

Lancashire County Council

Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday, 16th January, 2015 at 10.30 am in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Bill Winlow (Chair)

County Councillors

A Barnes	M Parkinson
D Clifford	A Schofield
C Crompton	V Taylor
R Newman- Thompson	C Wakeford
Mrs L Oades	D Watts
D O'Toole	G Wilkins

County Councillors Darren Clifford and Alan Schofield replaced County Councillors Clare Pritchard and John Shedwick respectively.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None were disclosed.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 5 December 2014

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4. Domestic Abuse - Collaboration with Health Services

The Chair welcomed Dr Sakthi Karunanithi, Director of Public Health, to the meeting. A report was presented to the Committee on Domestic Abuse and collaboration with Health Services. The report provided an update to an earlier report to Scrutiny Committee about the partnership response to domestic abuse, particularly concentrating on working with NHS organisations.

The Committee was informed that work was ongoing with health bodies, principally representatives of the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), to

improve the development, delivery and consideration of domestic abuse in mainstream service provision.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) had produced public health guidance, 'Domestic Violence and Abuse: How Health Services, Social Care and the Organisations They Work with can Respond Effectively' which had been used as the basis for discussion with health colleagues.

The guidance was targeted at health and social care commissioners, specialist domestic violence and abuse staff and others whose work might bring them into contact with people who experience or perpetrate domestic violence and abuse.

Many of the health bodies were already working to improve their response to domestic abuse, utilising the NICE guidance as a benchmark.

A Domestic Violence and Abuse Workshop had been held on 23 October 2014 with representatives of the CCGs to consider the guidance in terms of current provision, and to identify where improvements could be made. The key areas for further development and improvement were considered to be:

- Effective partnership working – strategic and operationally
- Integrated care pathways
- Workforce development – across all agencies
- Sustainability of domestic abuse services

Ongoing engagement with health services was planned in order to agree a mutual action plan as the basis of future joint working.

The CCGs in Lancashire had agreed representation at the Lancashire Chief Executives Group, which had adopted the statutory function of Community Safety Strategy Group for the County. This forum provided strategic direction for community safety, including domestic abuse issues.

Councillors were invited to ask questions and raise any comments in relation to the report, a summary of which is provided below:

- Members enquired about the training in place for NHS staff in dealing with domestic abuse victims. It was noted that this was a complex area, with many victims of abuse being reluctant to report abuse for a wide range of reasons. It was confirmed that there are systems in place to help staff identify vulnerable people at risk, including in A&E. It was acknowledged that work in this area was further advanced in relation to recognising vulnerable children than other groups, but that this was being addressed.
- It was noted that Domestic Abuse was an issue that cut across a range of different partners outside the council and services within the council. The Organisational Transformation currently underway in the council would bring many of these services together under the Director for Public Health.

- The Community Safety Partnership was leading a campaign to improve awareness of abuse issues and services which were available to victims. It was noted that raising awareness amongst both victims and the various professionals to help them recognise and deal with abuse was crucial.
- In relation to the NICE guidance, it was explained that this was guidance only and not a mandatory set of standards or practices. It was, however, being followed in Lancashire as the model of service for Domestic Abuse. It was accepted that the challenging financial environment meant that resources had to be carefully managed to ensure the guidance was being met.
- The impact of this activity and how its success would be measured was raised. The main process for this was through the commissioning of these services. The commissioning plan had service specification and this specification had key performance indicators which would allow the success of the services to be assessed. There was also a NHS outcome framework which was nationally set which would pick up on the higher population outcome which would show the link between the service procured and whether this had an impact on the outcome.
- Members commented that the service mapping exercise was very useful as it produced information where there might be gaps but might also produce information where there might be duplication. There was a clear need to strengthen engagement with the NHS and the third sector in connecting with their existing pathways to the services commissioned through other partnerships.
- Councillors requested contact points and details to point them to the right place to find assistance and help for members of the public contacting them about Domestic Abuse, given their involvement with their communities. They requested they be linked to all the correct connections to contact. Dr Karunanithi reassured the Committee that these contacts would be made available to Councillors.
- Members queried the degree to which different partners were integrated on these issues, particularly given the need for clinical confidentiality and compatibility of information systems. It was confirmed that the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was successfully getting the services to integrate, although there would always be some issues around the technological integration of the different partners' IT systems and the appropriateness of maintaining patient confidentiality where appropriate. Members felt a visit to MASH would prove useful.
- Members were informed that the NHS had a very strong system for safeguarding and assuring itself safeguarding systems were in place. The issue was how this information was shared with a wider set of partners.

Safeguarding was one of the key issues for the NHS to assure NHS England and the Department of Health.

- Members requested that there be ongoing robust scrutiny of domestic abuse. It was recognised that some of the issues raised came within the remit of the Health Scrutiny Committee, and that working between the committees would be important and beneficial. The strong and ongoing support received by both committees from the Director of Public Health and his team was recognised.
- Concerns were raised around the people who suffered domestic violence who had a mental health condition. The results from the Domestic Violence and Abuse Workshop identified that services for these people were poor and patchy and Members enquired what would be done about this. This was a strategic priority within the NHS regarding mental health.

Resolved: That,

1. The report be noted
2. A joint meeting with Health Scrutiny and Children and Young People be held in one year's time with the Scrutiny Committee.
3. The Committee arrange to visit the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in the next few months.

5. Work Plan and Task Group Update

A report was presented summarising the work to be undertaken by the Committee in the coming months, including an update on task group work.

The Committee recognised the need to take a strong role in scrutinising the impact of service changes introduced in the budget in the context of reducing financial resources. It was agreed that a report should come to a future committee on the initial finding of the adult social care transformation project, as well as an update on services for adults with learning disabilities. In addition, a report on progress on discussion with districts about bus services and bus subsidies was requested.

Concerns were raised regarding consultations on the budget and also the transport plans and that these consultations were being done through LALC. Many Parish and Town Councils were not members of LALC and were not receiving the information from LALC. It was felt that this may have meant that fewer responses to the budget consultation that might be expected had been received from parish and town councils. Councillors asked for reassurance that all Parish Council had been contacted directly about the proposals now agreed for formal consultation by cabinet.

Resolved: That

1. The work plan be updated to include items on adult social care transformation; services for adults with learning disabilities; and bus services and subsidies
2. A visit to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) be added to the work plan, as agreed under the previous item
3. The report be noted.

6. Urgent Business

None.

7. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be on Friday 13 February 2015, at 10.30 at the County Hall, Preston.

I Young
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston