



Health, Adult Social Care and Social Inclusion Policy and Accountability Committee Minutes

Wednesday 29 April 2015

PRESENT

Committee members: Councillors Rory Vaughan (Chair), Elaine Chumnery (Vice-chair), Hannah Barlow and Joe Carlebach

Co-opted members: Patrick McVeigh (Action on Disability) and Bryan Naylor (Age UK)

Other Councillors: Vivienne Lukey (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care), Sue Fennimore (Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion) and Sharon Holder (Lead Member for Health)

Witnesses: Sarah Mitchell (Carers' Network), Alex Tambourides (H&F Mind), Jude Ragan (Head Teacher, Queensmill School), Simi Ryatt and Phil Storey (Citizens Advice Bureau)

Officers: Selina Douglas (Director for ASC Commissioning and Enterprise), Mike England (Director for Housing Options Skills & Economic Development), Nia Evans (Service Manager, Day Opportunities/Older People), Sue Perrin (Committee Co-ordinator), Mike Rogers (Head of Business Analysis, Planning and Workforce Development) and Kevin Williamson (Head of Housing with Care Services)

69. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2015 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

It was noted that the local briefing for Hammersmith & Fulham to be provided by Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust was outstanding.

70. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Debbie Domb, Councillor Sharon Holder and Liz Bruce and Councillor Joe Carlebach for lateness.

71. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were made:

Councillor Vivienne Lukey is a trustee of H&F Mind.

Councillor Joe Carlebach is a trustee of H&F Citizens Advice Bureau.

72. LISTENING TO AND SUPPORTING CARERS

Mike Rogers introduced the report, which provided: a description of local carers in Hammersmith & Fulham; the interim local results of the recent National Carers Survey and other recent feedback from carers; the range of support services available to carers living in the borough; and information on areas to improve services for carers in future.

In the national ONS Census of 2011, 12,330 local residents had described themselves as providing unpaid care to a family member or a friend. The hours of care provided per week by carers in Hammersmith & Fulham were longer when compared with those for inner London, and the carers were more likely to live with the person for whom they cared.

Carers in Hammersmith & Fulham were more likely to be women, retired or not in paid work, most were age 50 plus, half of whom had a health condition themselves.

Carers providing 50 plus hours of care a week were more likely to live in the north of the borough, in College Park & Old Oak and Wormholt & White City ward, areas of relative deprivation and social housing. Fulham Broadway and Sands End also had higher rates of carers, compared with the borough average.

The Care Act 2014 provided new rights to carers and gave local authorities a duty to meet such needs. The report outlined how the Council intended to meet carers' needs and address carers' feedback. There had been some improvements in services for carers locally.

Alex Tambourides outlined the role of H&F Mind in providing services for carers over the previous three years and noted the improvement in services.

Mr Tambourides stated that there were a large number of carers looking after people with mental health problems, but the service was not engaging with that number. Whilst 1 in 4 carers were looking after someone with mental health problems, only 1 in 20 were reporting mental health problems themselves, indicating potential hidden mental health wellbeing issues.

Mr Tambourides agreed that carers should be involved in and consulted on decisions, although there were issues of confidentiality.

Mr Tambourides suggested that carers could be identified through GPs. Carers tended to feel a stigma and it was important to meet with other carers in the same situation.

Sarah Mitchell stated that Carers' Network was a small local organisation supporting carers in Westminster and, for the previous year, Hammersmith & Fulham.

Ms Mitchell considered that there remained a lot more carers still to be reached. There had been a significant increase in carers over the previous year, a third of whom were new to caring. There were issues in respect of quality of life.

Ms Mitchell was concerned about the quality of advice and information for carers, particularly for those who did not have access to the internet. Provision was mostly in the centre and south of Hammersmith & Fulham. There was little provision in the north, although advice sessions had been held in College Park and Old Oak and Wormholt and White City, areas with the highest numbers of carers. An application had been submitted for trust funds to extend the sessions. Slightly lower numbers of BME (black and minority ethnic) carers were being reached, compared with people across the borough. Carers' Network was working to reach out to community organisations.

Ms Mitchell referred to the implications of the Care Act and the importance of both physical and mental health. A health information day was being organised as part of Carers' Week. The network had informed the Hammersmith & Fulham Primary Care Navigation Pilot, which would help to connect carers with support.

Mr Naylor raised concerns in respect of people identifying themselves as carers and the need for publication of the help available and how to access services. Carers were likely to seek help from the organisation most associated with the disability of the person for whom they were caring.

