

Annual Report of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee

Chair: Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey

Division and Local Member: All

Lead Officer: Lindsey Tawse – Democratic Services Team Leader

Author: Jenny Murphy – Senior Democratic Services Officer

Contact Details: 01823 355529 jzmurphy@somerset.gov.uk

1. Summary

- 1.1** The Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee is required by the Constitution to make an annual report to the Council each year and also to provide each other meeting of the Council with a summary progress report and outcomes of scrutiny. This is the annual report and covers in more depth the meetings on 20 March 2019 and 3 April 2019.
- 1.2** The Committee agreed their work programme would comprise of items considered directly at meetings plus other items considered or ‘commissioned’, using flexible arrangements outside of the formal committee structure.
- 1.3** Members of the Council are reminded that:
 - all Members have been invited to attend meetings of the three Scrutiny Committees and to contribute freely on any agenda item;
 - any Member could propose a topic for inclusion on the Scrutiny Work Programmes;
 - any Member can be asked by the Committee to contribute information and evidence and to participate in specific scrutiny reviews.
- 1.4** The Committee has 8 elected Members.

2. Background

2.1 Scrutiny Work Programme

Each of our meetings had specific agenda items to consider the work programme and allow members and officers to suggest items we should scrutinise in more depth. We also frequently review how we monitor our suggested outcomes and/or recommended actions so we can understand the impact of our work so we can learn how to better focus our scrutiny work to ensure we have made a difference.

Scrutiny Members have endeavoured through the Committee’s meetings to make suggestions and express opinions to Directors and Cabinet Members after discussion and debate. We have constructive relationships with our sister Scrutiny Committees, particularly the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee.

2.2 13 March 2019

Somerset CCG Quality Performance Report -

We considered an update on the Somerset CCG Integrated Quality, Safety and Performance. The CCG had established performance monitoring meeting with all providers of healthcare services, we considered the summary of the escalation issues for quality, safety and performance against the constitutional and other standards.

In 2018/19 the demand for both elective and emergency services in Somerset continued to increase compared to the previous year. This led to increased waiting times particularly for diagnostics and elective treatment. The CCG and Health providers have identified areas of pressure and these are monitored with support from the Somerset Referral Management centre. The increase in people who have long waits continues to be a concern.

We considered the report and were keen to celebrate the achievements over the past year. Worth noting was the NHS Staff survey that resulted in Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust being in the highest 20% nationally for positive staff response, the CCG Safeguarding Children Strategy and Dashboard now complete and Home First quality metrics and contract specification in place with the Trusts.

In terms of the performance of South Western Ambulance Service Trust (SWAST) we were interested to know how the CCG assesses the resource requirement for ambulances. There are daily updates on performance while targets are not being met. The CCG has commissioned some emergency response vehicles based in Somerset to 'hear and treat' or 'see and treat' to reduce the number of patients who are simply transported to A&E for treatment. The pressure on the service is not lack of vehicles but the challenge of retaining trained and qualified staff.

We were interested to learn of any impact the major incident in Salisbury had on the ambulance service. We asked for a more detailed report on the South West Ambulance Service Trust. This will be presented at the June 2019 meeting.

Performance Report Adults and Social Care -

We considered a report on the performance of Adult Social Care. Key achievements were the focus on managing demand, improving outcomes and improving the number of calls to Somerset Direct that are resolved at the first point of contact. The target for this is 60% and has been over that for the first part of 2019 at 62.5% for February. Somerset County Council's Customer Service team was awarded the best customer service contact centre award in a South West Forum. The Home First initiative has supported independence and reduced the need for longer term stay in hospital. As this service has developed over the past year it has grown and now more people are being discharged earlier from hospital onto a Home First pathway to be supported at home.

We were pleased to hear that there is an upward trend in the CQC rating for Somerset Care Homes with 92% of providers being Good or Outstanding in February 2019. We were interested in the challenges for the coming year included staffing. It was acknowledged that there continues to be a desire to 'grow our own talent'.

Discovery - Scrutiny Update -

We considered the update on the performance of the Discovery contract. The report contained performance measured against the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). We discussed the current performance of the Discovery Contract, welcomed the wider engagement with stakeholders. The CGC continue to carry out unannounced inspections of Discovery locations in line with their planned inspection regime. The last service to receive such an inspection was Amberleigh. This was rated as Good and some the CQC observed some areas of good practice in supporting people to have choice and control over their lives.

We were interested in an update on Crisis Support as this had been identified as one for concern prior to transfer to Discovery, especially Oak House. SCC is supporting Discovery to transform this service and to support the delivery of a new service model the current service will end on 16th March 2019.

Employment Services now has the new management structure needed to deliver this key part of the programme. We were pleased to see in the report details of some of the early successes of this programme. They noted the positive outcomes of the working relationship with Hinkley C in supporting Traineeships leading to employment.

We asked about the replacement services available once Six Acres closed and wanted reassurance that there would not be too long a gap between one closing and the other being ready and able to offer the necessary services. We were informed that the new service in Taunton would not replicate that of Six Acres; the rationale for closing Six Acres was to provide better and more support across a wider base.

2.3 03 April 2019

Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) –

We considered a report from the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB). The report outlined the strong synergies exist between the work of the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) and the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee, which has a valuable role in the assurance and accountability of the SSAB. The purpose of the report is to consult with Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee in relation to the Strategic Plan for 2019/2022.

