

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL  
25 MAY 2016  
7.30 - 8.55 PM**



**Present:**

Councillors Harrison (Chairman), Allen (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Angell, Finch, Mrs McKenzie, Ms Merry, Peacey and Mrs Temperton

**Executive Members:**

Councillor D Birch

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Councillor Finnie

**1. Election of Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Harrison be elected Chairman of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2016/17.

**2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Allen be elected Vice-Chairman of the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the municipal year 2016/17.

**3. Minutes and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the 19 January 2016 Panel meeting were approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

**4. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip**

There were no declarations of interest relating to any items on the agenda, nor any indication that Members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

**5. Urgent Items of Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

**6. Public Participation**

There were no submissions from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny.

**7. Quarterly Service Report (QSR)**

The Panel received the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Quarterly Service Report (QSR) for the Quarter 4 of the year 2015-16, relating to the period 1 January to 31 March 2016. Officers also gave a presentation on progress since the publication of the QSR.

The Chief Officer: Older People and Long Term Conditions reported that:

- A tender had been awarded to The Ark for provision of service for unpaid carers. This new service was to be called Signal 4 Bracknell Forest, and would work to raise the profile of unpaid carers, and identify hidden carers.
- The Emergency Duty Service had developed a new service model which had gone out to consultation with the other Berkshire Local Authorities.
- Work with the Clinical Commissioning Group and Local Trust was ongoing to develop preventative and self-care methods.

The Chief Officer: Commissioning and Resources on behalf of Chief Officer: Adults and Joint Commissioning reported that:

- The Helping You Stay Independent guide had been published and was being distributed through social workers, libraries and public meetings.
- It was also reported that the current Mental Health provider had not been delivering as hoped, and that a re-procurement process would be beneficial. It was hoped that the Recovery College model could be followed, which aided recovery of those with mental health needs by focussing on their strengths and promoting achievable recovery goals.
- It had been decided that the Safeguarding Adult Partnership Board needed an Independent Chair, and there was now a Chair in post.
- 7 people with Learning Disabilities were living in the Santa Catalina flats following their development. It was hoped that as the new residents settled in, their needs and associated service costs would become apparent.

For Commissioning and Resources, it was reported that:

- A replacement for the Resource Allocation System was being investigated, as the system had been developed 8 years ago and other more robust, national models were available.
- The LAS Citizen Portal was in development, and it was hoped that the portal would go live in October.

The Chief Officer: Housing, informed the Panel that:

- Four properties had been bought and let out by Downshire Homes. Fifteen further properties were in the process of being bought.
- The draft Housing Strategy was due to be presented to the Executive in July before going out to consultation. The allocation policy changes were also due to go to the Executive.
- A new Council Tax reduction scheme based on income bands was in development, and it was hoped that the new scheme would be simpler.
- Forest Care had applied to the Care Quality Commissioner for registration of care provision.
- Amber House was in the process of being purchased, which would provide 200 units of affordable housing.

In response to Members' questions, the following points were raised:

- There had been complications with ensuring compliance with the Information Governance Statement of Compliance (IGSOC) regarding the transfer of information, and how NHS data was received onto Bracknell Forest Council networks.
- Concerns were raised around performance against indicator OF2c.2 relating to Delayed Transfers of Care. Members reported concern from GPs regarding early discharge from hospitals putting an increased pressure on community services, as patient information from the hospitals was not forthcoming. Officers responded to comment that if the community team did not believe a

discharged patient was physically fit, their discharge could be challenged with the hospital. The issue was reported to be regularly raised at Community Resilience groups.

- There were 9 households in Bed and Breakfast accommodation at the time of the meeting, and this was the lowest number since 2013. Officers reported that families facing homelessness could be assisted financially and with finding a suitable property, but that the Council could not assist in finding a suitable guarantor.
- Increasing focus on prevention and self-care was hoped to slow the pressures of an increasing population in the borough. It was commented that the Local Plan had not taken these community pressures into account in the past, and that talks with developers regarding community provision for the frail and elderly would need to start early.
- There was no underlying problem to result in 6 performance measures out of 22 appearing as Red, and as an example it was noted that for Of1E Adults with Learning Disabilities in Paid Employment, 17.1% was a good outcome compared with national statistics despite being marked as Red in the report.
- Bracknell Forest along with Surrey and Hampshire County Councils had been working with Frimley Park Hospital to agree a hospital discharge pathway, and a record was kept of known Bracknell Forest residents in hospital. It was noted that the location of the hospital was irrelevant to the nature and quality of care residents received on return to the borough.
- It was queried whether the Recovery College was modelled on SLAM (South London and Maudsley)'s example, and officers offered to find out.