Mr McVeigh noted that whilst the report provided information in respect of adult carers, young carers would not necessarily be known to social care services and that there could be a triangulation of numbers with other sources of data. Mr McVeigh commented on the role of local community resources, such as care centres, libraries and churches as a source of information and queried how carers were identified and received communications.

Mr Rogers responded that many carers preferred to receive information on a leaflet, rather than through the internet, and that a range of channels were being considered. The survey had focused on carers who had been assessed by the Council in the previous year.

In respect of the inclusion of carers in decision making, a third of carers had confirmed that they would like to be involved as far as possible, and this would be taken on board in designing the new assessments and implementation of the Care Act.

Mr Rogers stated that identification of carers was a challenge. Some BME carers were known to Adult Social Care. To raise awareness, information was being placed in external magazines, newsletters and other printed matter.

The new duties under the Care Act and the right of all carers to request an assessment, could mean that 700/800 additional local carers might come forward to be assessed.

Councillor Barlow commented that survey responses from 177 people were useful, but only a small proportion of the 12k plus carers in the borough. There was no support in the areas of the borough where most needed. Councillor Barlow suggested different ways of communication, such as through GPs and pharmacies.

Selina Douglas noted a gap in the provision of information and advice. Adult Social Care would develop an information strategy over the next few months, in line with the requirements of the Care Act. Adult Social Care was working with the CCG to access their network and would work with the Carers' Network to provide support in new locations.

Councillor Chumnerly considered that more could be done in respect of Carers' Week and that there needed to be better communications, including different locations such as community centres and working with other organisations, for example social landlords.

Councillor Lukey responded that Adult Social Care was keen to do more in Carers' Week and to work with the Carers' Network. The Council's communications team was being used, together with partner organisations, and health champions. Housing needs of the people being cared for were considered, as part of the Council's total responsibility, and a consumer group had been established to feed into the review of social housing policies.

Councillor Lukey stated that whilst the limitations of communication through the website were recognised, there was significant information on the People First website.

Councillor Lukey stated that Carers' expertise in supporting each other, in addition to the hours spent as carers, was recognised.

Councillor Fennimore added that it was really helpful for the Council in developing a digital strategy to know the preferred format for communication and whether people actually preferred leaflets or could be supported in the use of digital technology.

Councillor Vaughan commented on respite services that carers either seemed to be dissatisfied or had not used the service and queried the likely impact of

the Care Act on the number of carers coming forward. Mr Rogers responded that a national model predicted that over the first eighteen months there would be 700/800 additional carers identified in Hammersmith & Fulham. The helpfulness of carers' services by type had excluded 'does not apply to me', and there had been a positive response from those who had received the service. In addition there was a Carers' Network small grants scheme, which could help towards the cost of a holiday or other similar needs.

Councillor Vaughan invited the expert witnesses to make two final points.

Mr Tambourides emphasised the need for good resources to reach carers, currently only a small percentage were being reached, and the opportunity for GPs and other professionals who register patients to identify carers.

Ms Mitchell considered that some really useful suggestions had been made and good opportunities identified in respect of communications, and specifically ward level initiatives. Resources were needed to raise awareness of services available to carers.

Councillor Vaughan summarised the key issues and recommendations.

1. Adult Social Care needed to do more to identify carers, and a simple change in the GP registration process to promote self-identification was given as a good example.
2. Communication needed to be improved and people asked why they wanted communication in a particular way. Suggestions included working with social landlords and increased use of Carers' Week.
3. There needed to be increased support put in place in the north of the borough where support was most needed.
4. Carers should be involved in decisions about persons cared for, within the bounds of confidentiality and dependent on the level of involvement wanted by the carer.
5. There were some concerns in respect of the adequacy of respite care.
6. A future discussion would be added to the work programme, with specific areas around the increase in the levels of support, consequent on the Care Act and the development of an information strategy and partnership working.

73. LEARNING DISABILITIES COMPLEX NEEDS - COMMUNITY SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

Kevin Williamson introduced the report in respect of in-house day and respite services for people with profound and complex learning and physical disabilities across the three boroughs, highlighting the proposals for the future.

The report focused on Hammersmith & Fulham services at Options and Rivercourt, and referred to the developing offer for young people with complex disabilities, aged 18-25 years.

The key proposal was to move from a day service/centre model to one of Complex Community Opportunity Services. There would be three elements to the service: buildings, activities and opportunities and support.

