

ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL**SOCIAL WORK AND HOUSING COMMITTEE****WOODHILL HOUSE, ABERDEEN, 2 APRIL, 2015**

Present: Councillors K L Clark (Chair), A K Norrie (Vice Chair), A M Allan, G Blackett, E Chapman, L Clark, M A Ford, A S Grant, W A Howatson (as substitute for Councillor E A Robertson), I W Gray, J Latham, P Oddie, B A Topping and I Walker.

Apology: Councillor E A Robertson.

Officers: Director of Communities, Head of Housing, Head of Adult and Criminal Justice Services, Business Services Manager (Communities), Corporate Finance Manager, Senior Solicitor (Mr S Munro) and Senior Committee Officer (Mr N David).

KITE MARK AWARD

Sue McLintock of Carers Scotland was present to formally make the Kite Mark Award to Aberdeenshire Council as an employer that values informal carers. Sue McLintock gave a short presentation to the Committee on the work of Carers Scotland in this regard and the importance of supportive employers like Aberdeenshire Council.

The Committee concurred with the Chair in thanking Sue McLintock for attending and Carers Scotland for making the Kite Mark Award to recognise Aberdeenshire Council as an employer that valued informal carers.

1. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

The Chair asked members if they had any interests to declare in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct. No interests were declared.

2a. PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

In making decisions on the following items of business, the Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010:-

- (1) to have due regard to the need to:-
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- (2) where an Equality Impact Assessment was provided, to consider its contents and take those into account when reaching their decision.

2b. RESOLUTION

The Committee **agreed**, in terms of Section 50A (4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public from the meeting during consideration of Item 14 so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in paragraphs 1, 3 and 12 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

General

3. COMMUNITIES SERVICE: KDI PROGRAMME AND IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

There was circulated a report dated 17 March, 2015, by the Director of Communities which provided an update on the Kaizen for Daily Improvement (KDI) Programme and Improvement Project which had taken place across the Service.

The report provided detail on the Communities teams involved in KDI Self-Assessment. In 2014 thirteen teams achieved their Self-Assessment KDI Award, with a further four teams at various stages. To date sixty one teams had been awarded their KDI Self-Assessment.

The report also provided detail on the evaluation of the KDI Self-Assessment Programme and the future of KDI.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge the Kaizen for Daily Improvement (KDI) Programme and Improvement Projects which had taken place across the Communities Service, and
- (2) that the Director of Communities submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee providing detail on the review of the housing adaptations process for people with disabilities.

4. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION REPORTS OF HOUSING AND SOCIAL WORK REGULATED SERVICES

There was circulated a report dated 5 March, 2015, by the Director of Communities which provided a summary of inspection reports of Housing and Social Work Regulated Services.

The report reminded members that the Care Inspectorate regulated and inspected care services and carried out social work and child protection inspections. It also carried out inspections of some services jointly with Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education.

In this regard the Care Inspectorate used a six point grading scale to assess the quality of registered services: 6 – Excellent; 5 – Very Good; 4 – Good; 3 – Adequate; 2 – Weak; 1 – Unsatisfactory.

Services were assessed by four quality themes, namely: Quality of Care and Support; Quality of Environment; Quality of Staffing; Quality of Management and Leadership.

The report included the published inspections of care and support services provided by Aberdeenshire Council Housing and Social Work for the period January to December 2014. A list of regulated services inspected by the Care Inspectorate, indicating the types of services reviewed, was included as an appendix.

Of the 29 services inspected in 2014, 13 services were assessed at level 5 for both quality of care and support and the quality of leadership and management. 12 services received a rating of very good or good for either the quality of care and support or the quality of leadership and management. One service was assessed at grade 2 and three services assessed at grade 3. The great majority of services had either improved or remained at the same high level of quality since the last inspection.

The report provided specific information in respect of the services which had been assessed at either grade 2 or grade 3. These were discussed by the Committee and the Director provided further information.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to welcome the overall high quality of care and support services provided by the Council as evidenced by the inspection reports,
- (2) to acknowledge the progress being made to improve the quality of services, and
- (3) that regular updates and information bulletins be provided to both local members and the Committee in respect of Durnhythe Care Home in Portsoy, Doocot View in Banff, and the Banchory Respite Unit.

Housing

5. HOUSING REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING TO 31 JANUARY, 2015

On a joint report dated 26 February, 2015, by the Director of Communities and Head of Finance, the Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the position with regard to the Housing Revenue Account as at 31 January, 2015 and that the forecast revenue surplus of £16.822m would offset some of the borrowing required to fund capital expenditure.

6. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/ 2015 MONITORING

There was circulated a joint report dated 23 March, 2015, by the Director of Communities, Head of Finance and Head of Property and Facilities Management on the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2014/ 2015.

The report explained that a 3 year Capital Programme for housing had been agreed at the meeting of the Social Work and Housing Committee on 27 March, 2014 (Item 8). When preparing detailed proposals for stock improvements, officers had regard to Aberdeenshire wide priorities which included: Local Housing Strategy objectives; Work that contributed to achieving the Scottish Housing Quality Standard Delivery Plan by 2017; Works that contributed towards achieving Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing by 2020; Health and safety related works; Work to protect the structural integrity of property.

The report included detailed information on Capital Programme expenditure 2014/ 2015 and Capital Programme finance in 2014/ 2015.

The report also highlighted that a contractor was now in administration. The Council had been advised that Muirfield Contracts went into administration on 10 March, 2015. The Head of Housing and Director of Communities both provided information on the up to date position in this respect.

Thereafter, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge the current capital forecast for financial year 2014/ 2015,
- (2) to acknowledge the revised borrowing requirements to finance the Capital Programme and resultant Housing Business Plan implications, and
- (3) that officers continue to report to the Social Work and Housing Committee on overall progress and implementation of the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for 2014/ 2015.

7. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015 – 2017

There was circulated a joint report by the Director of Communities, Head of Finance and Head of Property and Facilities Management on proposals for the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme for the forthcoming financial year 2015/ 2016 and for the following year 2016/ 2017 in principle.

The report highlighted that the requirement to meet the statutory requirements detailed in the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH), by December 2020 were the key driving factors and this was reflected in the programme of works. The Housing Service continued to review 100% of the stock condition database, confirming any works outstanding to ensure compliance with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). There would be some abeyances and exemptions, which were out with the scope of the SHQS, due to “tenant refusals” and “energy efficiency works which were not economically viable”. The Service was working with tenants and specialist contractors to reduce this total. In order to comply with the SHQS all outstanding works in the stock improvement programme and all works planned for 2014/ 2015 would have to be completed by March 2015. The Property Service had confirmed that they were able to deliver this programme of works before the 31 March, 2015 deadline.

The Committee **agreed**: -

- (1) to the proposed expenditure and funding for the 2015/ 2016 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme, subject to revision following finalisation of the 2014/ 2015 figures and the review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, and
- (2) in principle, to the proposed expenditure and funding for the 2015/ 2016 and 2016/ 2017 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme.

Community Care

8. OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICE REVIEW – UPDATE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 6 November, 2014 (Item 10) there was circulated a report dated 5 March, 2015, by the Director of Communities which outline the progress to date on the Occupational Therapy Service Review and also provided information on the performance of the Service during this time of change.

The report provided detailed information on meeting performance targets as well as delivering change in line with the objectives of the review. The report concluded by highlighting that, as part of the integration of health and social care in Aberdeenshire, the combined Occupational Therapy staff group across Aberdeenshire Council and NHS Grampian had been working more closely together in recent months to develop an integrated care pathway for Occupational Therapy, across all settings, whether community or hospital based. This work would continue and would contribute to the determination of the membership, structure and processes of local multi-disciplinary teams to be formed as part of the next stage of integration over the coming months.

The Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge progress to date as part of the review to improve the delivery of Occupational Therapy services across Aberdeenshire, and
- (2) that the Director of Communities submit a further progress report to the Committee as future meetings as appropriate.

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL CARE (SELF DIRECTED SUPPORT) (SCOTLAND) ACT 2013

With reference to Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 6 November, 2014 (Item 9), there was circulated a report dated 23 March, 2015, by the Director of Communities on the implementation of the Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013.

The report reminded members that the Act placed a duty on local authorities to offer options to those with long term care needs, eligible for community care. The Council was well prepared to implement legislative duties on 1 April, 2014 in respect of new social work clients with longer term care needs and those whose care arrangements were approaching a review date. Aberdeenshire Council continued to be at the forefront of the development of Self Directed Support (SDS) and had taken a number of significant steps to support practitioners with practical and cultural changes required including training, peer support and an SDS practitioner helpdesk.

The report highlighted that the scale of change that arose from SDS policy continued to represent a major challenge for Social Work staff. The report went on to detail information regarding the funding of the SDS team, the SDS pathway review and long term planning from booking existing and new cases through the SDS process. The report concluded by providing information on the resource allocation system and the monitoring of the financial implications of SDS.

The Committee **agreed**: -

- (1) to acknowledge progress towards implementation of new statutory responsibilities in relation to the Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 against the recommendations from Audit Scotland,
- (2) to acknowledge financial implications of Self-Directed Support and measures being taken to mitigate short and medium term financial risks, and
- (3) that a further update be provided to the Committee in 6 months time and that it include information from the perspective of service users.

10. SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORT POLICY ON INDIVIDUAL BUDGETS AND FREE PERSONAL CARE

With reference to the Minute of Meeting of the Committee of 26 February, 2015 (Item 10), there was circulated a report dated 25 March, 2015, by the Director of Communities on the Self Directed Support Policy on Individual Budgets and Free Personal Care.

The report reminded members as background that the introduction of Self Directed Support was enabling people with care needs to make different choices and take greater control over how their care and support was arranged than would previously of been possible. In some cases their personal choices and preferences were placing considerable additional financial pressures on the Council and similarly on Councils across Scotland. It was therefore proposed to establish a policy that mitigated some of the inequities and risks highlighted within the report.

The report also reminded members that at the meeting of the Committee on 26 February, 2015, it had been agreed in principle to apply an upper threshold for free personal care at home in Aberdeenshire. However, the level at which this threshold was to be applied was to be considered at this meeting. The options for the threshold would be equivalent to either the cost of residential care or nursing. The recommendation within the report was to set the

higher level of threshold which reflected the concerns of elected members over the threshold being too low and potentially providing a disincentive to stay at home. Further information on the context to this was included in detail in appendices to the report. The report highlighted that a person living at home with nursing needs would receive additional services from the community nursing team and would not therefore have to meet the costs of this from the payment.

Following discussion, the Committee **agreed**:-

- (1) to acknowledge that members had agreed, in principle, at the meeting on 26 February, 2015, to introduce a standard upper limit for free personal care whilst people lived at home,
- (2) to apply standard free personal care allowances for people over 65 years who receive their care in both:
 - (i) residential settings, predetermined through the National Care Home Contract Rate of £169 per week for residential care and £246 per week for nursing care, and
 - (ii) non-residential settings at £587 per week,
- (3) to offer a maximum individual budget for those over 65 years old in circumstances where this would be a suitable option to meet their assessed needs, which was equivalent to:-
 - (i) the National Care Home Contract weekly rate for nursing care for over 65 year olds; and
 - (iii) agree the provision of double-up care as an exceptional circumstance requiring additional funding above these levels,
- (4) to offer an individual budget that had an equivalent value to the most cost effective alternative support as a relevant amount where this would be sufficient and reasonable to meet a person's significant social care needs, this to apply for people under and over 65 years old, and
- (5) that the policy be reviewed by March 2016 to ensure it remained fit for purpose, with an interim report being provided to the Committee in 6 months time.

11. DELAYED DISCHARGE

There was circulated a report dated 24 March, 2015, by the Chief Officer, Aberdeenshire Health and Social Care Integration, on Delayed Discharge.

The report provided information on Delayed Discharge, namely whereby a person was considered to be a Delayed Discharge if they remained in hospital but were deemed medically fit to leave hospital. The report included information on the background to Delayed Discharge, including the causes and potential solutions.

The Committee **agreed**: -

- (1) to acknowledge the detail within the report on Delayed Discharge,
- (2) to acknowledge that the Transitional Leadership Group, (Health and Social Care Integration) had agreed that reducing the number of Delayed Discharge cases would be one of its key priorities, and

- (3) that regular reports be submitted to future meetings of the Committee, including an action plan which had been created by the new Strategic Delayed Discharge Group.

Criminal Justice

12. ABERDEENSHIRE UNPAID WORK SERVICES – UPDATE

There was circulated a report by the Director of Communities on the ongoing work of the Aberdeenshire Unpaid Work Service.

The report provided detailed information and explained that in 2013/14 the Aberdeenshire Unpaid Work Service supervised a total of 45,076 hours unpaid work. Examples of unpaid work projects and individual placements were included in an appendix.

The report concluded by highlighting ongoing initiatives to improve performance.

The Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the ongoing work of the Aberdeenshire Unpaid Work Service and to approve the ongoing initiatives to further improve performance.

General

13. INTERNAL AUDIT

There was circulated a report dated 23 March, 2015, by the Chief Internal Auditor on the completed audit relating to the Homeless Persons' Budget, and setting out progress by the Service in implementing agreed recommendations.

The Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the detail within the report and the attached appendix.

14. INTERNAL AUDIT

There was circulated a report dated 23 March, 2015, by the Chief Internal Auditor on progress made by the service in implementing the agreed recommendations.

The Committee **agreed** to acknowledge the content of the report and the attached appendix.