

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Adult Services held at 9.00 am on
Monday, 4 December 2023

Present:

Members: Councillor L Bigham (Cabinet Member)
 Councillor S Nazir (Deputy Cabinet Member)

Employees (by
Directorate):

Adult Services P Fahy (Director), N Byrne, S Caren, C Elliot, A Errington

Law and Governance T Robinson

Apologies: Councillor B Mosterman (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Public Business

6. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

7. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September, 2023 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

8. Quarter Two Performance 2023/24 - Adult Social Care

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Adult Services and Housing that provided an update to Adult Social Care performance for quarter two 2023/24 alongside actions in place to improve performance and proposed next steps.

Adult Social Care performance is measured in line with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) national Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) and this performance is reported nationally at year end.

Adult Social Care (ASC) also measures a series of locally defined indicators, which are reported to the Adult Social Care Management Team on a quarterly basis.

Alongside providing an opportunity for the Cabinet Member to provide comment, the report also gave an update on the Adult Social Care involvement approach including engagement and user experience work undertaken in the previous quarter. This is important alongside numerical performance as it provides a

context for what people with care and support needs and their carers consider important and should be used to inform areas for improvement.

An appendix to the report outlined the ASCOF figures for each of the four domains and indicators set out in the report, demonstrating the quarter two improvement of key areas in comparison to 2021/22 and 2022/23 figures. Directional arrows were displayed to summarise performance compared to previous years against these indicators. It also provided a useful comparison between Coventry City Council's figures and those at a regional and national level.

The Director of Adult Services and Housing outlined the information in the report with the Cabinet Member, providing clarification as to any significant changes in the indicator figures as well as the steps implemented to ensure continued improvement. The Head of Adult Care and Support summarised that no major concerns or trends had been highlighted in the data, with exception to the around 10% drop in the proportion of adults with learning disabilities who live in their own home or with their family – these results were however likely due to a data issue and not a performance issue. It was also noted that, while the numbers in relation to paid employment remained low, lots of work was being undertaken to address this.

Additionally, the Service Manager for Adult Communication updated the Cabinet Member on the engagement work being undertaken, especially with regard to the Service's engagement with Adult Social Care providers, recruitment events, internship providers, communication with disability confident employers, and work done with the voluntary sector.

The Cabinet and Deputy Cabinet Member asked questions, sought assurances and received responses on a number of matters including:

- Collaborations with the Job Shop to help those in care access voluntary and paid employment.
- Colour printing for the agenda, especially with regard to Appendix 1 and its colour indicators.
 - (Note: An accessible online colour agenda is provided to all Members, attendees and the public 5 working days before the meeting.)
- The Worker's Carer's Association, online training programs and the release of old IT equipment for those in care to access online training courses.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Adult Services endorses the action taken in relation to the Adult Social Care quarter two 2023/24 performance including the next steps as outlined in the report.

9. **Coventry Carers Action Plan 2024-26**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Adult Services and Housing that outlined the updated Coventry Carers Action Plan 2024-26.

In context to the action plan, the report indicated that according to the 2021 census 27,391 Coventry residents identified themselves as unpaid carers (8% of all Coventry residents). This was a reduction from 31,900 (10% of residents) in 2011. However, the 2021 census was undertaken during the coronavirus (COVID-

19) pandemic. This may have influenced how people perceived being a carer and how individuals accepted unpaid care. It is estimated that around 10% of the Coventry population are unpaid carers. The estimated value of unpaid care in Coventry is £680 million per annum (Valuing Carers 2015).

Therefore, the report provided an update on carers' needs in Coventry, and the resulting action plan to improve the Service's support to carers in the context of these needs. This understanding of needs has been derived from analysis of the biennial Survey of Adult Carers in England 2021/22, a local 'Let's Talk' Coventry Carers Survey undertaken in 2023 and using national information and data sets.

The Carers Action Plan 2024-26 focuses predominantly on adult carers, with some alignment with young carers where required. The plan is a working document, and it is aimed to continue to work with local carers and third sector organisations to shape the priorities and actions moving forward.

Delivery is expected to be achieved within existing resources across a partnership of the City Council, NHS and third sector partners, although any opportunities to lever in additional resources will be explored.

Appendices to the report included the Carers Action Plan 2024-26 in its entirety and the Equality Impact Assessment.

The Director of Adult Services and Housing outlined the information in the report, drawing the Cabinet Member's attention to the fact that under the current plan carers in Coventry do not feel well served. The new plan aims to provide support to carers which makes them feel listened to.

