact for 60% of all incoming telephony and email enquiries to Lancashire County Council. The strategic plan had been for additional services to be delivered by the CAS, in order to better serve the citizens of Lancashire, whilst improving costs and efficiency. Within the CAS is the dedicated Social Care Centre for Adult's and Children's Social Care, and the Customer Contact Centre delivering 26 services including Highways, Ask HR, Libraries, Blue Badge, Registration, Crisis Support, Waste and Welfare Rights.

The Committee noted that calls into Adults and Children's Social Care had reduced, as a result of safer, more effective referral pathways. The impact to Adults social care had been influenced by the Newton's programme of pathway to independence. Similarly, with Children's social care, a change of process had

been made at the front door, reducing the need for professionals to make repeat calls, by directing the contact to the most appropriate team at the first point of contact.

In relation to the Blue Badge Scheme, there had been improvements in application processing times and waiting times; lots of calls had been received in relation to eligibility and renewal. It was reported that the main reason for a Blue Badge being declined was that the applicant was not in receipt of the correct benefits and that, in these cases, once this had been rectified, the refusal would be looked at again, resulting in the badge being awarded for applicants meeting the eligibility criteria. This meant that some people would have been included in the figures for both 'applications declined' and 'badges awarded'. The County Council had increased the offering of free internet access with some assistance in Lancashire libraries, to help people with the application which had to be completed online. However, it should be noted that there was a separate fast track application process for terminally ill applicants.

Following on from the audit, an improvement plan was currently being worked on to review some of our processes in relation to the Blue Badge scheme and particularly our correspondence to improve customer experience. The issues raised included quality of the letters sent out and the lack of detailed responses.

In response to a query, Sarah confirmed that an annual review was completed to check whether any Blue Badges were no longer required. The County Council were able to render them as 'not in use' but it was noted that this was a difficult process, especially in relation to applicants who had deceased. The Blue Badge Service was part of the 'Tell Us Once' scheme, which allowed people to report a death to most government organisations in one go.

The Committee noted that, as part of the development of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) model within Children's Social Care, changes had been made to the referral process, in order to ensure that qualified social workers dealt with concerns at the first point of contact.

Work had been undertaken with Corporate Communications to design a dynamic and engaging recruitment advertisement, including profiles on existing staff and their experience working for LCC. The new advert had been well received by applicants, demonstrating the benefits of working for the authority. Young people had said they preferred to submit a CV, rather than completing an application form and this had resulted in a much larger amount of applications being received. It was agreed that this should be discussed with Children Looked After (CLA) at the Corporate Parenting Board due to take place on 7th December.

The Committee were advised that the Genesys Project which supported enhanced multi channel contact and was also used by LCC Accounts Payable and Procurement Services, Emergency Duty Team, MASH Children's Services and BTLS Ask ICT, was currently in Phase 2, focussing on implementing new functionality such as telephony Auto-Attendant, in addition to new channels of contact including Web-Chat and Social Media.

It was noted that Customer Access were currently managing changes to the Crisis Support service, in order to cease the cash voucher payments currently provided, and replace them with food parcels.

It was reported that there had been a huge uptake on NoWcard online renewals and that we were currently in the re-issue period which occurred every 5 years, which was an extremely busy time for the CAS to assist customers whose badges were due to expire on 31st March 2018.

Resolved: That the Cabinet Committee note the contents of the report.

5. Risk & Opportunity Register Quarter 3

A report was presented by Paul Bond, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, providing an updated (Quarter 3) Risk and Opportunity Register for the Cabinet Committee to consider and comment upon.

The Committee noted that the updated Register would be presented to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee on 29th January 2018.

The Cabinet Committee noted the following key highlights for this quarter:

- There was one deletion to the register:
 - CR28 – Risk of not fulfilling our duty in relation to Court of Protection applications. This had been deleted as Cabinet had approved a Prioritisation Tool which had reduced the risk score.
- Allowing for mitigating actions, the residual risk score for the other entries, as detailed in the report, remained at 12 or above, and therefore these issues remained on the register.

Due to a formatting error, the following entry had been omitted from the register:

- CO1 – Developing a new model for public service delivery in Lancashire.

It was confirmed that this would be added to the next quarterly update and would also be amended for the report to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee meeting in January 2018.

Amanda Hatton confirmed that there would be an update for the next quarter on the recent Ofsted inspection for the SEND Service.

Resolved: That the Cabinet Committee note the updated Risk and Opportunity Register and the amendment to be made, prior to its consideration by the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee meeting in January 2018.

6. Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring Report – Quarter 2 2017/18

A report was presented on the Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring for Quarter 2 of 2017/18.