## 8. **Annual Complaints Reports 2015/16 for Adult Social Care and for Housing**

The Panel considered the Annual Complaints report 2015-16 for Adult Social Care and for Housing.

There had been more compliments than complaints received over the reporting period, although the number of both had declined. There had been no apparent reason for the decline, but it was noted that a decline in number of complaints meant that the service was missing opportunities to improve. There had been 19 complaints within the reporting period.

In response to Members' questions, the following points were noted:

- An inaccuracy was raised regarding the outcome of complaints and the different numbers of complaints upheld, partially upheld and not upheld in report sections entitled 'Executive Summary' and 'Outcomes from Complaints'.
- It was queried why the report stated that nineteen complaints had been received and the QSR for Quarter 4 stated eighteen complaints. Officers explained that an issue had been received in March, and this had become a complaint in April after the QSR had been published. Clarification would be provided in response to a further query regarding the number of upheld complaints.
- There was no reason given for the small increase in Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Communications complaints.
- The issues behind complaints were often resolved as a result of learning from the complaint. As an example, it was reported that there had been problems regarding the complicated invoice received by people paying for care. Work had been done to simplify the invoice, but due to the complicated nature of the financial arrangements it was anticipated that complaints may still be received.

- A Member training session on the Council's provision for people with ASD over the age of 18 including provision of housing was requested.

## 9. **Housing Allocation Policy**

The Panel considered the proposed changes to the Council's Housing Allocation Policy which were currently subject to consultation.

There were four proposals to be considered, which were:

1. An increase from one to four years for the residency requirement for the housing register.
2. The ability to discharge the homes duty to the private rented sector, if a suitable property was refused by the household on the housing register.
3. The maintenance of a family's housing need if children were removed by social care from their families, as preparation for their return to the family home. This proposal followed advice from Chief Officer: Children's Social Care.
4. The implementation of Right to Move guidance from the Government which allowed customers to move areas for employment purposes. The guidance suggested that 1% of lettings should be put aside each year, amounting to 3 lettings for Right to Move customers per year.

In response to Members' questions, the following points were raised:

- The increase to four years for residency requirement was in line with a government suggestion that benefits be restricted to European Union workers living in the country over four years.
- It was reported that customers were tested on whether they had made themselves intentionally homeless. Although there was the risk of an increase in intentional homelessness when changes were made to residency requirements, intentional homelessness would not be rewarded.
- Statutory guidance on housing suitability did not take into account location of schools attended by the household, unless a child had imminent exams.
- The timings of proposed changes were subject to approval from the Executive.
- There was no housing provision for those who worked but did not live in the borough.
- Consultation would take place through the Council's Consultation portal, and the Consultation would be advertised on the frontpage of the BFC My Choice website for existing housing users. It was also reported that the housing providers in the borough would be contacted for their thoughts on the proposed changes. The consultation would be extended and would continue past the 6 June 2016.

## 10. **Heathlands Residential Home Update**

The Panel received an update on the Heathlands Residential Home closure.

There had been eleven residents of Heathlands Residential Home who had needed to move in February and March 2016. All residents had been notified of the closure and given choices for their relocation. Of the eleven residents, one had already planned to move to cater for their complex needs and had died shortly after the move, and one resident had died before the move took place. Both deaths had been expected and were not resultant of the moving process. The relocated residents would continue to be monitored over twelve months following the move.

There had been fifty-two staff at Heathlands at its closure, and all had taken up the offer of an interview to examine their skills audit. Most staff had either retired, changed career or transferred to private residential homes, but one had found work at Waymead, and two had gone to the Bridgewell Centre.

Building access and security of the Home was being monitored by Forest Care.

**11. Next Review Topic / Working Group**

The Panel discussed its next review topic with reference to the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17. Although Members had previously expressed an interest in reviewing local housing supply, this topic was no longer included in the Work Programme. Examining the provision of accommodation for older people in the Borough was also a topic of interest. As the Executive's approval was being sought to hold a consultation in respect of the draft Housing Strategy 2016-2021 in July, it was suggested that this be the first topic for a Working Group to review. As the Strategy covered all aspects of housing in the Borough, a Working Group could subsequently turn its attention to one of the strands flowing from it, such as accommodation for older people.

Members who volunteered for the next Working Group were Councillors Peacey, Finch, Mrs Angell, Mrs McKenzie and Mrs Temperton.

**12. Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions**

The Panel received and noted the scheduled Key and Non-Key Executive Decisions relating to Adult Social Care and Housing.

One of the scheduled decisions related to the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report which the Panel would consider at its next meeting. It was suggested that the Independent Chair of the Partnership Board be invited to attend on that occasion to present the report.

**CHAIRMAN**

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