The Service Manager for Adult Communications further highlighted that since the last action plan, the Service has worked on a series of key priorities and made the following improvements:

- The recommissioning of The Carers Trust.
- Work and collaboration with Admiral Nurses.
- The introduction of the Carers Self-Assessment that allows carers to access an assessment at a time that best suits them.
- The launch of the carers bulletin – 3000 subscribers receive updates to keep well informed and are connected to other areas of the Council such as finance and housing.
- Work with General Practitioners (GPs) to encourage their support for carers and collaboration with them through The Carers Trust.
- Feedback from The Carers Trust about the service and the challenges carers face on a day-to-day basis – including but not limited to finances, health and wellbeing, and isolation.

Additionally, the Service Manager for Adult Communications, highlighted that currently work is being undertaken to analyse the data collected from carers and align that to the action plan and progress through a series of priorities over the coming years. In year 1, the plan will focus on recommissioning the action plan with the aim to holistically improve the social contact of carers and work with third sector organisations to buy back care for carers to provide them with more spare time. In year 2, the focus will turn to getting carers more support, including more technological and IT support to give them a break and avoid any potential periods

of social isolation alongside improved advice and information with regards to ongoing issues such as the cost of living.

It was also noted that initial feedback from carers as to the plan has been positive, but as more data is collected from a national and local level the more the Service will engage with differing carers groups.

In summarising, prior to its official launch this month, officers stressed that they want the plan to evolve and will continue to make improvements and updates to make sure it is progressing with Adult Social Care.

The Cabinet and Deputy Cabinet Member asked questions, sought assurances and received responses on a number of matters including:

- Accredited GPs, their locations in the city, and ease of access for carers.
- The provision of instant and emergency support – the role of The Carers Trust in providing emergency support.
- The Milan Carers Group and the extremely beneficial support they provide.
- Resolving annual data lag with direct carer engagement and local surveys.
- Young carer engagement.
- Ensuring people recognise that they are carers – the role of the pandemic in keeping carers housebound and working with other Council services and third-party shareholders to reach out to unforthcoming carers to make them aware of available support.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Adult Services endorses the action taken in relation to the Carers Action Plan 2024-26 including the next steps as outlined in the report.

10. **Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy 2023-26**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Adult Services and Housing that outlined the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy 2023-26.

The report emphasised that above all, a valued and respected workforce is critical to the delivery of Adult Social Care. The Service supports and develops the workforce, both their own and those of their partners, wherever possible to ensure they have the necessary skills, knowledge, values and attributes to provide effective care and support. We recognise that our workforce is key to the delivery of our Adult Social Care Offer in Coventry.

This Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy focused on Adult Social Care's workforce, both internally within the Council and the external social care providers and the challenges they face together. It was also a statement of their workforce priorities and the action taken to deliver them. Coventry's Adult Social Care workforce is diverse with people working for the independent sector, local authority, and for people in receipt of direct payments.

The Adult Social Care Workforce Board and Adults Joint Commissioning Group will have oversight of the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy and associated action plans. They will receive reports on progress and take the lead in ensuring the Strategy is reviewed and refreshed and that actions are being delivered.

Appendices attached to the report included both the Workforce Strategy 2023-26 in its entirety and an Equalities Impact Assessment.

The Head of Practice Development and Safeguarding outlined to the Cabinet Member the importance and far-reaching impact of delivering a workforce strategy for around 10,000 Adult Social Care staff in Coventry altogether. With this in mind, it was felt that the strategy should be simple and digestible to ensure it is widely read. Specifically, workforce planning was a key focus of the strategy, especially in posts where it is traditionally hard to recruit. Engagement events and 'work packs' were also highlighted as key aspects of the work being done as part of the strategy.

The Cabinet and Deputy Cabinet Member asked questions, sought assurances and received responses on a number of matters including:

- Rising salaries and the inability to effectively provide the appropriate salaries equivalent to ASC roles.
- Career paths – making the image of carers more appealing through training and visualising the value of the work.
- Majority female carers and how to engage other genders to come forward and join the carers workforce – socialised, stereotypical and gender biased roles and the issues caused in the health sector as a result.

The Cabinet Member gave her thanks to officers for the comprehensive report and the work being done to implement such a vital workforce strategy for Adult Social Care.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Adult Services endorses the Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy 2023-26.

11. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

12. Any other items of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 9.55 am)