

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel

(to be confirmed at the next meeting)

Date: Thursday, 12 March 2015

Venue: Collingwood Room - Civic Offices

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs M E Ellerton (Chairman)

Councillor D L Steadman (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: T G Knight, N R Gregory, Mrs K K Trott and Miss S M Bell

Also

Present: Councillor B Bayford, Executive Member for Health and Housing (item 6)



1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology of absence was received from Councillor D M Whittingham.

2. MINUTES

It was AGREED that, subject to the spelling correction of 'care' in paragraph 3 of item 6, and the spelling correction of 'Panels' in paragraph 2 of item 9, of the minutes of the Health and Housing Policy Development and Review Panel held on 15 January 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISCLOSURES OF ADVICE OR DIRECTIONS

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

5. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations made at this meeting.

6. HEALTH UPDATE

The Panel received a verbal update by the Executive Member for Health and Housing on local strategic issues.

He informed the Panel that he did not have any positive information to report. He stated that there are lots of issues surrounding mental health and dentistry.

He informed the Panel that two integrated care teams have now been set up in Fareham, but he has had no contact with them and does not know where they are based.

He will be attending a meeting with the Head of Commissioning and the Head of Planning for the Fareham and Gosport Clinical Commissioning Group where he will be raising concerns over the lack of support for people who are discharged from hospital but still require care.

He informed the Panel that the A&E department has been well managed over the winter period with the provision of extra beds and the re-scheduling of some elective surgeries. Councillor Gregory enquired as to whether provisions had been put in place for the possibility of a hot summer as this can also cause severe health issues. The Executive Member for Health and Housing stated that there should be Care in the Community in place in order to minimise the amount of people having to be admitted to hospital or to provide assistance to those who are discharged.

He concluded his verbal update by informing the Panel that he is currently putting together a presentation for the Panel on the use of and problems with the Fareham Community Hospital.

It was AGREED that the Executive Member for Health and Housing be thanked for his verbal update.

7. FINAL REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15 AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Community on the final review of the work programme 2014/15 and the draft work programme for 2015/16.

The Director of Community explained to members that this was the last opportunity for members to put forward suggestions for the 2015/16 work programme. He also informed members that the suggestions put forward by Councillor Knight as listed in item 9 of the previous minutes will be incorporated into the 2015/16 work programme.

Councillor Mrs Trott put forward a suggestion that an item be added onto the agenda to look at sanctions that are applied to people claiming job seekers allowance and how this could impact upon their housing situation. The Director of Community informed the Panel that the Council are not responsible for issuing the sanctions and cannot have a say in how they are issued or dealt with, but members may wish to invite the DWP to attend a meeting to discuss these as, the sanctions do impact on Fareham residents. The Director of Community explained that he had recently met with officers to explore and set up a system to monitor the impact of welfare reforms on our customers and the Council's services.

It was AGREED that the Panel:-

- (a) reviewed the outcomes of the Panel's work programme for 2014/15;
- (b) agreed the proposed work programme for 2015/16; and
- (c) submit the propose work programme for 2015/16 to the Council for endorsement.

8. ANNUAL REVIEW OF HOMELESSNESS ACTION PLAN

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Community on the annual review of the Homelessness Action Plan.

Members enquired as to the impact that Universal Credit will have on tenants as some will be responsible for paying their own rent for the first time, and may not be used to having to budget for a month.

Councillor Gregory suggested that the Council work in partnership with other organisations, such as local Children's Centre where they are running training courses for people advising them of how to budget, and how to look after

themselves and their families. Councillor Gregory suggested passing information on to these organisations so that they can incorporate it into their training sessions. The Director of Community agreed that this was a good idea and is something that Officers will be considering when discussing the Partnering Agreement with DWP.

Councillor Knight addressed the Panel and requested that an up-to-date report on the position of Farelets be brought to the Panel, as the current report is now out of date in parts. The Director of Community confirmed that this would be reported to a future meeting of the Panel.

It was AGREED that the Panel note the progress made so far in meeting the 19 actions included in the Homelessness and Housing Options Strategy 2014 - 2017

9. CHANGES TO THE SHELTERED HOUSING SERVICE

The Panel considered a report by the Director of Community on the planned changes to the sheltered housing service that sheltered tenants receive from the Council.

The Tenancy Services Manager presented the report to the Panel and explained that the proposed staffing structure, as set out in Appendix B to the report, has been agreed today by the affected Members of staff and the Unions. It has resulted in one member of staff taking redundancy and two other members of staff being redeployed within the Council.

The Panel noted that the biggest change is at Downing Court, which provided two Home Support Officers who would help a number of tenants with cleaning, laundry and provide a mid-day meal. The Tenancy Services Manager explained that these posts are to be deleted and that the tenants of Downing Court will receive a reduced level of support from the Sheltered Housing Team in the future. He informed the Panel that staff have been working closely with the tenants and their families to ensure that they have alternative arrangements in place for their continued care and support.

The Tenancy Services Manager also informed the Panel that since the report had been written consultation with tenants on the proposed changes to the Sheltered Housing Service at Melvin Jones House has taken place with a positive response from many of the tenants there, stating that they were happy with the new arrangements, although a couple of tenants have indicated that they wish to continue receiving a similar level of support as they currently do and therefore are looking to move to another sheltered scheme.

It was AGREED that the Panel note the content of the report.

10. PRESENTATION - AFFORDABLE HOUSING ENABLING PROGRAMME - ANNUAL UPDATE

The Panel received a presentation by the Senior Housing Officer (Enabling) on the affordable housing enabling programme.

The presentation outlined the reasons why there is a need for an enabling and development programme, how this can be achieved, how the service is performing to date and the challenges for the future.

It was AGREED that the Senior Housing Officer (Enabling) be thanked for his presentation.

(The meeting started at 6.00 pm
and ended at 7.37 pm).