

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

Chairman: Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey

Division and Local Member: All

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### **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 July 2019 and 3 June 2020.
- 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 11 September 2019**

### **Fit for My Future - Acute Mental Health Inpatient beds -**

We considered a report under the Fit for My Future strategy covering a review of the acute mental health inpatient beds for people of working age. The report set out a vision for mental health services and the future model of care. It updated members of the committee on:

- the engagement undertaken so far to seek stakeholder views on potential options for the future configuration of acute mental health inpatient beds for adults of working age,
- engagement and input from the same stakeholder panel into the design of a public engagement / consultation strategy, and
- next steps in the overall governance process.

### **CCG Integrated Quality and Performance Report**

We considered the Integrated Quality, Safety and Performance report from Somerset CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) The report provided an update on the Somerset CCG Integrated Quality, Safety and Performance. There were six areas to celebrate:

- Eclipse alerts, antimicrobial stewardship, reducing antipsychotic use in Learning Disabilities (LD) and dementia patients, Somerset CCG is one of the best performing CCGs against the national low priority measures indicator
- Somerset has achieved all its antimicrobial prescribing performance measures
- Each GP practice has a Sepsis lead and Somerset CCG has raised the profile of National Early Warning Score (NEWS2) in primary care
- Somerset CCG has also ensured that Somerset has a robust infection control system and root cause analysis follow ups of C. difficile and E.coli cases
- Somerset CCG benchmarks well for high cost drugs. S

### **Minor Injury Unit Service**

We considered a report a report setting out an overview of the pressures faced by the running of seven Minor Injuries Units across Somerset. The report highlighted the current pressures being experienced by the Somerset Minor Injury Unit (MIU) Service. The report highlighted which areas of the county are being impacted upon currently, and some of the work being undertaken within

local communities to try to address the challenges of recruiting and retaining staff.

We heard that despite some closures there was not a knock-on impact in other services. Indicating that perhaps another service was more appropriate.

## **02 October 2019**

### **2.3**

#### **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.

#### **Adult Social Care Performance Update focusing on Carers Survey**

We considered a report which followed a request for a general update in addition to a specific update on the results of the Carers Survey. The Committee heard that personalised support was being promoted as this would give allow targeted provision with the appropriate expenditure. The Committee were concerned about the decline in the satisfaction survey results by Carers in Somerset. There was a 20% recorded drop in carers reporting that they have the social contact they would like. The Committee were informed that Carers are entitled to an assessment themselves although very few are undertaken. The Committee were informed that this was an area that the County Council wanted to improve performance and proposed to have a Carers Charter within the next 4 – 6 months. The Committee asked that a briefing note be share with members setting out the recruitment and retentions figures -if they were available - for care workers.

#### **Discovery Report**

We received a report on a report which provided scrutiny with an update on the performance of the Discovery contract. It included overall measures of the contract, and also provides wider information on the delivery of the contract. It includes specific updates on: Key Performance Indicators and general delivery of the contract; Transformational activity, including day services, employment support and reviews of people supported; Financial update of the contract, including the Discovery Community Fund; SWAP audit and Stakeholder update. It was agreed that Discovery will be discussed again as the contract progressed.

## **November 2019**

### **Mental Health Social Care Scrutiny Update**

We were informed that the Adult Social Care (ASC) services that supported people with Mental Health needs was continuing to develop in line with the Council Promoting Independence strategy. The service continued to focus on the transformation to ensure that services were well aligned with other ASC services and that opportunities were maximised to promote the independence and mental well-being of the people of Somerset.

### **Value for Money: Tracker and Social Care Experts Review 2018/19**

We had a report from Grant Thornton and the VFM tracker developed by the Council in response to the overall VFM.

There was a section on Adults Services with some useful benchmarking comparisons. The overall VFM experts' opinion for Adults Services concluded that there was a very low risk to the delivery of the MTFP for Adults services.

### **Scrutiny Review Report**

We heard that as part of organisational transformation and taking forward Peer Challenge recommendations, the Council had undertaken a thorough review of its scrutiny function.

The majority of the recommendations in the report combined both the short-term improvements that could be taken forward recognising that necessary cultural improvements were required to develop and embed better scrutiny form part of a longer-term programme of work commencing before the end of 2019 through until March 2021.

### **December 2019**

#### **CCG Quality, Safety and Performance Report**

We discussed a report that provided an update on the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Integrated Quality, Safety and Performance. The CCG has established performance monitoring meeting with all providers of healthcare services, this paper gave a summary of the escalation issues for quality, safety and performance against the constitutional and other standards for the period April to September 2019.

#### **Adult Social Care Performance Report**

We discussed a report on the performance of Adult Social Care. The report followed on from previous reports provided to Scrutiny Committee and highlighted key performance activity and indicators relating to Adult Social Care.

#### **Annual Report of the Public Health Director -**

We were given a presentation on the benefits of the prevention agenda; shifting the costs from those whose health has deteriorated significantly with preventable complications towards benefitting a larger percentage of the population and supporting them to maintain or improve their health.