We welcomed the comprehensive report the following areas were discussed: -

- We were interested to hear how dynamic the plan was and how quickly it could respond to changes and new challenges. The events at Mendip House was an example of how events can arise unexpectedly. The Committee were assured that the Safeguarding Board were quick to learn from this and it resulted in more robust understanding of the risks.
- Another challenge has been the County Lines activities. This has in the main involved young people in the movement of illegal drugs, but vulnerable young adults have been targeted. By raising this there has been a concerted multi-agency response which has heightened awareness of the risk. We sought reassurance that Somerset was

striving to be a difficult area for County Lines to operate and not a soft target.

- We wanted to make sure that the wider aspects of exploitation were covered. These included community based, social media and coercive control were all considered and included in the safeguarding plans.
- We were pleased to hear that there was a proactive approach to safeguarding but wanted to know which other agencies were included. We were informed that all agencies with a statutory responsibility were involved and many had Board members in common; including the Fire Service.
- We asked if it was clear to Somerset residents where they should go if there were concerns about safeguarding. They were informed that Somerset is a ground-breaking council in this area and the model used here has been shared at a national level. Somerset Direct is the single point of contact and access to the services and through a system of case file audits and routine assessments the service can be confident that no-one should be missed.

Mental Health Services including Deprivation of Liberty update -

We considered a report into Adult Social Care (ASC) – Mental Health. The report set out the current position following the transition of services back to the local authority from Somerset Partnership Trust. The ASC service supports people with Mental Health it is continuing to develop in line with promoting independence strategy. As in all ASC services the vision is to ‘Promote Independence in Mental Health this is often translated into the Recovery Model. A strengths-based approach that focuses on the strengths of individuals, families, social networks and communities. Also, central to the approach, is what matters to individuals and their families.

The transition of services back to the Local Authority has enabled the ASC Mental Health teams to focus on its vision of Promoting Independence and Recover. We discussed the report and welcomed the detailed presentation which conveyed a passionate commitment to delivering the best mental health support for Somerset residents. We were keen to recognise the pressures on those working in the mental health field.

Scrutiny Adults and Health Report Learning Disabilities -

We received a report on Adult Social Care’s continuing development of the Promoting Independence model of delivery for people with a Learning Disability. The Committee heard that the strategy was being realigned to support its continued development. As in all Adult Social Care services the vision is to ‘Promote Independence in Learning Disability services this is often translated into the Progression Model. A strengths-based approach that focuses on the strengths of individuals, families, social networks and communities. Also, central to the approach, is what matters to individuals and their families. Adult Social Care continues to empower people to take control of their lives and their care and support, work with people and their communities to identify and provide sustainable local solutions to help them stay as well as possible and as independent as possible, for as long as possible. The Learning Disability Plan aims to maximise independence and raises ambition to ensure people are

supported in the most effective and appropriate way.

We welcomed this approach but were interested to note that Somerset has the highest number of people learning difficulties recorded compared to national figures and appears to spend 2% more than other similar local authorities. A different way of supporting people will enable the County to support more people with the same money. We were interested to know if the increase in individual cost could be attributed to the awarding of the contract to Discovery. It was confirmed that this was not the case.

Scrutiny Adults and Health Report Dementia Strategy -

We were informed that the current Somerset Dementia Strategy is under review as the previous strategy expired. A rewrite of the current strategy is planned which will be presented to the September Older People's Mental Health and Dementia Collaborative Service Development Group.

A small working group is currently being set up to identify the immediate priorities to improve the support and diagnosis of patients in Somerset suffering from Dementia. Somerset has older than average population and so the incidence of dementia is likely to be higher. In the county there appears to be increasing demand on many services in relation to dementia, including primary care, A&E, acute wards and nursing and residential care homes admissions. Earlier intervention with higher quality community-based support will help reduce some of these pressures on services – and improve the quality of life for those who have dementia and their carers.

We welcomed the report but were concerned that it was being presented as a strategy yet there was not a strategy attached. It was agreed that the Committee would be presented with a strategic document once the alternative model was fully worked through.

Meetings Overview for 2018-19

We have considered a number of reports on a range of topics and these have included:

- Fit for My Future
- Somerset wide integrated sexual health service
- Regular clinical quality review reports from Somerset Clinical Commission Group (CCG)
- Reports regarding the performance and transformation at Weston Hospital
- Regular updates regarding Adult Social Care Performance
- Somerset Safeguarding Annual Report and strategic plan
- Somerset CCG finance and performance issues
- Improved access to GP services
- NHS 111 and Out of Hours Service Performance
- Community Hospitals
- South Western Ambulance Service
- Council performance reports
- Learning Disability Service Contract

- NHS waiting times for Somerset patients
- Somerset suicide prevention
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Medium Term Financial Plan

2.4 Suggestions for the Future

We look forward to an interesting and informative year ahead; items scheduled for scrutiny including dementia strategy, autism services update, mental health service update, sexual health services update as well as a presentation on the challenges facing the South Western Ambulance Service.

Many of the reports we have considered have been information reports where our ability to make constructive input or provide feedback has therefore been limited.

We have always endeavoured to approach our task as a 'critical friend' by trying to be supportive to officers and encouraging them to highlight areas of concern to us, whilst hopefully providing a suitably robust challenge to question poor performance and seek reassurance that appropriate action is taken to achieve improvement. We feel the Council would benefit from Scrutiny being asked to undertake more pre Cabinet decision work to help the transition from policy development to implementation.

3. Consultations Undertaken

The Committee invites all County councillors to attend and contribute to its meetings.

4. Implications

The Committee considers carefully and often asks for further information about the implications as outlined in the reports considered at its meetings.

For further details of the reports considered by the Committee, please contact the author of this report.

5. Background Papers

Further information about the Committee including dates of meetings and agendas and reports from previous meetings, are available via the Council's website:

www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.