

Adults Scrutiny Panel

Minutes - 5 December 2023

Attendance

Members of the Adults Scrutiny Panel

Cllr Qaiser Azeem
Cllr Val Evans (Chair)
Cllr Bob Maddox
Cllr Rohit Mistry
Cllr Paul Sweet
Cllr Iqra Tahir

Employees

Lindsey Cowan
Emma Curran
James Barlow
Earl Piggott-Smith
Becky Wilkinson

Corporate Analytics Manager
Portfolio Manager
Finance Business Partner
Scrutiny Officer
Director of Adult Social Services

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

1 **Welcome and Introductions**

Cllr Val Evans, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised it was being live streamed to the press and public. A recording of the meeting would be available for viewing on the Council's website at a future date.

2 **Meeting procedures to be followed**

Cllr Evans explained the protocol to be followed during the meeting for asking questions

3 **Apologies and Notification of Substitutions**

Apologies were received from the following:

Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Christopher Haynes
Cllr Udey Singh
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr Linda Leach
Cllr Jenny Cockayne

Cllr Jasbir Jaspal – Cabinet Member for Adults and Wellbeing

4 **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest recorded.

5 **Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2023**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2023 were approved as correct record and signed by the Chair.

6 **Budget and Performance Update**

The Chair invited Becky Wilkinson, Director of Adult Services, to introduce the report.

The Director invited James Barlow, Finance Business Partner, to introduce the slides on the budget report. A copy of the presentation is attached.

The Director invited panel members to comment on the Draft budget 2024-2025 and MTFS presentation slides.

A panel member queried the issue of costs for out of area placements for children services and highlighted concerns about the huge discrepancies in the level of charges. The panel member commented on previous discussions about charges for external children's residential accommodations and plans to work with other local authorities to avoid competition for places leading to increased costs. The panel member queried if this was a similar situation facing adult social care placements.

The Director acknowledged the pressures on care costs for adult social placements but the issue for the Council concern cases involving adults with learning and physical disabilities where more people tend to be placed out of city. The Director added that the cost pressures are due the lack of suitable placements rather than the cost of the care package.

The Director commented that the Council is working on the issue and reassured the panel that the cost pressures are not as acute as compared to the situation in children services for out of area residential care placements.

The Director presented the Our City Our Plan Performance slides and progress against six performance indicators. A copy of the presentation is attached.

The Director commented that Adult Social Care is showing strong performance overall and work is being planned in areas where improvements are needed.

The Chair thanked the Director for the presentation. The panel were invited to comment on the presentation.

A panel member queried what checks were in place to ensure the quality of care provided by external agencies to residents.

The Director reassured the panel that checks are done by the Quality Assurance Team on the care provided and the service also do unannounced inspections. The Council works closely with health colleagues to support this, for example, infection control procedures. The Director added that concerns or alerts about the quality of care can either be raised with CQC or with the Council.

The Director commented that that an updated Quality Assurance Framework is scheduled to be presented to the panel on 20.2.24 which details the work being done with partners to improve the quality of care provided.

There is an expectation that there will be further improvements because of the past investment in the sector. The Director acknowledged that the current assurance framework does need further improvement.

A panel member queried the method used to randomly select service users to take part in the survey and expressed concern about the low response rate.

Lindsey Cowan, Corporate Analytics Manager, advised the panel that the analysis is based on a random sample of service users.

The aim is to achieve a response rate of 20 per cent to be statistically significant. To date 1700 survey forms have been issued.

The Chair thanked the presenters for the report.

Resolved:

The panel comments on the Draft Budget 2024-2025 and Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Our City Our Plan Performance report to be noted.

7 **Transforming Adults Service Programme Annual Report 2022-2023**

The Chair invited Emma Curran, Portfolio Manager, to present report.

The Portfolio Manager advised the panel that the presentation would cover the background to the Transforming Adults Service Programme (TASP) Annual Report 2022-2023 and the main headlines, key achievements, and future priorities.

The Portfolio Manager advised the panel that a priority for the forthcoming year will be to continue the test and learn approach and to look for opportunities to use the success from TASP to support projects across adult social care. The Portfolio Manager added the aim will also be to ensure lessons learned from setbacks are being applied well and initiating the expected changes in the design and delivery of future projects.

The Portfolio Manager advised the panel that in the new year that there will be a focus on checking that the vision of the TASP resonates with residents.

The Portfolio Manager invited panel members to comment on the report and the presentation.

A panel member asked for further details about the achievement highlighted in the annual report about Wolverhampton being selected by Government to be one of six local authorities involved in the trailblazer programme for social care charging reform and asked for an update.

The Director confirmed that Wolverhampton had been approached to be one of six local authorities to take part in the work that the DHSS were doing on social care charging reforms. The project was focused on finding the fair cost of what the Council should be spending on social care, however there were significant costs to implementing the reforms and the work was paused at the start of the year.

The Director added that currently not sure what the future of programme will be.

The Chair thanked the presenters for the report.

Resolved:

1. The panel comments on the content of the Transforming Adult Services Programme Annual report and presentation to be noted.
2. The panel note the achievements and successes for this reporting year and the priorities for 2023 – 2024.

8 **Adults Scrutiny Panel - Draft Work Programme 2023 2024**

The Chair invited Earl Piggott-Smith, Scrutiny Officer, to present report. The Scrutiny Office advised the panel of future items scheduled on the work programme. The panel were invited to suggest changes to the work programme.

Resolved:

The Panel agreed to note the report.

The Chair formally recorded her thanks and appreciation on behalf of the panel for the work done by Becky Wilkinson in supporting the work of the panel. The panel wished her the best in her new role.