

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
4 APRIL 2019

Present: Councillor David Absolom (Chair)
Councillors Grashoff, Hoskin, Jones, Khan, McEwan, McKenna, Pearce, R Singh, Terry, Vickers and White.

Apologies: Councillor Robinson.

37. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

38. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

The Minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

- Health and Wellbeing Board - 18 January 2019

39. OMBUDSMAN INVESTIGATION

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Services and the Monitoring Officer submitted a report giving the Committee notice of a completed investigation by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman into a complaint about the quality of home care that had been provided by the Council's contractor to the complainant's late mother, in particular that the carers had failed to call 999 when the subject had been ill.

The report explained that the Ombudsman had found that injustice had been caused by faults on the part of both the care provider and the Council. The Ombudsman's report had been made available for public inspection at the Civic Offices and in the Central Library and had been circulated separately to the members of the Committee.

The home care had been commissioned by Adult Social Care and had been provided by Radis Group under contract to the Council. The Ombudsman investigation had found that Radis care workers had been late in getting medical attention for a vulnerable woman, with faults in the following specific areas:

- The carers had not encouraged the subject to move around or use her inhaler;
- The carers had not visited the subject at lunchtime on the day before she had died, or had dealt properly with the morning carer's concerns about her health;
- The carers had failed to call 999 on the evening of the same day, or to follow Radis's own emergency procedures;
- The recording of the carers' discussions with the subject with Radis management was not flawed and incomplete;
- The investigation of the subsequent complaints had been flawed in procedural and safeguarding terms, had failed to establish that the provider

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had not followed their own emergency procedures and the outcome had not been reported back to the complainant by the Council.

The report set out the response of both the Council and Radis to the Ombudsman's investigation, and his proposed remedy, which had been fully accepted by the Council. The action that had been taken by Adult Social Care to implement the Local Ombudsman's recommendations, and remedy the faults to the complainant and his family, were set out in the report.

At the invitation of the Chair, Paula Hoggarth, Group Operations Director Radis Group, addressed the Committee and answered questions.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Ombudsman's finding of faults (maladministration) by both the Council and the Council's home care provider, Radis, be noted;**
- (2) That the action being taken to remedy the injustice experienced by the subject's family as a result of these faults, as recommended by the Local Ombudsman, be endorsed, as follows:**
 - (a) The Council had:**
 - Apologised to the complainant for the distress caused by the faults identified
 - Is discussing with him whether he wishes the Council to provide a lasting tribute (such as planting a tree) in memory of the subject
 - Paid £100 to the complainant to acknowledge the time and trouble he had taken in pursuing this complaint;
 - (b) Within three months of the Local Ombudsman's final report, the Council would have:**
 - Ensured the care provider had:
 - Trained all staff on the use of its emergency procedures and the procedures to follow when a service user was ill
 - Trained all carers on accurate and complete record keeping
 - Reviewed its adult social care complaints procedure to clarify how it dealt with complaints against commissioned care providers, and how it would ensure independent investigation of serious complaints
 - Reminded staff involved in adult safeguarding enquiries of the importance of ensuring enquiry reports were factual and accurate

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- Provided the Ombudsman with evidence it had taken these actions.

40. ADULT SOCIAL CARE PERFORMANCE

Seona Douglas, Director of Adult Social Care and Health Services, gave a presentation on performance in Adult Social Care. The presentation covered a number of areas including how Adult Social Care was measured, the budget position, an analysis of expenditure in 2017/18, the number of people receiving Adult Social Care services 2016/17 to 2018/19, current activity and work coming into the system, current delayed discharges from hospital and a number of graphs showing performance against the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) neighbours, CIPFA Average 2017/18, South East Average 2017/18 and the England Average 2017/18.

In response to a number of questions Seona explained that in respect of Direct Payments the aim was to get to 23% of people using direct payments, staff training was taking place to improve knowledge so that it was promoted as an option and many staff were now championing their use. Seona also explained that the service had a statutory responsibility to assess need against national eligibility criteria and the aim was to promote the service before needs became desperate. More sophisticated ways of supporting people were being used and a conversation based approach was being taken asking people what they could do rather than focusing on what they couldn't do which was a very negative deficit model approach and had been used in the past.

A copy of the presentation slides was made available on the Reading Borough Council website.

Resolved - That the presentation be noted.

