

**At a meeting of the HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY 8<sup>th</sup> JANUARY, 2020 at 5.30p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor D. Dixon in the Chair

Councillors Butler, Davison, Essl, Heron, N. MacKnight, Mann, McClennan, McDonough and O'Brien

**Also in attendance:-**

Ms. Deborah Cornell – Head of Corporate Affairs, Sunderland CCG  
Mr Nigel Cummings – Scrutiny Officer, Sunderland City Council  
Ms. Ann Dingwall – Commissioning Manager, Sunderland City Council  
Mr. David Gallagher – Chief Operating Officer, Sunderland CCG  
Ms Gillian Gibson – Director of Public Health  
Ms Andrea Hetherington – Head of Corporate Affairs – South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust  
Mr. Graham King – Head of Integrated Commissioning, Sunderland City Council  
Ms Gillian Robinson – Scrutiny Officer, Sunderland City Council  
Mr Ben Seale – Public Health Lead (Business Management), Sunderland City Council  
Ms Joanne Stewart – Principal Governance Services Officer, Sunderland City Council

The Chairman opened the meeting and introductions were made.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Cunningham and Leadbitter.

**Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2019**

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee held on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)**

There were no declarations of interest made.

## **Change in Order of Business**

At this juncture the Chairman advised that the Committee would be considering Item 6 – Sunderland Care and Support Annual Report as the first item on the agenda, to allow the presenting Officer to attend another meeting.

## **Sunderland Care and Support Annual Report**

The Chief Operating Officer submitted a report which presented the Sunderland Care and Support's Annual Report for 2019.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. King presented the report advising that Sunderland Care and Support (SCAS) was a 100% Council owned local authority trading company established in 2013 and that it provided a range of service to adults who have social care and support needs and short break services to children with disabilities. Mr. King advised that SCAS was well established in the city and was the sixth largest provider in the region.

Councillor Mann congratulated the service on the compliments they had received but raised concerns over the waiting list for community equipment, whilst understanding that is probably one of the most put upon services. Mr. King advised that at this time in the previous year there had been a significantly longer waiting list but that they had worked with colleagues in CCG to reduce these. It was an area of significant demand and they were currently looking at a new working model with the CCG. In relation to wheelchairs in particular, Mr. King advised that people would usually need them immediately and therefore if it needed to be a bespoke item it could take a number of weeks to acquire, rather than the standard wheelchairs which may be in stock.

Councillor Davison referred to the telecare service and queried them receiving 11,000 alarm activations per month but mobile staff only responding to 2,000 and was advised that a lot of contact was either made accidentally or on further investigation it transpired that the user was not in need of any assistance and there was no need to dispatch staff to them.

Councillor McDonough asked if the service would be meeting the new minimum wage requirements and asked how this would affect the service. Mr. King informed the Committee that the contract with SCAS mirrored that of Council employees and therefore the staff were already being paid in excess of the living wage.

Councillor O'Brien asked how long an application for adaptation or improvement through the Home Improvement Agency could take and was informed that the timescale varied dependant upon the level of works that were needed to be carried out at the home. Minor works, such as a ramp installation, would usually be completed within weeks but a more significant adaptation could take up to three months or longer. Mr. King advised he could provide a breakdown of the categories in future quarterly reports.

Councillor McClennan referred to the telecare service and commented that there had been fierce opposition against the introduction of charges from those who had previously received the service free of charge and asked if the service had seen a

change in the level of demand. Mr. King advised that in previous years the service had seen the number of users reduce and following a review they found that they were predominantly those users that weren't engaging with the service as it was. The number of current users had levelled off at approximately 11,000 and they were not looking to make an increase in the charge for the service as it was reasonably priced compared to others in the region.

In response to a further query from Councillor McClennan regarding the provision of live in care in the city, Mr. King advised that the Sunderland Shared Lives Scheme was similar to a live in carer service and they were currently working with the Council and national organisations to expand the scheme to look to offer different types of support.

In relation to complaints received, Councillor O'Brien asked if the 123 complaints received was higher than normal and was advised that it was slightly higher than the same period for the previous year but that this had mainly been in relation to community equipment. The dissatisfaction rate currently stood at 0.03% so it was felt that in relation to the volume of services they provided this was extremely low and the number of complaints received had to be taken in the context of the scale and size of services that they offered. The Chairman asked if a copy of the review into the Complaints Policy, referred to in the report, could be circulated to Members of the Committee for their information.

The Chairman commented that overall the report gave a very positive summary and illustrated the work of SCAS well and asked, as the company continues to face increasing financial pressures alongside the demand for services, what they saw as the biggest challenges for them in 2020. Mr. King advised that the biggest challenge facing the service was recognising the increasing complexity of the needs of users that services were dealing with. He advised that services were reasonably comfortable with their finances and recruitment levels but that they were now dealing with individuals who had highly complex needs and they were developing new models of care to support people to remain living in the community.

There being no further questions or comments, the Chairman thanked Mr. King for his report, and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the content of the report be received and noted.

### **Integrated Care Systems and Integrated Partnerships Update**

The Chief Officer submitted a report to provide an update from Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group on integrated care systems and integrated care partnerships.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Gallagher, Chief Officer, Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group (SCCG), gave a presentation to the Committee which provided an update on the developments with regards to the integrated care systems and partnerships.

(for copy presentation – see original minutes)

Mr. Gallagher took the Committee through the presentation which looked to provide the committee with the context of the Integrated Care System (ICS) and Integrated Care Partnerships (ICP) in Sunderland, how working as an ICS would make a difference to the population health, the ICS five year strategic plan and the ICP priorities.

Councillor McClennan commented that it was clear that one of the drivers for change was down to finances but yet it was not referred to in the presentation and asked if there was a cost comparison available between what is now in place and what savings would be made. Mr. Gallagher advised that work was underway to provide these figures but explained that the biggest driver was the availability of trained staff in particular areas and they were undertaking a lot of work around how to develop new roles in the service to be able to provide a new sustainable staffing model for the future.

In response to Councillor McLennan's concerns that organisations may be set up that were not able to provide services that were needed, Mr. Gallagher advised that the changes were deliberately not about setting up new organisations but that it was partly about hospital services working more closely together.

Councillor Dixon asked if Mr. Gallagher could advise how patients and the public had been involved so far in the development of the systems and partnerships and also, if there would be a formal consultation with local people on the proposals. Mr. Gallagher confirmed that there had been no public discussions undertaken so far but advised that there would be a consultation exercise carried out as detailed works were developed.

Councillor Butler asked how much of the budget was focussed on prevention rather than treatment as he found that too often social issues based around poverty and behavioural change were medicalised; with residents being given prescriptions rather than helping them deal with the underlying issues. Mr. Gallagher commented that they had to look to address all of the issues that were affecting residents but advised that this could not be done by the NHS alone and that it was much more of a problem for society as a whole. He advised the Committee that Sunderland had really good health services but really bad health and to change this was going to be a huge job. There was a role for society and all partners to look to make improvements moving forward.

Councillor Dixon commented that Phase 2 of the Path to Excellence process saw prevention feature much more predominantly and that historically it had been seen to be one of the first things cut from services when funding was reduced.

Councillor MacKnight referred to the issues with accident and emergency waiting times and how these were not new problems and asked what the plans were to tackle them. Mr. Gallagher advised that it would take a whole system approach to relieve the pressures on accident and emergency rooms and that the place based work should see patients being treated in other areas of the city. Working together they should help see the numbers of patients presenting at accident and emergency reduce.

In response to a comment from Councillor MacKnight, Mr. Gallagher advised that between the local authority and the CCG the changes were about making the best use of the resources that they had between them.

Having thanked Mr. Gallagher for his report and informative presentation, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the information provided in the presentation be received and noted.

### **Managing the Market**

The Executive Director of Neighbourhoods submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided information relating to the care and support provider market in Sunderland.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Ms. Ann Dingwall, Commissioning Manager, took the Committee through the report informing Members that it included the on-going work undertaken by the Commissioning Team with regards to working with and developing a diverse care and support market and an update on quality and adult safeguarding matter. The report was one of a series of regular updates to the Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor McClennan drew the Officer's attention to the domestic abuse services within the report and asked how we could be confident that the provider was not 'cherry-picking' simple cases, which may give positive outcomes, and passing more complex cases on to alternative services and was informed that the current provider was consistently monitored and that they had grown their service provision with the local authority but that with the higher demand on those services there was not enough provision available. Ms. Dingwall advised that as cases were considered by the provider they would agree whether it was more relevant for a case to be signposted to other services and they were comfortable that they were undertaking this role responsibly.

