

PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 January 2017

Present:-

Councillors S Randall-Johnson (Chairman), F Biederman, C Channon, A Dewhirst, R Hannaford, A Hannan, R Hosking, J Mathews, P Sanders and C Mabin

Additional Members for Educational Issues:-

Mrs Mabin (Church of England)

Members attending in accordance with Standing Order 25

Councillors Barker and McInnes

Apologies:-

Councillors E Barisic, A Connett, A Eastman, R Rowe, M Squires and R Julian

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Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2016 be signed as a correct record.

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Public Participation: Representations

There were no representations received.

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Children's Standing Overview Group

The Committee received the Report of discussions at the meeting on 2 December 2016 (CS/17/05) on, inter alia, Children in Care and concerns over delays in initial Health Assessments for looked after children and the number of young homeless; Children's Social Work and Child Protection performance, looking at in-house fostering and reducing reliance on high cost external residential placements and the positive site visits that took place to the Children's Social Work Officers in Tiverton and Barnstaple.

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Adults Standing Overview Group

The Committee received the Report of discussions at the meeting on 7 December 2016 (CS/17/06) focusing on, inter alia, on the Promoting Independence Policy and creating a robust short term strategy to help promote independence. Members noted the positive site visits to the Residential Care Homes and concerns over the timeliness of re-assessments and the impact of delays on small care homes cash flow.

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Statements of Special Education Needs to Education and Health Care Plans

(Councillor McInnes, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Skills, attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(1) and spoke to this item at the invitation of the Committee).

(Councillor Biederman declared a personal interest in this matter by virtue of having a child with a Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disability).

The Committee noted the Report of the Head of Education and Learning (CS/17/05) on the findings of the Peer Review and latest performance data on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

A Peer Review was carried out following a new framework for inspection of local areas effectiveness in identifying and meeting needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, providing independent feedback on Devon's progress and to inform preparation for a formal local area inspection. Main points highlighted within the Review included improved leadership across the Special Education Needs team and improved outcomes for children with SEND against national standards. This provided an overall positive external validation of the Council's self-assessment, reinforcing areas of key strengths and helping to identify areas for improvement. Members were also informed of the improved transfer rates of Statements of SEN to Education and Health Care Plans, with 71% of the latest transfers completing on time.

* **40** **Children's Social Work and Child Protection - Performance Report**

The Committee considered the Report of the Head of Children's Social Work and Child Protection (CS/17/04) updating Members in relation to Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, Early Help, Children in Need and a reduction in Social Worker caseloads, Referrals into statutory children's service, single assessments, a reduction in child protection enquiries, child protection conferences and a higher than the national average number of repeat child protection plans.

* **41** **Devon County Council and Devon Prisons from a Care Act Perspective**

The Committee received the Report of the Head of Care Operations and Health (ACOH/17/01) on the progress and ongoing plans for action in relation to Devon Prisons and adult social care post implementation of the Care Act 2014.

Members' discussions included the rates of suicide within HMP Exeter and the work of social workers to help reduce this and the extremely positive value of the Devon 'Buddies' system in supporting prisoners to promote wellbeing and independence by accessing employment opportunities within the prison.

* **42** **Adult's Performance Report**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Head of Adult Commissioning and Health and the Head of Adult Care Operations and Health (SCC/17/59) highlighting areas of good performance and where further improvement and development were needed in line with current adult vision priority.

The report focused on areas where targets were not met and areas presented in the report and discussed by Members, in line with the Vision Priorities, included: ensuring that people using the service felt safe, reducing the need for long term social care and support, expanding the use of community based services, ensuring people have a positive experience of the social care services, ensuring the workforce can deliver effective services and ensuring that planning and commissioning of adult social care services are integrated within the NHS.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 4.00 pm