

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

29 November 2018

Present: Councillor K Hastrick (Chair)
Councillor J Dhindsa (Vice-Chair)
Councillors S Bashir (for minute numbers 44 to 53), S Cavinder,
K Crout, I Hamid, M Hofman (for minute numbers 48 to 59),
R Martins and I Stotesbury

Also present: Esther Moors, Redevelopment Programme Director, West
Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust (for minute numbers 44 to
48)
Louise Halfpenny, Director of Communications, West
Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust (for minute numbers 44 to
48)

Officers: Head of Service Transformation (for minute numbers 44 to 49)
Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications (for minute
numbers 44 to 51)
Watford 2020 Programme Manager (for minute numbers 44 to
49)
Leisure and Environmental Services Section Head (for minute
numbers 44 to 50)
Commissioning Officer (KB) (for minute numbers 44 to 50)
Commissioning Officer (LC) (for minute numbers 44 to 50)
Committee and Scrutiny Officer

44 **Apologies for Absence/Committee Membership**

There were no apologies for absence. Councillor Hofman advised that he had been delayed and would not be present for the start of the meeting.

45 **Disclosure of interests (if any)**

There were no disclosures of interests.

46 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2018 were submitted and signed.

The scrutiny committee noted that no executive key decisions had been called in.

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust - Presentation

Esther Moors and Louise Halfpenny from West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust gave a presentation on developing local health services in west Hertfordshire. The presentation provided a general overview of the wider health service transformation; an update on the work to progress hospital developments and refreshing the strategic outline case.

Louise Halfpenny explained that it was recognised that most acute hospital trusts ran at a deficit. It was necessary to do something different. The aim was for patients to visit hospitals only when they needed those facilities. People would be looked after in the community whenever possible. More preventative work would be carried out.

Esther Moors advised that the strategic outline case would set out why the trust needed the funding to do the detailed work. There was a prescriptive process to get the health care facilities the trust wanted. Currently the trust was informing people about the first of the business cases to be carried out; the strategic outline case.

Esther Moors informed the scrutiny committee about the proposed plans for each of the hospitals within the trust. Following feedback from NHS Improvement and NHS England the strategic outline case would be refreshed taking into account a number of points, which would include funding routes. She highlighted how the trust did not work in isolation and any plans had to be mindful of impacts on other hospital trusts. If new sites were to be developed it was necessary to consider many aspects including infrastructure. There had been discussions with clinicians about important aspects. People were keen to keep emergency and planned care separate, which had benefits. She provided details of the timescale for the strategic outline case.

Following a question about Mount Vernon Hospital, Esther Moors explained that different hospitals specialised in different cancers and research. The cancer service provided at St Albans Hospital would not duplicate that provided at Mount Vernon. If all specialist cancer care was placed into one hospital it would have to be enormous to accommodate all the different experts, treatment types and research facilities.

Louise Halfpenny confirmed that once the Strategic Outline Case had been agreed more detailed work would be carried out; for example the services at each hospital; the number of beds in wards.

Esther Moors responded to a question about preferred option. She advised that the process required all available options to be considered; it could not pre-suppose the final outcome. In response to a question about infrastructure, she explained that accessibility to the site was part of the criteria to be considered.

The Chair thanked Esther Moors and Louise Halfpenny for attending the meeting and providing the update on the current position with the future plans for the local hospitals. It was agreed that the trust's representatives would be invited back to a future meeting to provide a further update.

49

Watford 2020 Update

The Watford 2020 Programme Manager provided the scrutiny committee with an update on the progress of the Watford 2020 programme. He highlighted key headlines in the report.

The Watford 2020 Programme Manager advised that the implementation of the customer relationship management software was slightly behind schedule due to the complexities of integrations between different systems. However, it was confirmed that a resolution was close and that the software would enable the council to ensure its services were end to end digital by design. The team was working closely with IT to resolve the current issues. He commented that one additional risk had been placed on the risk register.

In response to a comment about the recruitment challenge and whether there was a risk in retaining staff, the Watford 2020 Programme Manager responded that significant time had been taken in ensuring that the right people had been recruited and that development opportunities for existing members of staff had been created. The team shared any learning. There was wider project management support across the organisation.

The Chair thanked the officers for the update.

50

Small Grants Fund Annual Report 2017/18

The scrutiny committee received a report of the Head of Community and Environmental Services, which provided the annual report for the Small Grants Fund 2017/18.

The Leisure and Environmental Services Section Head informed the members that officers had taken on board comments from previous meetings including the addition of equalities data. The Commissioning Officers provided highlights of the report. Officers ensured that applications met the criteria and that applicants had not applied for the same project in the same or following year. There had to be a two year break. This was to ensure that organisations did not become dependent on the council for funding. The portfolio holder made the final decision on applications, particularly if they felt organisations had received a lot of funding.

It was explained that officers were continually learning from applicants' comments; for example it had been suggested that an example application form could be provided; this would be considered for next year. The team worked closely with organisations and visited them if required. They discussed applications and sought clarification where information was not clear or missing. The Leisure and Environmental Services Section Head reminded councillors that his team were not bid writers. Watford and Three Rivers Trust was funded to provide support to organisations looking for additional income streams.