Councillor McClennan also commented that there were more victims of domestic abuse than females and raised concerns that services were not picking up all genres of victims. Councillor Butler agreed that the service should look to provide for all but commented that it could not be forgotten that male to female domestic violence still made up a significantly larger proportion of domestic violence cases than others.

Councillor Dixon commented that the report indicated that we were continuing to see a high demand for services and that the Council were looking at future service requirements and asked if we were also doing any work to understand why demand was increasing in terms of domestic abuse and what, if anything, could be done to reduce the number of incidents? Ms. Dingwall commented that the domestic violence issue was high on many of the partner agencies agendas and therefore they would expect an increase in the number of incidents being reported and that in some ways this was a good thing as they wanted victims to know they could report incidents. Prevention was key and all partners were looking at ways to address the issue, that were inclusive of both men and women, and Members could be assured that they would continue to drive forward the domestic violence agenda.

Councillor Davison referred to the partners that were carrying out a joint scoping for future requirements and commented that it was imperative that Together for Children ensured that the child's welfare was taken care of at any time that domestic violence

was reported. Ms. Dingwall advised that the service worked closely with Together for Children to ensure that support was inclusive of the victim and their families but that they needed to improve and become better around the commissioning of elements of the service, which they were hopeful the scoping exercise would bring out.

In response to concerns raised by Councillor O'Brien regarding Brexit and ensuring residents would have access to medications in a timely fashion, Ms. Dingwall advised that contingency plans had been put in place but the final details would need to be checked and she could look to provide a more detailed position for Members. Mr. Gallagher also added that there was a whole raft of work that had been undertaken on a national level to safeguard people at risk in the event of a 'no deal' Brexit.

With regards to a query from Councillor Mann around the Independent Advocacy service and what could be done to get more advocates to help meet demand, Ms. Dingwall advised that the provider had an ongoing recruitment process but there were not the numbers of qualified advocates available to serve demand in the region. Concerns had now been escalated to the regional commissioner as it was an issue Sunderland had faced for too long but it was not something that could be fixed in isolation. Ms. Dingwall commented that it was difficult to say what the outcome would be as they needed to source people who wanted to become advocates or persons with a particular expertise who could undertake the training.

Councillor Mann went on to comment that unpaid carers may already have some of the requirements needed to become advocates and Ms. Dingwall advised that the service were thinking about people who had the potential to become advocates but yet may not think that themselves. The provider currently did not have capacity to meet the demands on the services and they were looking at ways to work differently as the issue continues to grow. Councillor Mann advised that she would like to be involved in her role as Councillor in any groups set up to discuss the issue, if appropriate.

Members having thanked Ms. Dingwall for the quality and content of the report and thanked her for her attendance, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the information within the report be received and noted and the Committee agree to received regular updates from the Commissioning Team in relation to the market position.

### **Policy Review 2019/20 : Oral Health in Sunderland – Draft Final Report**

The Executive Director of Corporate Services submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with a draft report of the review into oral health in Sunderland.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

Mr. Nigel Cummings, Scrutiny Officer, presented the report advising that the Committee's investigations and findings into the policy review topic of Oral Health in Sunderland had been attached for any final comment or amendment before being submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

The Committee commented that it was a very well written report, following a robust and informed consultation process. They felt that the final report was well balanced with evidence based recommendations being made by the Committee.

Councillor Davison commented that a recommendation should be included to state that the Council would work with dental practices in the city to be more proactive in local communities and schools.

Members having considered the report, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that subject to the amendments as set out above the report be agreed and submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

### **Annual Work Programme 2019/20**

The Strategic Director of People, Communications and Partnerships submitted a report (copy circulated) which set out for Members information the current work programme for the Committee's work during the 2019-20 municipal year.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

6. RESOLVED that the work programme for 2019/20 be received and noted.

### **Notice of Key Decisions**

The Strategic Director of People, Communications and Partnerships submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Notice of Key Decisions for the 28 day period from 16 December, 2019.

(for copy report – see original minutes)

7. RESOLVED that the Notice of Key Decisions be received and noted.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

(Signed) D. DIXON,  
Chairman.