

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

28 JUNE 2016

“GETTING BETTER TOGETHER” MEDWAY ADULT SOCIAL CARE STRATEGY

ADDENDUM REPORT

Report from: Ian Sutherland, Deputy Director – Children and Adult Services

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Summary

This addendum report updates the Health and Wellbeing Board on the discussion of “Getting Better Together”, the Adult Social Care Strategy for Medway which took place at the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 21 June 2016.

1. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 1.1 The Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered “Getting Better Together”, the Adult Social Care Strategy for Medway at their meeting held on 21 June.
- 1.2 The Deputy Director – Children and Adult Services introduced the report which advised the Committee that the strategy articulated a vision for the development of adult social care in Medway over a four year period, based on six strategic priorities – Prevention, Personalisation, Partnership, Integration, Innovation and Safeguarding. The primary aim of the strategy was to prevent and reduce social need by providing effective support so that citizens maintained their independence. Wherever possible and appropriate, the Council would support citizens with eligible social care needs to remain in or return to their own home, so that they could maintain important relationships with family, friends, and continue to actively be a part of their own community.
- 1.3 Members then raised a number of points and questions which included: -
 - **Purpose and readability of strategy** - in response to a comment that the strategy represented an idealised vision of adult social care which was not always reflected on the ground, the Deputy Director commented that the strategy had been developed in response to

requests from service users and employees for greater clarity about what the Council considered good quality social care to look like. It was important to effectively monitor performance and delivery against the strategy and he was keen to develop more qualitative measures. The Deputy Director highlighted that this would be overseen by the Adult Social Care Improvement Board chaired by the Leader. Some Members recognised the aspirational nature of the strategy and commented that if this led to improvements in adult social care then that was clearly a positive development. Whilst the high level nature of the strategy was accepted, some Members felt the document, whilst reading well in parts, was difficult to understand in places and could be repetitive (particularly the business opportunities sections of the Market Position Statement). The point was made that for use at a grass roots level it needed to be much simpler and easier to read. The Deputy Director commented that feedback so far on the strategy had been positive but he acknowledged there may be a need to provide separate material when talking to specific audiences. He saw the document as iterative in nature and there would be roadshows with staff and service users to secure broader engagement. The Deputy Director commented that he understood Members' concerns and would take them on board.

- **Target Audience** – the target audience was questioned and the point was made that if the strategy was meant to encourage people to think about the future and possible future care needs then probably another way of doing that was needed.
- **Older peoples care market/planning** – a Member noted that the strategy acknowledged that the number of smaller care homes would decrease in the future but noted that planning applications for larger homes had been refused by the Council. In response to a question about how the strategy could be used to address this within the Council, the Deputy Director replied that the strategy would support more integrated working within the Council, and specifically influenced work being developed with Public Health and Housing. A Member hoped the strategy could be used as a driver to secure more extra care housing.
- **Digitisation** – in response to comments, the Deputy Director stated that digitisation was important but information needed to be provided in a range of media and in a way it could be understood. It was important staff were properly trained so they could provide service users with information about care or be able to sign post them. In response to a comment about older people finding technology expensive, he noted that a proportion of older people used technology extensively. In addition, technology could offer significant benefits to older people and improve their quality of life and help reduce isolation. It could also free up staff time so they could provide better quality care.
- **Direct payments** – in response to a request for an assurance that older people in particular would not be pressured to take up direct payments, the Deputy Director assured Members that no-one would be required to receive direct payments if they did not wish to.

- **Co-ordination of services** – the importance of a service stepping in where another had not met a user's needs was emphasised by a Committee Member. The Deputy Director responded that this was central to the strategic priority of integration to ensure that each individual receiving health and care services had their needs met in a well co-ordinated and joined up way.

1.4 The Committee agreed to recommend the Strategy to Cabinet for approval with the proviso that the readability of the document should be improved for other audiences.

2. Director's Response

2.1 There will be a process of engagement on the strategy and the delivery plan with staff, service users, carers and the voluntary sector, which will take place from July-September. The consultation will run on the internet in July, with an engagement event taking place in September. This will allow us to record wider opinion relating to the accessibility of the strategy, but also help shape the delivery plan in relation to priorities identified through the engagement process.

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Appendices

None

Background papers

Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21 June 2016

<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=131&MIId=3398&Ver=4>