There had been initial discussions between Options and Queensmill School to investigate the feasibility of developing an offer to people aged 19-25 with Autism during the day, which would help to improve the transition from Children's to Adult Social Care.

The report set out the developing partnership work between Options and Mencap to share day facilities. The main driver for people with more complex needs with learning disabilities was to support them to remain or move back into the local borough area.

Mr Williamson noted that there were issues with agency staff and that a review of staffing arrangements was underway.

Ms Jude Ragan, Head Teacher of Queensmill School, stated that the new school on Askham Road was for children suffering from complex autism and there were 145 children, aged from 2 to 19. The school was currently in the process of applying to get a small proportion of the school registered with the Care Quality Commission to provide respite care to under 19s and also young adults aged 19-25 with Autism on the school site. The proposal was for the school to partner with an external specialist support/care agency to deliver an after school, overnight and weekend offer, which would help to keep children in the borough. The new building would have four overnight beds.

Ms Ragan noted the change in the Special Educational Needs policy to cover those up to 25 years.

Mr McVeigh was concerned that the report, in describing service users, appeared to propose a one size fits all. In addition, journey times could be significant. Mr McVeigh stated that he had personal experience of the respite services at Riverside House and of an out of borough placement which had had a good outcome. However, he knew of one family who did not receive any respite care and queried the alternative.

Mr Williamson assured members that it was not proposed that one size fits all. The pilots highlighted the need to look at care and support allocated to people on an individual basis, depending on the complexity of their needs.

Councillor Barlow commented on recruitment of the right people to this specialist role, with the right contract, wages and training, and queried what was offered by the agencies. Mr Williamson responded that recruitment was an issue across the three boroughs. Whilst there were some better agencies, there remained a need for more training and the development of core

specialties. It was intended to partner with one or two specialist agencies and have regular specialist agency staff.

Councillor Barlow considered that the Council would have to provide the additional training for agency staff. Mr Williamson responded that managers were being trained as trainers, working with specialist groups to develop expertise. Ms Douglas added that the Council was trying to build a relationship with the specialist agencies to provide development of the workforce and to work in partnership with providers to ensure the right skill mix.

Mr Naylor spoke from personal experience of parents having to fight to get anything done and queried how staff could be persuaded to stay in what must be a very stressful job. Mr McVeigh raised the issue of staff also doing other jobs.

Mr Williamson responded that a culture was being embedded where everyone understood what the service was trying to do and the outcomes to be achieved. Ms Ragan added that there were 170 staff at Queensmill School, and it was important that they stayed as long as possible. Staff were motivated by training and also from self-esteem from doing the job well.

A member of the public queried progress in respect of the full engagement of Mencap, how services would be different and the assessment of outcomes and benefits.

Mr Williamson responded that the service was moving towards more partnership work, with more care based services to ensure that people were best served. Employment would be considered as part of an assessment and the service focus was being changed to outcomes. It was difficult to provide a general response. There would be future discussions in respect of the type of assessment, how outcomes would be agreed and how achieved, and families and carers would be involved. Ms Ragan added that outcomes, including employment and social care, were now being reported in Education, Health and Care Plans.

The Learning Disabilities Partnership Board took a high level overview of how services were meeting needs and supporting families. Ms Douglas suggested that there was a need to look at rebranding to an Opportunities Service. The buildings would be used to develop the service and provide support, but if it was not possible to deliver the range of services, a personal budget might be more appropriate.

The member of the public stated that, whilst Rivercourt provided respite care for people with complex needs, there was no provision for people with moderate needs. She had been provided with an assessment and a personal budget had been allocated, but there was nowhere to go, where the person could feel safe and supported. Ms Douglas responded that the options needed to be considered and that it might be possible to commission a service to meet the person's needs.

Ms Douglas responded to queries in respect of carers being overworked because they had a number of jobs, and whether the Council looked at agencies' policies and procedures. The Council asked agencies for information in respect of staff usage and undertook workforce development training. It contracted services through reputable agencies and, where there was high turnover, would question this.

Councillor Barlow recommended Unison's Ethical Care Charter as a useful tool for benchmarking against other councils.

The Chair stated that there was clearly a need for opportunistic and flexible services for different levels of need and summarised the key points from the discussion:

1. Service developments needed to be planned in a robust and consistent way for all people accessing the service, to ensure that the good intentions of assessments and outcomes were being met.
2. There needed to be a more solid understanding of the staffing issues.
3. There needed to be greater engagement with Mencap.
4. There was a need for respite care for those with moderate needs.

