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HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES AND OLDER PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

15 JANUARY 2014

(19.15 -20.20)

PRESENT: Councillors Logie Lohendran (in the Chair), Richard Chellew, Caroline Cooper-Marbiah, Brenda Fraser, Maurice Groves, Peter McCabe, Debbie Shears, Gregory Udeh, Laura Johnson, Sheila Knight and Saleem Sheikh

ALSO PRESENT: Stella Akintan, Caroline Holland (Director of Corporate Services), Simon Williams (Director, Community & Housing Department) and Rahat Ahmed-Man (Head of Commissioning)

1. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (Agenda Item 1)

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (Agenda Item 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Myrtle Agutter

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 13 NOVEMBER 2013 (Agenda Item 3)

Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Resources said that she was in attendance at the meeting and this is not recorded in the minutes.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Agenda Item 4)

There were no matters arising from the minutes

5. SOUTH WEST LONDON AND ST GEORGES MENTAL HEALTH TRUST - FOUNDATION TRUST PROPOSAL (Agenda Item 5)

The Director of Nursing and Quality Standards gave an overview of the report stating that gaining Foundation Trust Status will enable them to use their assets in a better way and there will be more accountability to the public.

A panel member said that the report mentions that the Trust want to be more flexible does this mean there will be a change of direction, if so what will this be?

The Director of Nursing and Quality Standards said that the general Direction is set by the Trust Development Agency. No major changes in direction are planned.

A panel member said that this panel should be provided with more statistical information on; carers, patients and numbers admitted to the acute wards. This would provide more accountability. The Director of Nursing and Quality Standards said that he would be happy to come to a future meeting with these figures.

A panel member said that a BBC4 programme had highlighted that the Trust had closed 154 beds. The Panel had visited Jupiter Ward for Merton residents at Springfield Hospital in February last year and found that it was full and 14 Merton residents had to be placed elsewhere. Also, there is no development worker for the user groups in Merton

The Director of Nursing and Quality Standards said that beds have been reduced but the home treatment service is the highest in Sutton and Merton. There is a national initiative to treat people in their own homes. The Trust does not place people outside the borough as some areas do. There is a cross borough reference group, which the Trust support and works closely with.

Panel members also said that the reduced beds put more pressure on the Community Mental Health Teams to discharge people earlier than they are ready for. Also, please provide more information made about a reference made on page ten of the report about work to engage ethnic minority groups.

The Director of nursing and quality standards said in Wandsworth they had trained black pastors in family therapy and put Improved Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services in the churches and Civic Centres. They are working to do similar work across all boroughs.

A panel member congratulated the Trust on the progress with their Foundation Trust proposal as they are further ahead than many areas. Also can they provide more information about the Quality Summit?

The Director of Nursing and Quality Standards said that there were some issues with the Trust and CQC had a number of concerns. A new team was brought in. Many of these issues have been resolved and the CQC is no longer concerned. The Quality Summit looked at how the Trust had moved on.

RESOLVED

The Panel agreed to support South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust's Foundation Trust proposal.

6. BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE 2014-2018, (Agenda Item 6)

Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Resources gave an overview of the business Plan.

A panel member asked why we were planning cuts of £242,000 to the community and housing budget and how can we expect to find this high level of savings?

The Director for Community and Housing said that there is a strategic approach to efficiencies and these have been verified by two external reviews. These are not new savings rather the department will ensure that we extract the maximum savings from existing proposals.

The Director of Community and Housing said Brokerage team has been tasked with finding and efficiencies. It is reasonable to set target high and keep it under review. The Head of Commissioning said the team had been working with providers to redefine care packages in some instances they have been able to save up to £1000 per week.

A panel member asked how we can make these cuts given the population rise. The Director for Community and Housing said that the council had provided growth monies for demographic pressures.

A panel member pointed out there had been no uplift for providers for seven years, are we close to the tipping point where the providers will no be able to provide the service?

The Director of Community and Housing said a good working relationship has been developed with providers to deliver services during this difficult period. It had been agreed not to add another year to this proposal.

A panel member said that the reality for councillors is while no-one wishes to make savings we are required to set a legal budget and difficult decisions need to be made. Officers can be commended for their work to minimise the harm and risk to vulnerable people.

A panel member asked about the deletion of four posts in saving CH4. The Director for Community and Housing said these are posts are currently vacant so it will not involve any redundancies.

A panel member asked about the revenue costs on the capital programme and the variations in the public health programme.

The Director for Community and Housing said the revenue is part of the support to the social care IT system so it is on the capital programme. In terms of public health, in the first year there were no reoccurring expenditures. NHS England removed money to the Clinical Commissioning Group, there was not enough time to spend the money but we can roll forward the funding. The Director for Corporate Resources confirmed that there is a £1.2 million current under spend that will be carried into 2014/15.

A panel member asked how we will know that the new social care IT system will be a good one given previous public sector disasters in implementing new systems?

The Director for Community and Housing said that a project manager, who is an industry expert has been put in place. Software upgrades is the area that can lead to significant costs, so we are being careful in the specification and putting in stringent terms and conditions to hold the contractor to account.

RESOLVED

The panel agreed to express their concern to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission about saving CH1 as there is a significant increase in budget saving required in years 2016/17. Panel members would like officers to provide more information about how this saving will be achieved.

7. WORK PROGRAMME (Agenda Item 7)

A panel member asked for the Director of Public Health to provide an update on their progress after one year of working within the local authority.