

## SHOPSHIRE COUNCIL

### HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2015**  
**9.32 am – 10.45 am in the Ludlow Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,**  
**Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND**

**Responsible Officer:** Amanda Holyoak  
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#### **Present**

Councillor Gerald Dakin (Chairman)  
Councillors John Cadwallader (Vice Chairman), Roger Evans, Pamela Moseley,  
Peggy Mullock, Peter Nutting and Madge Shingleton

#### **29 Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

Apologies were received from Mrs H Kidd, Mrs T Huffer, Mr D Minnery and Mrs C Motley. Mr R Evans substituted for Mrs Kidd.

#### **30 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

#### **31 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Mrs Moseley drew attention to the complaints dashboard section of the minutes and said she had referred at the meeting to the greatest number of complaints being made in the People to People category. The Portfolio Holder added that these were also the greatest number not upheld. The Committee agreed the above additions be made to the minutes.

The Committee also agreed to add to minute 28, Proposals for Committee Work Programme, that Support for Carers related to the Duty of Care made under the Care Act.

With the above amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2015 were agreed.

#### **32 Public Question Time**

A public question from Mrs N Clark was received by the Committee. The question asked for assurances that local tax payer's money was being spent on adult social care in an economical, efficient and effective manner. A copy of the full question and the response provided are attached to the signed minutes.

In her follow up question, Mrs Clark asked for assurances that the system would work in the future. The Director of Adult Social Care reported that Shropshire had been found to spend the least amount on over 65s and had been externally assessed as having the best residential provision in the country. Numbers getting in touch through the First Point of Contact had increased by 20%. Shropshire was regarded as one of the most efficient and best deliverer of quality in the country, but the year on year overspend had continued. This was because despite all modernisation to date, the demand for services kept rising and this was alongside a significant increase in complexity of need, also an increase in demand from people who had until recently funded their own care. The Council was attempting to plan for future needs in more granular detail.

### **33 Members Question Time**

There were no questions from Members.

### **34 Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Terms of Reference**

Members received a report, copy attached to the signed minutes, which explained that the current terms of reference of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Telford and Wrekin Council were not compliant with new guidance issued by the Department of Health, and that the proposed updates had regard to this guidance.

Members queried the role of the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in responding to a consultation and making a decision to make a referral to the Secretary of State.

In response to questions, the Committee were advised that the Council was legally required to deal with consultations which covered more than one local authority area through a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and a response to the consultation was required to be made through this Committee. The guidance issued by the Department of Health, which the terms of reference were being amended to reflect, did not change any of the principles behind this.

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer explained that although the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee would respond to the consultation, the proposed updates to the terms of reference clarified that the power to refer any contested proposals to the Secretary of State remained with Shropshire Council and Telford and Wrekin Council. There was also nothing to stop Shropshire's Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee from considering any issues in order to provide its view to inform the Joint HOSC Members.

Some Members raised questions regarding where a political discussion could be held on Future Fit, particularly as Telford and Wrekin Council had taken a position on the location of an Emergency Centre. It was confirmed that Scrutiny was not the place for this. In responding to questions, the Statutory Scrutiny Officer said there was no reason full Council could not discuss this in the same way that Telford and

Wrekin Council had done. The Chairman said that as a Member of Joint HOSC he would abstain from any discussion of this at Council

In conclusion, Officers explained that the Terms of Reference of the Joint HOSC needed to reference the Department of Health guidance, and recommended that they be updated to reflect it. The Committee were asked to endorse the changes, which would then be considered by Political Structures Monitoring Group and Council.

The Committee voted on the proposal for the Committee to endorse the update to the Terms of Reference. Five voted in favour, one against, and there was one abstention. Mr R Evans asked that it be noted in the minutes that he had voted against the proposal.

**RESOLVED:**

To endorse the changes to the terms of reference of the Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee in the light of the Health Scrutiny Guidance published by the Department of Health in 2014.

**35 Financial Strategy**

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer referred to the Financial Strategy report which had been presented to Cabinet on 28 October 2015 (a copy is attached to the signed minutes). He explained that at this stage of the development of the Financial Strategy the detail of the potential changes to the way that services were provided was not available.

Members of the Committee praised the quality of the Financial Strategy document.

The Committee's discussion covered the following:

**Big Conversation**

Some Members expressed concern regarding lack of Member involvement and input into the development of the Big Conversation questionnaire. The need for the 'which electoral division do you live in' question was queried. Some felt that there might not be a big response and that people were not likely to respond unless they were already service users.

**Adult Social Care**

Members were concerned about the risks of not getting Adult Social Care funding on to a sustainable footing and the turmoil within the local NHS, which could have a serious financial impact on the Council

It was recognised that more than 50% of the Council's budget was spent on supporting the most vulnerable people in the county. An ageing population and the increase in complexity of needs would continue to impact on resources.

Shropshire's Adult Social Care Service was one of the lowest spending in the country for older people, learning disability and mental health, and there was little more to take out, whereas some other higher spending Councils still had potential to remove costs.

The Committee acknowledged that a system wide solution was the only way forward and the Council should be prepared to play an active part in that system.

Members expressed concern that early intervention and prevention was not included in the list of protected services going forward, and that reducing focus in these areas would store up problems in both the near and long term future.

### **Public Health**

The Director of Public Health advised that there were two aspects to the Public Health Budget. The first related to those services that had previously been the responsibility of the NHS and transferred in April 2013 to local government. Funding for those services came from the national public health grant and were therefore identified separately from the main council budgets.

The second were those public health related services that were commissioned prior to the transfer of NHS public health responsibilities to the council and were used to fund services such as emergency planning and air quality monitoring. Those services have been identified as maintained under the current programme to identify a sustainable business model for the future.

Members heard that the Treasury had imposed a 6.2% in year cut in the public health grant equating to a £700k reduction in the Shropshire grant and that it was anticipated that the Treasury would make further cuts when the Comprehensive Spending Review was announced.

The Committee's comments on the Financial Strategy would be reported to the Performance Management Scrutiny Committee on 2 December 2015, which would then report overall Scrutiny feedback to Cabinet on 9 December 2015.

The Committee said it wanted to be informed as soon as possible of any proposed changes and their likely impact on the most vulnerable people in Shropshire.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....