



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 21st JANUARY 2020

PRESENT: Councillor R Ford (Chair), Councillors R Claymore, P Brindley, M J Greatorex, K Norchi, M Oates, R Rogers and J Faulkner

CABINET Councillor M Cook.

The following officers were present: Joanne Sands (Assistant Director Partnerships) and Jo Hutchison (Democratic Services, Scrutiny and Elections Officer)

Apologies received from: Councillor(s) County Councillor T Clements

36 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the previous Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 26th November 2019 were approved and signed as a true record.

(Moved by Councillor J Faulkner and seconded by Councillor P Brindley)

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

38 DEBT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

The Chair welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services and Communities, the Assistant Director Partnerships and the Chief Officer from Citizens Advice, Mid Mercia to the meeting.

The Committee received the report of the Assistant Director which updated the Committee on the corporate approach to managing and supporting residents with problem debt and wider vulnerability. The Assistant Director highlighted the following to the Committee:

- the work done by the Benefits team to process claims quickly;

- the availability of discretionary housing payments to assist the most vulnerable;
- the sensitive management of any overpayments of housing benefits;
- the corporate project group which had been re-set to respond to welfare reform, in particular Universal Credit;
- the commitment to deliver services through enhanced digitisation and customer access;
- the work of the Council Tax team, which although not signed up to the Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol, complies with most of the principles outlined.

The Chief Officer, Citizens Advice Mid Mercia, updated the Committee on the transition of the citizen advice service to the Mid Mercia organisation from April 2019. He further updated the Committee on the service provided in Tamworth and the areas from which the most queries came and from where support and advice was required. In particular the Committee heard that debt, housing and generalist advice was provided and that the demand for this came from a combination of referrals from Tamworth Borough Council and self-referral, sometimes following customers having called the citizens advice telephone helpline.

It was reported that:

- there were now 10 volunteers who were Tamworth based;
- an energy based advice service was provided to help avoid fuel poverty;
- Citizens Advice would also be providing a new mental health advice service for families from April 2020.

The Committee sought clarification on the following:

- The impact seen by Citizen Advice of the end of PPI payouts. Citizens Advice clarified that there was no evidence from aggregated national data that this was one of the top ten issues in debt management.
- The extent of support available in terms of avoiding financial scams. Citizens Advice reported that training in this area was usually undertaken 1-2-1 after contact had been made.
- Impact of funding for local authorities being withdrawn by DWP associated with Personal Budgeting Support. Citizens Advice confirmed that Government had looked to deliver a more consistent service nationally and had commissioned Citizens Advice to help support in this area.
- Why had Tamworth Borough Council not signed up to the Council Tax Arrears Good Practice Protocol. Councillor M Cook agreed to raise this with the Portfolio Holder for Assets and Finance and report back to the Committee.
- What proportion of Tamworth Borough Council debt went through an enforcement process. The Assistant Director Partnerships agreed to raise the item with the relevant Officer.

The Chair, on behalf of the Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder, the Assistant Director and the Chief Officer, Citizens Advice Mid Mercia, for their update and for the work they undertook with residents. They then left the meeting.

Councillor R Claymore left the meeting at 6.45pm.

39 UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair reported that the item on Councillor Training records would be brought forward to the next meeting of the Committee, rather than this meeting.

40 COUNCILLOR TRAINING RECORDS

This item to be moved to the next meeting of the Committee.

41 UPDATE ON HEALTH RELATED MATTERS CONSIDERED BY STAFFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

There was no update to report as had been no Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee held since the last meeting of this Committee. The next Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee meeting is on 3 February 2020.

42 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the Forward Plan and agreed that there were no items from the Forward Plan which should be considered as Work Plan items.

43 HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY WORK PLAN - 2019/2020

43.1 Staffordshire Observatory Data Pack

The Committee did not at this time identify any further items for its consideration.

43.2 Review and update the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2019/2020

The Chair highlighted that members had been requested to consider their priorities on the work plan in advance of this meeting with an aim to prioritise the existing items. It was agreed that the mental health issues in Tamworth item would be merged with the update expected at the February meeting from the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust.

The Chair reported that he would like to add an additional item to the Committee's Work plan which could require an additional meeting of this Committee to be called in March 2020. The item related to a service to improve the availability of information on the accessibility of Tamworth.

The Committee updated the Work Plan as follows:

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Work Plan

Work Plan 2019 - 2020	
DATE	SUBJECT
Each meeting	Update on Staffordshire County Council matters
26 February 2020	Councillor training records
26 February 2020	A representative from Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – to attend the Committee re mental health services To consider Mental Health issues in Tamworth
26 February 2020	Air Quality review
Ongoing	Together We're Better / STP - brief update post close of initial consultation (end date of initial consultation is 25 August 2019)
XXX March 2020	Tamworth Accessibility.
2 April 2020	Safeguarding Update (Councillor Doyle to attend and Officers)
Xx June 2020	Safeguarding & Partnerships
TBC	Cervical cancer screening
TBC	Staffordshire Talent Match
TBC	Loneliness – Joint Working group with Corporate Scrutiny. Note that SCC considering Isolation.
TBC	Discharge to Assess and End of Life Care
TBC	GCSE Attainment – T&F group formed of Cllrs Ford, Faulkner, Brindley and Claymore
TBC	Invite representative from the following to attend a meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulance Service
TBC	Barriers to accessing GP Services in relation to residents with additional needs / Centralisation of some GP Services
Defer to 2020	Invite First Response to attend – (RK)

Upcoming Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Meetings
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26 February 2020

XX March 2020 – additional meeting to be arranged

2 April 2020

Upcoming Relevant County Council Meetings
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Healthy Staffordshire Select Committee

3 February 2020 at 10am

17 March 2020 at 10am

Chair