74. DEVELOPMENT OF A DIGITAL INCLUSION STRATEGY FOR HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Mike England presented the Council's proposed approach to developing a Digital Inclusion Strategy for Hammersmith & Fulham. Digital exclusion affected some of the most vulnerable and socially disadvantaged people. Whilst there was a good range of wi-fi provision in the centre and south of the borough, communities in the north particularly within College Park and Old Oak and Wormholt and White City wards were less well served.

The Council provided access to online PCs in public buildings across the borough. The level of access to the People First website had grown quite rapidly.

The Council's Housing Services had appointed an Inclusion Officer to further digital inclusion for tenants. The Council was committed to providing broadband internet access across the whole of the housing stock.

The Council had set up a Cabinet Member Social Inclusion Forum, a cross-departmental "social inclusion unit" to provide a co-ordinated Council wide response to social inclusion issues across the Borough and a Digital Inclusion Working Group was being put together by the Forum to take things forward and develop the H&F Digital Inclusion Strategy. The Group would map local needs and there would be input from the local voluntary sector and businesses.

Simi Ryatt and Phil Storey, H&F Citizens Advice Bureau tabled a summary report 'Learn My Way'. 40 volunteers had been identified for training as Digital Champions. Their role would include assessing individuals' skills and the support required. Fairly intensive support tended to be required initially. The report set out the potential partners in the borough.

Olex Stepaniuk, H&F Age UK stated that many older people had never accessed digital communications during their working life and it could be confusing. In addition, they could not justify the cost, resulting in lost opportunities and increased social isolation, and possibly even unplanned emergency hospital admission.

Ms Stepaniuk considered that the H&F Age UK cyber café was a good model to assist older people to become digitally included. The café was open from 10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday. Volunteer tutors were available and people could also bring their own laptop or tablet.

Ms Stepaniuk suggested that digital inclusion needed: the right infrastructure (the right equipment including tablets, and not outdated equipment, compatible with equipment used elsewhere and wi-fi); and the right leadership (paid tutors to support and also for outreach and community engagement, special skills were needed to teach older people and they needed to visit people at home).

Councillor Chumnerly stated that Old Oak Community Centre had an IT site, offering free broadband and the trainer was excellent. The facilities were open from 9am to 5pm, and would possibly be extended. In addition, there were five schools, which allowed use of their IT facilities.

Councillor Fennimore responded that the most vulnerable in the community were the first priority. Extensive work around all areas of exclusion was ongoing, and internet access would be a stepped process. Working with schools would bring intergenerational opportunities in sharing skills. Online applications could be essential in supporting people into work.

Mr McVeigh stated that Action on Disability had recently secured funds to deliver a peer-supported project to increase disabled people's skills in the use of digital technology and their confidence to engage in online facilities.

Councillor Carlebach suggested that current broadband coverage needed to be known in order to understand the problem, and that it might be possible for a company to fund this work as a piece of academic research. There was a fear of crime on the web, but it was also a powerful tool to promote inclusion.

Louise Raisey stated that the Council's website was being rebuilt to make it more user friendly. Mr McVeigh referred to the People First website and suggested that the Council might be being too ambitious in having two websites. Ms Raisey responded that the websites had been moved apart because there was a big demand for information by older and disabled people.

Councillor Vaughan asked the expert witnesses if they would like to make a final comment.

Ms Stepaniuk commented on the complexity of the issues and the resources needed.

Mr Storey stated that the Citizen's Advice Bureau provision of digital inclusion at Avonmore Library was the only such facility in the borough. Ms Ryat emphasised the need for fibre broadband coverage in the north of the borough.

Councillor Vaughan summarised the discussion. There was a clear need to increase internet access and digital inclusion for a number of reasons, including employment opportunities and age related social isolation. The PAC supported the measures to provide broadband coverage for social tenants, and would like further information on how this policy would relate to housing association tenants. There were a number of key points and recommendations:

1. The current broadband coverage in the borough should be mapped.
2. There were a number of ways of access, such as cyber cafes and improved access in libraries and other public places.
3. There was a need to offer training and education to ensure that people currently excluded were confident to access online services.
4. An update report should be brought to a future meeting.

Councillor Vaughan thanked the expert witnesses.

75. WORK PROGRAMME

The draft work programme for 2015/2016 was noted.

76. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

This was the last meeting of the municipal year.

Meeting started: 7.00 pm
Meeting ended: 9.40 pm

Chair

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