In response to questions about the Council for Voluntary Services (CVS), the Commissioning Officers stated that organisations were informed about Watford and Three Rivers Trust and that they could approach that group for support. The trust included information on its website and publicised the fund to its members. The council team had a stand at the CVS conference and provided application packs to interested organisations. Unsuccessful applicants were signposted to other possible funding streams, including the councillors' neighbourhood locality funds and the Watford and Three Rivers Trust.

Following a request for further equalities information, it was agreed that the scrutiny committee would be provided with the number of ethnic minority groups supported by the CVS and the ethnic make-up of the organisation's workforce. Members were advised that 2017/18 had been the first year that equalities data had been collected. It was hoped that more information would be gathered in the future however not everyone completed the information.

Following a request it was agreed that councillors would be given information about the small grants fund and an application pack. This would enable councillors to raise awareness of the fund. The Commissioning Officers confirmed they worked with the council's Communications team to promote the fund; posters were located in the Town Hall subway, in community centres and the Watford Community Housing's hubs.

It was noted there had been a large decline in the number of unsuccessful applications when comparing 2016/17 and 2017/18.

The officers explained that this may have been due to a large number of applications being submitted at the end of the 2016/17 financial year and there was insufficient funds available. Organisations were given the opportunity to defer their application to the following year if the application was not time limited. In addition some applications did not meet the criteria, however as this had not changed for a few years, groups were more likely to understand the requirements.

RESOLVED –

1. that the annual report for the Small Grants Fund 2017/18 be noted.
2. that the scrutiny committee be provided with the equalities data requested.
3. that the scrutiny committee be provided with details of the Small Grants Fund and application packs.

51

End of Quarter 2 2018/19: Key Performance Indicator Report

The scrutiny committee received a report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications which provided the results of the key performance indicators at the end of Quarter 2 2018/19.

In response to a question about complaints, the Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications agreed to find out the different types of complaints and circulate the information to the scrutiny committee. Following a request for information about the minor planning applications, it was felt this had been due to staffing levels within the service. New staff had been employed. It was suggested that this could be checked again at quarter 3 and then referred to the head of service and portfolio holder if it had not improved. The Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications said that staffing could be a challenge, particularly for professional services and the degree of competition within both the public and private sectors. It had been noted that some people were making lifestyle choices and working more locally instead of travelling into London. The council had just agreed a contract with Webrecruit, who would help the council to find the best way to recruit new staff.

Following a comment about the target and actual result for telephone waiting times, the Head of Corporate Strategy and Communications agreed to change the colour of the arrow for those areas that were not meeting the target.

RESOLVED –

1. that the key performance indicator results for the end of Quarter 1 2018/19 be noted.
2. that future reports be amended as discussed.
3. that information about the different types of complaints received by the council be circulated to the scrutiny committee.

52 Executive Decision Progress Report

The Scrutiny Committee received the latest edition of the Executive Decision Progress Report for 2018/19.

RESOLVED –

that the updated report be noted.

53 Budget Panel

The Chair of Budget Panel, Councillor Bashir, informed the scrutiny committee of the panel's work at its last meeting. Members had received a short oral update on business rates retention and the Finance Digest for quarter 2.

It was agreed that Councillor Bashir would contact the Head of Finance for further information about the maintenance budget for the paddling pools in Cassiobury Park. This information would be circulated to the scrutiny committee by the Committee and Scrutiny Officer.

54 Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Hastrick, the council's representative to the Health Scrutiny Committee, reported that the scrutiny committee had last met on 24 October 2018. It had been agreed that a topic group would be set up as soon as possible to scrutinise Hertfordshire Partnership Foundation Trust's proposal to provide community reinvestment into dementia services. The scrutiny committee had concerns about the impact of the trust's proposals on carers.

55 Watford Community Housing Task Group - Update

Councillor Cavinder a member of the task group provided an update on the group's work. They had received a presentation from Watford Community Housing. There had been three drop-in sessions enabling tenants to complete a

survey about the service received from Watford Community Housing and their thoughts about service charges and maintenance. There were two more sessions still to take place.

56 Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel

The Chair of Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Cavinder, gave an update on the panel's last meeting. The panel had received a good presentation from the Housing Property Manager. Members had noted that there had been a reduction in the number of people being placed in temporary accommodation.

57 Community Safety Partnership Task Group

The Chair of Community Safety Partnership Task Group, Councillor Crout, advised that the task group's first meeting had taken place on 5 November 2018. The task group had received presentations by Inspector Simon Mason, Safer Neighbourhoods Team and Steve Devine, Rough Sleeper Prevention Manager at New Hope. The presentations had focussed on street homelessness. It was noted that the vast majority of New Hope's service users had mental health issues. The task group had been disappointed that there had been no progress in funding a mental health professional to work with the organisation. The task group agreed to make a recommendation to the Community Safety coordinator and Overview and Scrutiny Committee that a mental health nurse or mental health practitioner be employed directly to New Hope.

The scrutiny committee agreed that the chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee should write to Mayor Taylor, who chaired the Community Safety Partnership on this subject.

RESOLVED –

that the chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee writes to Mayor Taylor, in his role as chair of the Community Safety Partnership, and ask that the partnership promotes the inclusion of a mental health professional in the team working with New Hope.

58 Work Programme

The scrutiny committee received its updated work programme.

RESOLVED –

that the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

Dates of Next Meetings

- Thursday 20 December 2019 (for call-in only)
- Thursday 24 January 2019
- Thursday 7 February 2019

Chair

The Meeting started at Time Not Specified
and finished at Time Not Specified