Start Well

It was reported that the number of Children Looked After (CLA) in Lancashire continued to increase. There was a high number of CLA in the Preston area, however, the Committee noted that the rates at which children were becoming looked after in the North and East were reducing.

The Access to Resources Team were working closely with children's social care to ensure optimum placements were identified. It was reported that it was difficult to find placements for some children and that we were currently looking at ways to how best we could work with these young people. A report would be presented to Cabinet in March 2018 on this.

Data released by Ofsted in September 2017 showed that there were two primary schools and four secondary schools in Lancashire judged as inadequate. The Committee noted that significant intervention support had been put into these schools and that early in the New Year, a meeting would take place with the Schools Commissioner. We needed to look at how the warning system was used and this would be detailed on the next quarterly update. County Councillor Driver stated it may also be helpful for Committee to have an overview report on where Academy orders had been received.

Ofsted Post Inspection Update

Amanda Hatton gave a summary of the actions and activity that had been implemented to improve the quality of services that support and protect children and young people.

The Committee noted that next iteration of the Continuous Improvement Plan had been developed and was framed against the following three key areas:

- Reduce the need for social work and care intervention and ensure effective prevention is in place;
- Ensure social work and care intervention is effective and efficient – making the right plans for children, offering appropriate support and minimising drift and delay – purposeful practice;
- Supporting long lasting and sustainable outcomes – permanence.

A revised Sufficiency Strategy for 2017-2020 had been agreed by Cabinet in October 2017, which set out how the Council would ensure that all children looked after had the right placement, in the right place at the right time, and the expectations for how this demand would change in the future.

It was noted that, as part of the implementation of the Residential Strategy approved by Cabinet in June 2017, additional resources were put in place to prevent young people coming into care, and to offer more outreach support and develop an adolescent support unit.

It was reported that HR and Learning Development were currently looking at Social Worker career pathways. It was noted that a report on this was expected in the near future.

The Committee were informed that LINX, along with the Barnardo's Young Carers Service and Children and Young People's Participation in Lancashire, had been shortlisted for the CYP Now awards. LINX had also received a national award for their campaign for Care Leavers across Lancashire to be exempt from paying council tax.

The Committee noted that we had a clear trajectory of improvement from Ofsted. A full inspection was due in Summer 2018, after the final monitoring visit.

Amanda Hatton wished it to be placed on record that staff had worked extremely hard in preparation for the last inspection.

Live Well

It was reported that the County Council was making progress in relation to the diversion of municipal waste away from landfill. County Councillor Green asked how the District Councils' policies on charging for green waste would impact on the landfill and diversion rate. Donna Talbot agreed to look into this.

Library visiting numbers had decreased by 15% when compared to the same period in 2016/17. However, only one of the libraries which had been re-opened had been included in the figures. Over the same period, there had been an 83% increase in e-book downloads. County Councillor Buckley was keen to improve the digital service and felt this would be a useful measure for the next performance monitoring update. Amanda Hatton reported that from January 2018, there would be a big push on reading from the Schools Improvement Service and a grime artist was also due to do some work with young people.

There had been an improvement in uptake figures for the DTaP/IPV/Hib vaccine for babies (provisional figure of 87.6) although it was noted that this was still lower than the recommended target (95%). A further report on childhood immunisations would be presented to a future meeting of the Health Scrutiny Steering Group.

There had also been an increase in the uptake of NHS Health Checks; this was 58.3% compared to the national figure of 48.9%.

It was reported that, despite there being more referrals, fewer people had commenced the Targeted Community Weight Management programme

compared to the last quarter. The Committee requested more information on this.

Key areas were currently being targeted in relation to road safety and there had been a significant reduction in the number of slight casualties. More detail was available in the Live Well Quality of Service Report which was due to be distributed to Cabinet Members.

Age Well

It was reported that Delayed Transfers of Care was still a cause for concern and that a focussed DToC improvement programme had been approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board, with associated significant investment.

The Committee noted that waiting times for social work assessments had improved with 85.3% being completed within 7 days, an increase of 3.1% from quarter 1 and 95.7% completed within 28 days, an increase of 1.2% from quarter 1. Waiting times for OT assessments had also improved in line with the drive to establish greater capacity and a more robustly managed OT workforce.

There had been a 9.6% increase between June and September in support to carers, through the award of direct payments. It was agreed that information in relation to Young Carers would be provided to the next meeting of the Committee.

Highlights were provided to the Committee for services outside of the Start Well, Live Well and Age Well areas.

Resolved: That the reported performance for Quarter 2 and the Ofsted post inspection update information and comments be noted.

7. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement would be held on Tuesday 27th February 2018 at 2.00pm in Committee Room B – The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston