

HEALTHY LIVING AN SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a remote meeting held on 10th November, 2020.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

Present: Councillor Mrs. J.E. Charles (Chairman); Councillor N.C. Thomas (Vice-Chairman); Councillors Ms. J. Aviet, O. Griffiths, S.J. Griffiths. T.H. Jarvie, Mrs. R. Nugent-Finn and J.W. Thomas.

Also present: Councillor B.T. Gray (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

167 ANNOUNCEMENT –

Prior to the commencement of the business of the Committee, the Chairman read the following statement:

“May I remind everyone present that the meeting will be recorded via the internet and this recording archived for future viewing.”

168 MINUTES –

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the minutes of the meeting held on 13th October, 2020 be approved as a correct record.

169 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

170 SOCIAL SERVICES TRAINING ARRANGEMENTS (REF) –

Cabinet, on 2nd November 2020, had referred the report to the Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

The Director of Social Services advised that in November 2017 Cabinet had approved a proposal to establish a regional Social Care Workforce Development Training Unit and provided delegated authority to enter into a partnership agreement to provide governance for the proposal. The partnership agreement term was from 1st April, 2018 to 31st March, 2021 (three years) with an option to extend.

The Cabinet report proposed that no extension be sought to the arrangement and that alternative local arrangements be put in place by Social Services together with the Organisation Development and Learning Department of Human Resources.

For clarification, the Cabinet member for Social Care and Health confirmed that the local arrangements would commence from April 2021.

Scrutiny Committee, having considered the reference and Cabinet report, subsequently

RECOMMENDED – T H A T the reference and relevant Cabinet Report be noted.

Reason for recommendation

Having regard to the contents of the report and the recommendations of Cabinet.

171 ANNUAL SOCIAL SERVICES REPRESENTATIONS AND COMPLAINTS REPORT 2019/20 (DSS) –

The Director of Social Services with support from the Operational Manager for Safeguarding and Service Outcomes presented the report which was received by the Committee on an annual basis.

The purpose of the report was to provide the Committee with an overview of the activity, performance and achievements within the area of work and sought to ensure effective scrutiny of performance in Social Services and to provide evidence about the impact upon the lives of individuals and their families.

The Operational Manager apprised Committee of the complaint resolution stages and drew members attention to the statistical information included within the Social Services Representations and Complaints Annual Report 2019/2020 attached at Appendix 1 to the report (beginning at section 7.1).

Following the report presentation and subsequent questions from Committee Members, Officers advised the following:

- Referral of Stage 2 complaints to independent investigators (as referred to in section 7.3) had not impacted negatively on the outcome of the complaint however, the restrictions in place as a result of the national pandemic had prolonged the investigative process in the early stages of the pandemic;
- The independent investigators making contact with Stage 2 complainants to establish the terms of the investigation in the first instance as well as investigator capacity issues had contributed to all of the Council's Stage 2 complaints going beyond the 25 working day timescale during 2019/20;
- The Service advocates the use of plain language and efficient response times across all of its work practices and recognises these points as common themes in the Lessons learnt section of the Annual Report (section 9). Lessons learnt are shared with service staff;
- Complements are also shared with service staff to ensure staff are aware of the appreciation and gratitude of service users.

Having considered the report, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the contents of the report be noted.
- (2) T H A T the Scrutiny Committee continues to receive an annual report in relation to complaints and compliments received by the Social Services Directorate.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) Having regard to the contents of the report and discussions at the meeting.
- (2) To ensure continued oversight of Social Services complaints and compliance with the regulations and guidance.