

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Adult Services held at 10.00 am on
Friday, 17 March 2023

Present: Councillor M Mutton (Cabinet Member)

Members:

Councillor B Mosterman (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Employees (by Service Area):

Adults Services: P Fahy (Director), S Caren, J Reading

Law and Governance: S Bennett

Public Business

12. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

13. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October, 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

14. Adult Social Care Complaints and Representations Annual Report 2021/22

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Adult Services and Housing which indicated that Adult Services have a statutory duty arising from the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Services Complaints (England) Regulations 2009, to provide a system for receiving complaints and representations from people who use its services, or those acting on behalf of users. The system provides a means for resolving issues and listening to the views of those who use or are affected by adult services. Where things have gone wrong it enables the Council to put things right, learn from the experience and make the necessary improvements.

There were 50 statutory complaints made within the year 2021/22, compared to 35 in 2020/21. 22 (44%) of these complaints were fully or partially upheld, compared to 24 (68%) in 2020/21. Most informal complaints are received by social care providers but occasionally complaints received by the Council are dealt with on an informal basis where appropriate. In 2021/22, 21 informal complaints were received compared to 6 in 2020/21. The report indicated that these are complaints resolved /handled at the point of delivery. In line with the Council's complaints policy and best practice, most concerns are dealt with in an informal basis, for example by social care providers, and may not be reflected in the figures contained in the report.

In 2021/22, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSO) considered 9 complaints or enquiries regarding Adult Social Care, of which 2 were investigated and upheld. This is the same as 9 complaints or enquiries with 3 upheld in 2020/21. Adult Social Care Services are committed to learning from customer feedback. Where complaints highlight where matters have gone wrong, managers must identify any remedial and developmental action required to improve service delivery. Feedback from compliments provides an equally valuable message; clearly affirming when services make a difference and personal qualities have added value to the outcome for users and carers. The following learning point examples were detailed:-

- Improvements in communication in relation to when assessments are delayed and to ensure that processes and outcomes are completed in a timely manner and a prompt resolution to enquires are sought.
- Advice could be given to social workers that they can offer carers assessments to anyone providing informal care, regardless of the care in place for the cared person.
- Processes to be reviewed in intake to ensure persons/families are contacted and appropriately supported through the safeguarding process, and any necessary care changes.
- Continued staff training to ensure care providers leave properties secured

While there are no externally prescribed timescales for the resolution of complaints, the Council's internal guideline is to resolve complaints within 20 working days. Performance on this standard is monitored by the Adult Social Care Management Team. It is normal practice to inform complainants should an extension be required. Most often, extensions are sought due to the complexity of particular complaints, including where the complainant supplies additional information/evidence part way through an investigation. In 2021/22, 64% of complaints (32 of 50) were resolved within 20 working days, compared to 49% (17 of 35) a year ago.

An appendix to the report set out the trends in complaints and representations across Coventry's adult services in 2021/22. It highlights the service improvements and learning from feedback and includes information on future developments in complaint handling and reporting. Key issues for 2021/22 include: communication between adult services and service users; decisions; and delays/waiting time for assessment decisions and managing service users' expectations. A further appendix to the report set out the Council's complaints handling guidance.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Adult Services approves the publication of the Council's Annual Report in relation to complaints and representations in Adult Social Care in 2021/22.

15. **Market Sustainability Plan**

The Cabinet Member for Adult Services considered a report of the Director of Adult Services and Housing which indicated that a key component of Central Government's Adult Social Care reform agenda, introduced in the White Paper "People at the Heart of Care", is sustainability of the care market. Part of the requirement of Government was for Councils with responsibility for adult social care to undertake a Fair Cost of Care (FCoC) exercise to establish the median

cost of care for two distinct elements of the care market, namely care homes for people aged 65 and over and home support for those aged 18 or over, and to move towards payment of median fee rates. A further mandate was for the delivery of a provisional Market Sustainability Plan (MSP).

The production of the MSP was required to ensure that the Council received Central Government financial support in relation to Fair Cost of Care in 2022/2023 and is a condition of receiving the Sustainability and Improvement Fund in 2023/2024.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) required submission of a provisional MSP in October 2022 and the Council submitted this to DHSC by the prescribed deadline following approval at Cabinet on 11 October 2022.

Whilst many of the Adult Social Care reforms have been delayed until 2025 as part of the Autumn Statement 2022, there is still a requirement for publication of a “final” MSP by 27 March 2023, including the following three sections:-

- Section 1: This requires an assessment of the 65+ care home market and the 18+ home support market which should draw on a range of information to give a comprehensive and representative picture of the current situation.
- Section 2: This is an assessment of the expected market changes over the next 3 years.
- Section 3: This contains plans for each submarket to address the sustainability issues identified, including how funds will be used to move towards a fair cost of care over the next three years; any further actions the local authority plans to take to support market sustainability; how the plan complements other strategic documents such as the Market Position Statement and how the authority has engaged providers in the development of these plans.

The MSP contains both financial and non-financial aspects and has been shaped through targeted provider engagement initially informed via the use of a provider survey to understand the key concerns of our contracted provision. The feedback from this survey has informed our support offer as outlined below. Such support will be undertaken alongside our standard quality work and provider engagement.

The key features of the MSP are both financial and non-financial support through measures including skills development, use of technology and recruitment support. On 6 February 2023, Central Government announced a further requirement that Market Sustainability plans would need to be refreshed for Winter 2023. Further guidance is to follow in due course.

The Cabinet Member noted that the MSP will be considered by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) at their meeting on 22 March, 2023 prior to its publication.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Adult Services:-

- 1) Approves Coventry's Market Sustainability Plan as appended to the report, and:
- 2) Noting that the Plan will be considered by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5) on 22 March 2023, delegates authority to the Director of Adults Services and Housing to consider and take on board comments received by the Scrutiny Board, following consultation with the Cabinet Member, prior to the publication of the Plan and use with the Adult Social care market.

16. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

17. **Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business**

There were no other items of urgent public business.

18. **Thanks to Officers**

The Cabinet Member, Councillor M Mutton, indicated that she anticipated that she was attending her last Cabinet Member meeting as Cabinet Member for Adult Services.

Councillor Mutton paid tribute to the outstanding workforce in Adult Services for all of the vital work they undertake and requested that her sincere thanks to all those officers in Adult Services who had supported her in her Cabinet Member role and taught her so much over the last few years be formally recorded.

(Meeting closed at 10.30am)