Initiatives such as working with Natural England to promote the use of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in Somerset to encourage groups to access the outdoors to support wellbeing.

## **January 2020**

### **MTFP (Medium Term Financial Planning)**

We heard a report that summarised the key messages from the Medium-Term Financial Plan (2020-23) Strategy Report considered and approved by Cabinet on 18 December 2019.

### **Family Safeguarding**

We had a presentation on the Family Safeguarding element of the Somerset County Council Vision of Improving Lives. This presents an opportunity for a culture shift – innovation, empowerment and staff feeling more valued. Reduce the demand on emergency services (NHS & the Police), delivering savings to Adult Services (Mental Health & Drug services). The strategy uses a recognised Practice Model for effective family intervention.

### **Somerset Health Protection Assurance Report**

We considered the annual report of the Somerset Health Protection Forum. The Somerset Health Protection Forum comprises professional partners, across agencies, holding health protection responsibilities. The Forum has a collective role to provide assurance on behalf of the Director of Public Health. To ensure the Health Protection Forum has a focused agenda and forward plan, a Strategic Action Plan is developed annually.

### **Fit For My Future Update - CCG Consultation Strategy and Consultation on acute mental health in-patient beds for adults of working age**

We discussed a report summarising the engagement and consultation strategy which was approved by the CCG Governing Body on 16 January 2020 and set out the progress made since the last report. People who have used mental health services in the past or are using them now have helped shape the new model of care. This proposal is not about money or a reduction in service; in fact, the proposal is to invest more to improve the acute mental health inpatient service.

### **Fit For My Future - Engagement Consultation on Neighbourhoods and Community Settings of Care.**

We discussed a presentation outlining a proposed consultation using the same strategy as previously described for the engagement on acute mental health inpatient beds for adults of working age. The report was an update on community health and care services (formerly known as neighbourhood and community settings of care). It set out how the CCG is undertaking public engagement to obtain feedback on their vision and early thinking on improvements to these services.

## **March 2020**

This was our last face to face meeting.

### **Fit For My Future - Engagement on our vision for community health and care services**

We were invited to participate in developing alternative models for wider community services. The community services are those services for the 580,000 people registered with a GP in Somerset. This review covers a wide range of services and the public engagement was launched on 31 January 2020. We were invited to review and comment on proposals for alternative models of Community Health and Care.

## **May 2020**

### **Virtual Meeting Guidance**

As this was our first virtual meeting the agenda was restricted to guidance on how to conduct virtual meetings and an update on the current response to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

### **Covid - 19 Assurance**

The Committee considered a detailed report on the key areas of activity that have been undertaken by Somerset County Council Adult Social Care (ASC), with its partners across health, care providers and the voluntary sector; relating to the care of vulnerable adults and their carers during the pandemic. The Committee heard that there have been several changed requirements and "easements" proposed to the way ASC is delivered by Councils across England.

## **June 2020**

This informal meeting was a Mental Health trailblazer workshop. This was a cross party workshop with adult service from Somerset County Council, Somerset Commissioning Group, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust and the VCSE sector represented by Rethink.

The purpose of the workshop was to bring together a new alliance of charities and is formed to develop a bold new community-based mental health support service for Somerset residents. The shared ambition for the Somerset Mental Health Alliance is to ensure that people living with mental health problems get the right support at the right time. As well as reducing waiting times for clinical services, it aims to ensure that people can live a full life in their community, accessing housing, jobs or volunteering opportunities, community activities and physical exercise, to help support and improve their wellbeing and quality of life.

## **July 2020**

At this meeting we discussed two very detailed reports on the impact of Covid 19; first on the GGC response and the second on people with Learning Disabilities.

The CCG set out the Phased response (Phase 1 Major Incident Response and Phase 2 Recover, Restore and Transform). We heard that many of the actions

taken to deal with the Major Incident were transformations that were changes that had been planned before; such as greater use of technology for Consultations with Primary and Secondary Care. The response also introduced some temporary changes to admissions and elective surgery, and it was important to restore these as soon as possible. There was a commitment from the CCG to evaluate all the changes and report back to Scrutiny with the findings for discussion.

We also had a detailed report on the work undertaken to continue to support people with Learning Difficulties who had relied on a face to face building-based support service prior to the Covid 10 pandemic. We heard that there had been some quick and creative collaboration between various organisations to deliver a range of support best suited to the needs of individual service users. The setting up of the Nightingale Unit (Henford Court) was an example of collaboration between SCC and the CCG and had proved to be a useful release valve for Yeovil Hospital.

We concluded by paying tribute to all the staff and teams who had responded with such speed and compassion in such challenging times.

### **Meetings Overview for 2019-20**

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

- Fit for My Future
- Regular clinical quality review reports from Somerset Clinical Commissioning 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
- 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 Liberty Protection and Best Interest, Housing Strategy Dementia Report, Mental Health Transformation - Update Strategy for people with physical disabilities and an update on the Nursing Home Support Service. In addition we hope to see more information about the Fit for my Future transformation and regular updates on services affected by Covid 19.

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](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers)

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