

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee - Adults and Health held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY, on Thursday, 3 August 2023 at 10.00 am

**Present:**

Cllr Gill Slocombe (Chair)  
Cllr Graham Oakes (Vice-Chair)

Cllr John Bailey	Cllr Hilary Bruce
Cllr Ben Ferguson	Cllr Emily Pearlstone
Cllr Claire Sully	Cllr Rosemary Woods

**In attendance:**

Cllr Bill Revans	Cllr Heather Shearer
Cllr Fran Smith	Cllr Andy Sully
Cllr Lucy Trimnell	Cllr Sarah Wakefield
Cllr Dean Ruddle	

**Other Members present remotely:**

Cllr Christine Lawrence	Cllr Sue Osborne
Cllr Tony Robbins	Cllr Mike Stanton
Cllr Peter Clayton	Cllr Leigh Redman
Cllr Norman Cavill	

**10 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1**

Apologies were received from Councillors Christine Lawrence, Tony Robbins, Sue Osborne, Andrew Govier and Mike Stanton.

**11 Minutes of Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 2**

Resolved that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Adults and Health held on 31 May 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

**12 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3**

There were no new Declarations of Interest.

**13 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4**

There were no public questions.

**14 Mental Health Workshop - Update - Agenda Item 5**

The chair of the committee gave a verbal update on the workshop which had taken place on 21 July 2023. The workshop had been attended by 9 speakers and had very informative, although it was considered that it had been at a high level.

It was requested that a task and finish group be set up with specific areas to be agreed as it was such a large area of work, it was also requested that this subject be placed on the work programme for this committee so that further scrutiny can take place on a regular basis.

Councillor Pearlstone requested that consideration of the effect of the closure of St Andrews and the use of the bed spaces at Yeovil affecting transportation of clients, staffing and use of these facilities, Councillor Bruce seconded the proposal for this to be placed on the work programme. It was also requested that a list of the names of those officers at the workshop for reference.

**Resolved:**

To note the information from the Mental Health Workshop and the verbal update from the Chair. It was proposed that the committee receive information on the effects on services across Somerset including transportation, staffing and use of beds especially in Yeovil which has replaced St Andrews closure.

**15 Committee Work Programme - Agenda Item 6**

Members discussed the Forward work Programme and agreed the following areas of work to be included: Ambulance Service Performance and Stand bys, also that Suicide Prevention needed to return onto the plan. It was also noted that the Crime and Disorder report would come to this committee but the meeting would be open to any Councillor or public.

**16 Primary Care Strategy - Agenda Item 7**

Michael Bainbridge and Bernie Mardon from the NHS attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the Primary Care Strategy being put together. The committee

were informed that although there were 17 problems to address, the one central problem was capacity to demand mismatch. The intention was to provide a broad strategic framework and to build trusting relationships for sustainable improvement but with a set of detailed delivery plans.

The vision for GP services needs to be clarified, however the core value is continuity of care. It was noted that there was a wide programme of actions which included attraction and retaining GPs, including trainees, increasing nurse numbers and the number of wider primary care teams including moving from reception to care navigation.

Digital Innovation – co-ordination of services with other providers, patients and system. There will also be investment in services and providers therefore a new funding framework for practices will be a priority action.

The committee also noted that the Pharmacy, Optometry and Dental Services were taken on as from 1 April 2023 and have brought their own issues.

During discussion, Councillors made the following comments:

- Need to integrate services and access to medical facilities i.e. bus services and digital access as not everyone able to connect
- Need to be proactive rather reactive to issues so planning and managing of expectations
- Local Plan will highlight new developments and should therefore be able to predict pressure/demand on services, can also use S106/CIL funding but have a statutory duty for access to services
- Aware of major issues with NHS dentistry services in the County, especially in certain areas like Chard
- GP business models – need to include operation of models to be compared with others, lack of same day appointments, activities and clinics being stripped away, need to measure continuity of services.

The chair summarised the points of consideration for the committee's work programme as follows:

Wider implementation of access

Detail on workforce with facts and figures

Dentistry – on work programme for October/November

Business models

GP appointment systems

Activities being stripped away and reasons why

New funding programme

Pharmaceutical provision

Scrutiny process

It was suggested that Michael Bainbridge provide information for distribution to

committee and that the Chair and officers work through the issues to add to the work programme. It was also requested that the Primary Care Strategy be provided to the committee for information.

**Resolved:**

The committee noted the Primary Care Strategy and scrutinised delivery of the strategy to ensure that the changes proposed are delivered in a timely fashion and in a way that maximises the benefit to the people of Somerset. A number of areas to scrutinise were suggested and it was agreed that these would be agreed via the Chair and officers and added to the work programme.

**17 Adult Social Care - Budget Report - Agenda Item 8**

The committee received a presentation from the finance team who confirmed that the Outturn for 2022/2023 that the budget of £160.1m showed an overspend of £15.4m.

Pressures and challenges for 2023/24 included:

Newton project – projected to achieve £0.2m during 2023/24 instead of £5m as per the MTFP

Learning Disabilities – pressures within Supported Living and Day Care Placements – increases in fees, with increased “Capital Drop” contacts and increased number of new placement requests.

A number of mitigations/actins undertaken in 2023/24 included the review of fees for next financial year, reduce the overreliance of bed placements, voids, review high cost or complex placements along with other funding.

In response to a question from Cllr Pearlstone, it was confirmed that the Discovery contract had reduced costs and changed their delivery model with the contract running the best ever.

**Resolved:**

To note the Adult Services outturn position for 2022/23.

**18 Adult Social Care Assurance Report - Agenda Item 9**

The committee were given a short presentation by Niki Shaw about the Adult Social Care Strategy 2023-2026 giving the priorities and commitments which was underpinned by a delivery plan.

Members of the committee congratulated Niki on the report and the work being undertaken.

**Resolved:**

The committee noted the key updates highlighted within the report in relation to Adult Social Care (ASC) especially in regard to the new Care Quality Commission assessment of adult social care at a local authority level.

**19 Healthy Weston - Agenda Item 10**

The Chair updated the committee as she had met with the Chief Executive of Weston Hospital and discussed the changes to their strategy and partnership with Bristol, the reports had been sent as supplementary items to the agenda with the full details.

It was noted that in February 2024, a report will come to this committee on the business case for care as 20% of the population in Somerset use the hospital at Weston.

**Resolved:**

To note the update received from the Chair in relation to Healthy Weston. The committee noted that a report will come forward in February 2024 with details of the business case.

**(The meeting ended at 12.55 pm)**

.....

**CHAIR**