

**COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 22nd May, 2018**

Present:-

Councillor P Innes (Chair)

Councillors Borrell  
L Collins

Councillors Dyke

Councillor Caulfield ++  
Councillor J Innes +++

Damon Bruce, Head of Customer Services +++  
James Creaghan, Public Health Lead (Mental Health), Derbyshire County  
Council +

Clare Fowkes, Operational Benefits Manager +++  
Shirley Hallam, Environmental Services Manager ++  
Brian Offiler, Democratic and Scrutiny Officer  
Ian Waller, Assistant Director – Health and Wellbeing +

+ Attended for Minute No. 4  
++ Attended for Minute No. 5  
+++ Attended for Minute No. 6

**1 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' AND OFFICERS' INTERESTS  
RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.**

No declarations of interest were received.

**2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Flood, Niblock and Sarvent.

### 3 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee held on 20 March, 2018 were presented.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That the Minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 4 **CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING - PROGRESS REPORT ON FOOD POVERTY, MENTAL HEALTH AND DEPRIVATION**

The Assistant Director - Health and Wellbeing and the Public Health Lead (Mental Health), Derbyshire County Council, presented a report to update Members of the current projects, programmes and issues across Chesterfield relating to the need to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities since the previous report to the Scrutiny Committee in September 2017.

The report referred to the progress which had been made in delivering the Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Locality Plan through the work of the Chesterfield Health and Wellbeing Partnership, including:

- Continuing delivery of physical activity initiatives to support improving health outcomes, despite the bid for Sport England 'Local Delivery Pilot' funding having not been successful;
- A Health and Wellbeing Network group having been established in Loundsley Green;
- A collaborative approach to dealing with issues caused by loan sharks / doorstep lending;
- Holiday Hunger programmes targeting children and young people in Barrow Hill, in addition to Rother and Hasland. It was confirmed that it was hoped to coordinate these with existing initiatives and assets where possible, such as the Staveley Community Cafe;

- Working with the voluntary sector to support access to premises for local initiatives, such as the memorial hall at Barrow Hill and the community hub at Holme Hall;
- The establishing of Local Integration Boards by Autumn 2018 to help remove barriers to people gaining employment;
- A pilot project being developed to target those most at risk of falling and to identify the best prevention strategies for individuals;
- Proactive attempts to mitigate the impact of the introduction of Universal Credit, including increased use of foodbanks and other support services (Citizens Advice, Derbyshire Unemployed Workers Centre, Derbyshire Law Centre) and identifying places where people could access IT to submit and maintain online claims. Members suggested using community premises and services, especially local schools, to facilitate access to IT equipment and provision of information to raise awareness of support available.

It was noted that in the coming year the Health and Wellbeing Partnership would focus on work to address social isolation in the Staveley area, across the lifecourse covering first time mothers, children and young people, those of working age and those who were retired.

The Committee expressed its appreciation of the work being undertaken to improve health and wellbeing and the Chair thanked the Assistant Director - Health and Wellbeing and the Public Health Lead (Mental Health) Derbyshire County Council for their contribution to the meeting.

#### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the ongoing work through the Health and Wellbeing Partnership be supported.
- (2) That progress on the work to improve health and wellbeing in the borough be considered further by the Committee later in 2018.

## **5 SCRUTINY MONITORING**

The Environmental Services Manager presented the Scrutiny Progress Monitoring Report on the Scrutiny recommendations on Friends Groups,

which had been considered by Cabinet on 14 November, 2017 (Cabinet Minute No. 81, 2017/18).

It was noted that actions were proposed in the monitoring report to address each of the scrutiny recommendations, and it was suggested that it would be helpful for the Environmental Services Manager to discuss these with Councillor Caulfield, Lead Member of the Scrutiny Project Group, prior to the proposals being reported to Cabinet for further review and final decision.

The Chair thanked the Environmental Services Manager and Councillor Caulfield for their contribution to the meeting.

### **RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the proposed actions in respect of the scrutiny recommendations on Friends Groups be supported for reporting to Cabinet.
- (2) That progress on the implementation of the recommendations be reported to the Committee in January, 2019.

## **6 CABINET MEMBER FOR HOMES AND CUSTOMERS - PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

The Head of Customer Services and the Operational Benefits Manager gave a presentation to update Members on progress in the implementation of Universal Credit (UC) in Chesterfield since the previous report to the Committee in January, 2018.

The presentation provided updated information on the measures taken and the continuing work to support residents claiming or transferring on to UC and to minimise adverse impacts on them, including:

- 660 households were in receipt of UC; 338 Council tenants with UC as their income were claiming Council Tax Support;
- Maximising income for claimants – 652 new awards / increases in benefits had been achieved in 2017/18, which had resulted in annual increased benefit entitlement of £790,352 and increased backdated arrears payments of £366,826;

- Review of claims for Employment Support Allowance (ESA) – 97 claimants had received increased weekly awards totalling £4,513 and increased arrears payments of £416,573;
- Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) – 449 (from a total of 530) requests for DHP had been granted in 2017/18, 84 of whom were in receipt of UC, resulting in a total of £48,488 being paid to UC recipients (from a total of £249,029). The DHP budget available for 2018/19 would reduce to £235,699;
- Assisted digital support had been provided to 279 customers since 29 November, 2017. The three PCs in the Customer Service Centre were currently adequate to support this;
- 93 personal budgeting support interviews had been completed since 29 November, 2017, although 40% of those invited had not attended. Attempts were being made to improve take up rates;
- The rent collection performance had improved from 95.6% of collectable debt in 2016/17 to 96.2% in 2017/18, with overall rent arrears being reduced from £1.88m to £1.59m by the end of 2017/18;
- Direct managed payments of rent were being received for 209 tenants (37.7% of those on UC);
- Positive relationships had been built with staff at the Chesterfield Job Centre and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP);
- Staveley Job Centre was due to rollout to full service UC on 11 July, 2018.

It was noted that case studies were currently being developed and it was suggested that these be distributed to members of the Committee for information once available.

Members expressed their appreciation of the work being undertaken to assist claimants, particularly through the assisted digital support to enable them to submit and maintain their online claims. Members were of the view that the availability of computer terminals and such support in the Staveley area once UC went live there would be invaluable, to assist people for whom travelling in to Chesterfield may be difficult. It was

therefore proposed that the possibility of making terminals available at the Healthy Living Centre, if possible with some assisted digital support available at set times, be considered.

The Chair thanked the Head of Customer Services and the Operational Benefits Manager for their contribution to the meeting.

### **RESOLVED -**

- (1) That the presentation be noted, that copies of the presentation be made available to all Members for their information and that the ongoing work on implementation of UC be supported.
- (2) That it be recommended to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Customers that consideration be given to making computer terminal(s) available at the Healthy Living Centre in Staveley, and if possible providing assisted digital support to be available at set time(s) each week, prior to Universal Credit being rolled out in the Staveley area in July, 2018, in order to enable claimants to submit and maintain their online claims for Universal Credit.
- (3) That a progress report be submitted to the meeting of the Committee in November, 2018.

## **7 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the Forward Plan for the period 1 June – 30 September, 2018.

### **RESOLVED –**

That the Forward Plan be noted.

## **8 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE COMMUNITY, CUSTOMER AND ORGANISATIONAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered the overall Scrutiny Work Programme for 2018/19 which had been approved at the meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 8 May, 2018, and the draft Scrutiny Work Programme for the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee for 2018/19.

**RESOLVED -**

That the draft Scrutiny Work Programme for the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee for 2018/19 be approved and updated to include the decisions of the current meeting.