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## HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

11 FEBRUARY 2020

(7.15 pm - 8.34 pm)

**PRESENT:** Councillors Councillor Peter McCabe (in the Chair), Councillor Thomas Barlow, Councillor Rebecca Lanning, Councillor Dave Ward, Councillor Carl Quilliam, Councillor Nigel Benbow, Councillor Pauline Cowper, Councillor Mary Curtin and Di Griffin

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Mark Allison (Cabinet Member for Finance and Deputy Leader of the Council) and Councillor Tobin Byers (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment).

Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), John Morgan (Assistant Director, Adult Social Care), Dr Dagmar Zeuner (Director, Public Health) and Hannah Doody (Director of Community and Housing) Stella Akintan (Scrutiny Officer)

### 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Saleem Sheikh.

### 2 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 2)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests.

### 3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Agenda Item 3)

The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record

### 4 SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICE - SHORT FILM ON SERVICE USERS EXPERIENCES - EXEMPT ITEM (Agenda Item 4)

The Panel watched a film which provided an insight into the service user experience.

### 5 TACKLING AND PREVENTING SUBSTANCE MISUSE (Agenda Item 5)

The Director of Public Health gave an overview of the report. There a wide range of services to tackle service misuse and a partnership is in place which includes the police, mental health and homelessness services.

The WDP service Manager gave an overview of the services highlighting that there is a fully integrated service based in Mitcham. A CQC inspection has just been completed and it has rated the service Good overall with Outstanding features.

The chair congratulated the Service Manager WDP Merton on the outcome from the CQC inspection.

A Panel member asked how many people are fully functioning amongst the 38,000 alcohol misusers in Merton. The Director of Public Health said these are numbers of those at risk which is worryingly high. There are different categories and about 6,000 people fall into the category for higher harm. There is a digital app available (Drinkchecker) which provides a self-assessment and advice tool, for those who do not access services. The Service are looking at new ways to get more people into treatment.

A panel member asked how Merton WDP work with prisons. The Service Manager reported that there is a dedicated officer who liaises with the prisons and is notified when those who need services are released. The aim is to continue treatment and integrate them into their local WDP service.

A panel member asked if there is a risk the service miss-diagnoses between those who have drinking and drug problem and what support is provided for the homeless. It was reported that it is difficult to disentangle between drug use and mental health but there is a dual diagnosis service. They also work closely with night shelters and Faith in Action who refer people to WDP services.

#### RESOLVED

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

#### 6 BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE 2020-24 (Agenda Item 6)

The Director of Corporate Services gave an overview of the report and stated that it contains an indication of the Local Government Settlement and it is not anticipated there will be significant change to the final figures. The report provides an update on the Freedom Pass, and Pension Fund. There are some grants within the settlement but it is only for a year at this stage. The Spending Review and Fair Funding review has been deferred for another year.

A Panel member asked about the expected 1.4% increase in the public health budget. The Director of Corporate Services said councils are waiting for further details but it is likely to be linked to re-commissioning of services.

A Panel member asked for further detail on saving proposal CH98 review of the transport requesting for more detail on how the £200,000 saving will be made.

The Director of Community and Housing said transport is a high spend area across the council and the fleet needs to be reviewed to ensure we are providing the most efficient environmentally friendly transport. We are working with consultants to review the service, this includes analysing the routes used and the best way we can provide the service more efficiently. It is recognized that some individuals will need support to

travel, this is based on individual assessed need. However, some people may prefer to be supported to travel independently or with some support. The department will work with local communities to increase the independent travel-training offer to promote independence.

A Panel member asked if additional investment will be needed in the transport service. The Director of Community and Housing said the transport review is currently underway, once it completed then the options can be considered.

A panel member said while supporting independence is important, that there will be an increase in people needing help. The Director of Community and Housing said detailed work is taking place to understand costs within the services. Discussions are also taking place with health partners to share some of the costs. A combination of factors will support people and enable them to remain in their homes.

In response to questions the Assistant Director of Adult Social Care reported that the care monitoring system will provide more information about a visit. This will enable the council to pay for the care that is provided. This also benefits those who pay for their own care.

#### RESOLVED

The Chair thanked officers for their report.

#### 7 BUSINESS PLAN 2020-24 - SAVINGS INFORMATION PACK (Agenda Item 7)

The Director of Corporate Services gave an overview of the report and stated that it contains an indication of the final settlement and it is not anticipated there will be significant change to the final figures. The report provides an update on the Freedom Pass, and Pension Fund. There are some grants within the settlement but it is only for a year at this stage. The Spending Review and Fair Funding review has been deferred for another year. There is currently is no budget gap in 2020-2021.

A Panel member asked about the expected 1.4% increase in public health budget. The Director of Corporate Services said councils are waiting for further details but it is likely to be linked to re-commissioning of services.

A Panel member asked for further detail on saving proposal CH98 review of the transport service asking for would like more detail on how the £200,000 saving will be made

The Director of Community and Housing said transport is a high spend area and the fleet needs to be reviewed. They are working with consultants to review the service and consider how it can be re-modelled. It is recognised that some individuals will need support to travel. However some people can manage a more independent model. The department will work with local communities to increase the independent travel offer to promote independence and reduce the number of buses on the road.

A Panel member asked if additional investment will be needed in Transport. The Director of Community and Housing said the transport review is underway to understand the detail then the options can be considered.

A panel member said while supporting independence is important, that there will be an increase in people needing support.

The Director of Community and Housing said detailed work is taking place to understand costs within the services. Discussions are also taking place with health partners to share some of the costs. A combination of factors will support people and enable them remain in their homes.

In response to questions the Assistant Director of Adult Social Care reported that the care monitoring system will provide more information on a visit, so the council can pay for the care that is provided. This also benefits those who pay for their own care.

RESOLVED

The Chair thanked officers for their support.

## 8 LEARNING FROM SAFEGUARDING ADULT REVIEWS (Agenda Item 8)

The Assistant Director of Adult Social Care gave an overview of the report. A Panel member asked for clarification about how the learning is obtained. The Assistant Director for Adult Social Care said the Safeguarding Adults Evaluation Group will consider the evidence and learning from the review.

A Panel member asked if the professionals feel blamed and therefore reluctant to participate in the process. The Director of Community and Housing said the Safeguarding Adult Review is commissioned independently. The Interim Safeguarding & DOLS Team Manager said there is a good relationship with partner agencies and the focus is on learning from the review.

RESOLVED

Officers were thanked for their report

## 9 WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 9)

The work programme was noted by the Panel.