41. SHARED LIVES EXPANSION UPDATE

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the expansion of the Shared Lives Scheme to support older people (65+), including a marketing plan and vision. The report was presented by Amelia Johnson, National Management Trainee. A copy of the Equality Impact Assessment was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and a copy of an advertisement that had appeared on the back of 19 Reading buses throughout March 2019 was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The report explained that Shared Lives was a national scheme that had been created as an alternative to care homes or short but frequent care visits. The scheme matched someone who needed care with an approved Shared Lives carer. The carer was paid to open up their home, shared their family and community life, and gave care and support to the person with care needs. In Reading the Scheme currently primarily supported those with Learning Disabilities, but was being expanded to support Older People also, either through full-time, part-time, or respite placements. The report explained that the reason for expanding the scheme was to support older people, primarily to provide a preferable service to members of the public than traditional alternatives in a cost effective way. The

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expansion required recruitment of extra carers to provide care; a recruitment and marketing campaign had been carried out which had included marketing on social media, in print and on both the radio and television news. The most significant marketing exercise had been advertisements that had been placed on the backs of Reading buses. The expansion aligned with the strategic direction of travel that had been outlined in the Adult Social Care Transformation Strategy, which was to provide sustainable forms of care to benefit residents in the Borough.

Resolved - That the expansion of the Shared Lives Scheme to support older people be noted.

42. FAIR WORKLOAD COMMITMENT FOR SCHOOLS

Further to Minute 33 of the previous meeting the Director of Children's Services, Brighter Futures for Children (BFfC), submitted a report on the Fair Workload Commitment for Schools.

The report stated that work had been carried out with schools and professional associations to establish a framework of guidance, and a core set of principles governing a Fair Workload Charter for staff working in schools. This guidance had reflected a commitment to ensuring that workloads were reasonable but that the way this manifested itself was flexible to meet the diverse needs and working patterns of schools and teachers.

The work-life balance of staff in schools was a high priority for school managers, staff, the local authority and trade unions. It was an area that needed to be monitored and managed, with individual schools being supported in finding strategies that worked for them. The Reading Pledge had been consulted on with Headteachers, the authority and trade unions to demonstrate a commitment to finding and maintaining a fairer work and life balance for all staff. It provided flexibility for schools to find what worked best for their staff and their school ethos. The aim of the Pledge was to achieve a consensus of staff who felt valued and supported and who felt they had control over managing their workload. This would help support the wellbeing of staff and would contribute to the recruitment and retention of staff. The Pledge provided a set of core principles that all parties had committed to and these were set out in the report.

The report set out a number of initiatives that provided examples of current practice that were in place and that had been gathered from Headteachers in the Borough across both primary and secondary schools. Such strategies had been offered as examples that might be adopted and adapted to fit the ethos of individual schools to support a Fair Workload culture for staff and to promote a positive work-life balance. This was not intended to be an exhaustive list and schools would continue to adapt and were free to identify approaches that worked for them.

The Committee discussed the report and requested that an update report detailing how the Reading Pledge was working be submitted to the meeting on 8 April 2020.

At the invitation of the Chair Alison McNamara, Teacher, Panel Secretary: Education and Community Unions, addressed the Committee.

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Resolved -

- (1) That the Fair Workload Commitment for Schools be approved;**
- (2) That an update report be submitted to the meeting on 8 April 2020.**

43. UPDATE ON THE DELIVERY OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) STRATEGY 2017 - 2022

Further to minute 16 of the meeting held on 4 October 2018, the Director of Children's Services, Brighter Futures for Children, submitted a copy of the Council's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2017 to 2022 and Sonia Aluk, Service Manager, SEND and CYPD, Brighter Futures for Children provided the Committee with a verbal update on the Strategy.

Sonia informed the Committee that the SEND Strategy delivery strands had been reviewed in light of progress to date and the Strategy had been developed accordingly. She then gave a detailed update on each of the five strands.

In respect of increasing capacity for SEND students Councillor Pearce reported that Blessed Hugh Faringdon would be increasing the size of its unit for autistic students next year, two primary school units would be established and would provide an outreach service for other schools, the authority had been successful in a bid to build a new SEN School which it was planned would be opened in 2022 and the Avenue School was also expanding and would be offering a new SEN class.

Resolved - That the position be noted.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.22 pm).