

Report of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee

Chairman: Cllr Hazel Prior-Sankey

Division and Local Member: All

Lead Officer: Scott Woodridge – Monitoring Officer

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1. Summary	
1.1	The Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee is required by the Constitution to provide full Council with a summary progress report and outcomes of scrutiny. This report covers meetings since May 2021.
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	<p>Members of the Council are reminded that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 Programme.• any Member can be asked by the Committee to contribute information and evidence and to participate in specific scrutiny reviews. <p>The Committee has 8 elected Members.</p>
2.	Background
2.1	<p>Scrutiny Work Programme</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Scrutiny Members have endeavoured through the Committee 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.</p>
2.2	<p>Meeting 07 July 2021 Out of Hours – Report</p> <p>We had a presentation and report from Devon Doctors who run the Out of Hours Service for Somerset. This report was requested as the CQC had rated</p>

	<p>the service as Requires Improvement and the Committee requested an update on the progress towards bringing the service up to standard. We were updated on the current position, changes that have been made and the plans for the future to improve the service. We heard that the greatest challenge is staffing as common across the whole sector nationally. The demand for the 111 service has grown year on year and this is a cause for concern as this could have a knock on impact on Emergency services if now fully supported.</p> <p>CCG Performance and Quality Report</p> <p>We had a presentation and report on the current position and a comparison of February 2020 and March 2021. We heard of the impact of Coronavirus on all services ranging from the closure of an operating theatre at Musgrove Park Hospital to allow for infection control. We also discussed the temporary closure of the Minor Injuries Unit overnight at Minehead as a result of safety concerns. We had updates on all the current areas of focus for all area of performance. We challenged some of the figures seeking further clarification and requested further information on the Mental Health provision for Children and Young People in Somerset.</p> <p>SCC Business Plan Report</p> <p>We had a tailored presentation on the Somerset Business plan for next year; this brought the County Vision to reality. This report had already been shared with members and that consultation had resulted in some revisions to ensure it was transparent and had a clear measure of outcomes.</p> <p>Learning Disabilities Report</p> <p>We had a presentation that began with a tribute to all those working in the Learning Disability arena as the last year had been most challenging for this group of people. We welcomed the proposed capital spend in improving housing. We welcomed the flexible and individual support packages being made available. We had an overview of the Discovery contract and the steps being taken to fully embed the Dimensions Standards.</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Consultations:</p> <p>We have during the period shared and commented on a number of papers that were circulated to the Committee as we have not been able to meet as frequently as usual. These have covered: -</p> <p>Weston Hospital Annual report for Hospital and Ambulance Trusts</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Meetings Overview for 2021-22</p> <p>We have considered a number of reports on a range of topics and these have included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fit for My Future • Access to Dental services • Waiting lists post Covid 19 • Changes to Stroke Services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to Out of Hours Service • Care Homes and Nursing Home Support Service (LARCH/CCG) • Regular clinical quality review reports from Somerset Clinical Commission Group (CCG) • Dementia Report • Regular updates regarding Adult Social Care Performance • Somerset Safeguarding Annual Report and strategic plan • Somerset CCG finance and performance issues • Community Hospitals • Council performance reports • Learning Disability Service Contract • NHS waiting times for Somerset patients. • Somerset suicide prevention • Mental health and wellbeing • Medium Term Financial Plan
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Suggestions for the Future</p> <p>We look forward to an interesting and informative year ahead.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Consultations Undertaken</p> <p>The Committee invites all County councillors to attend and contribute to its meetings.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Implications</p> <p>The Committee considers carefully and often asks for further information about the implications as outlined in the reports considered at its meetings.</p> <p>For further details of the reports considered by the Committee, please contact the author of this report.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Background Papers</p> <p>Further information about the Committee including dates of meetings and agendas and reports from previous meetings, are available via the Council's website:</p> <p>www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers</p>

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