Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

Date: Thursday, 02 September 2021 **Time:** 10:00

Venue: Council Chamber

Chair: Councillor John Paton

Present: Councillor Mrs Christine Finlayson, Councillor Colin Glover, Councillor Mrs Ann McKerrell, Councillor John Paton, Councillor David Shepherd, Councillor Peter Sunter, Councillor Miss Jeanette Whalen

Councillor John Collier (for Councillor Mrs Valerie Tarbitt)

Also Present: Councillor Mallinson (J), Leader
Councillor Ellis, Finance, Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder
Councillor Mrs Mallinson, Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder
Councillor Nedved, Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder

Officer: Deputy Chief Executive
Policy and Communications Manager
Health and Wellbeing Manager
Carlisle Partnership Manager
Policy and Performance Officer
Overview and Scrutiny Officer

HWSP.52/21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Mrs Tarbitt (substituted by Councillor Collier).

HWSP.53/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted.

HWSP.54/21 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and Part B be dealt with in private.

HWSP.55/21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2021 be agreed.

HWSP56./21 CALL-IN OF DECISIONS

There were no items which had been the subject of call-in.

HWSP.57/21 ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2020/21 AND EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2021

The Policy and Performance Officer submitted the Annual Equality Report 2020/21 and the Equality Action Plan 2021 (PC.29/21). The report set out: key data - workforce profile; Employee support; Training and Development; Recruitment and Selection; Equality Impact Assessment, consultation and engagement; Partnership working and service provision; Customer Satisfaction; Complaints; Equality Objectives 2020-24.

In considering the report, Members raised the following questions and comments:

- In relation to staff appraisals: how many had been carried out in the preceding year; what was the ration of one to one versus team appraisals; could further detail be provided regarding the review of the current system?

The Policy and Communications Manager explained that the review was mainly focused on the paperwork used in the process to ensure it was appropriate for all teams, he undertook to provide further detail on the matter in a written response to the Panel, as well as the other questions raised by the Member.

- Did the Council operate a guaranteed interview scheme for those applying for a job who had a disability and if so, what proportion of those applicants were subsequently employed at the authority?

The Policy and Performance Officer confirmed that a guaranteed interview scheme was in operation for job applicants with a disability who met the essential criteria for the role. During 2020/21 the Council had taken on 47 new employees, 2.1% of whom had declared a disability.

- The Chair considered that the recruitment statistic indicated a low level of diversity.

The Policy and Performance Officer responded that the authority's profile was likely to be reflective of the wider district, however, that may alter once the latest Census data was available. The data contained in that section of the report had only begun to be collected two years ago, in order for trends to become identifiable three year's data was required. The area would be analysed in greater depth when sufficient data was available.

- Was the increased number of applications for jobs in the past year a result of Covid 19?

The Policy and Performance Officer considered Covid 19 to be a factor in the uptake of applications, a comparison with the coming year's data would confirm whether that was the case.

- Had any responses been received in relation to the online consultation on the Carlisle Investment Plan?

The Policy and Communications Manager confirmed that responses had been received and that they would be considered as part of the development of the Plan.

- Regarding the Next Steps Accommodation Funding a Member asked: how many unsuccessful applicants there had been, and was a profile breakdown of those in the age 16-24 years old, and over 24 years old available?

The Policy and Performance Officer undertook to provide a written response on the matter.

- Was the Council's support to Community Centres driven by need identified by the Council or from the Centre and its surrounding residents?

The Health and Wellbeing Manager responded that as Community Centres were independent organisations, the support required from the Council was identified by the Centres themselves.

The Deputy Chief Executive added that in addition to the support provided by the Health and Wellbeing team, the Council also acted as landlord to the Community Centres and so addressed issues such as building maintenance.

- What was the timescale for the completion of the SharePoint site including the Council's Equality Objectives?

The Policy and Communications Manager advised that work had commenced on the project and it was expected to be delivered by 2022.

- How near completion was the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment?

The Policy and Performance Officer undertook to provide a written answer.

- Did the Council undertake benchmarking of equality data with other local authorities?

The Policy and Communications Manager responded that the Performance Report (later on the agenda) comprised benchmarking data. Given the government's decision to implement unitary Councils in Cumbria, benchmarking with Allerdale Borough and Copeland Borough Council would be a useful activity.

- The Action Plan made reference to different groups: was it timely, given the situation in Afghanistan to include refugees as a category? The City had a history of supporting refugees and celebrating their contributions to the district.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder agreed that there was a long tradition of providing support to refugee communities. She noted that Cumbria County Council was the Lead Authority for that area and explained that refugee placements across the country were managed by a quota system. Information on the level of refugees that would be received in the county as a result of the situation in Afghanistan had yet to be advised, but it was expected that they would be provided with the necessary support.

- A Member congratulated Officers on achieving the Gold Better Health at Work Award, and asked whether the outcome of the next steps in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) were known.

The Policy and Performance Officer understood that the bid to secure the next step in the DERS had been unsuccessful. She undertook to provide written confirmation of the matter.

The Member noted that the Armed Forces Bill was currently progressing through parliament, and suggested that the Executive be asked to monitor its progress. The Panel indicated its

assent.

The Chair proposed that benchmarking data be incorporated into future Annual Equality reports. The Panel indicated its assent.

RESOLVED - 1) That benchmarking data be incorporated into future Annual Equality reports.

2) That the Executive be asked to monitor the progress of the Armed Forces Bill through Parliament.

3) That the Policy and Communications Manager provide a written response regarding: the review of the appraisal process; the number of appraisals completed in 2020/21; and, the ration of one to one versus team appraisals.

4) That the Policy and Performance Officer provide written responses in respect of:
- The number of unsuccessful applicants for the Next Steps Accommodation Funding, and the a breakdown of those in the age 16- 24 years old, and over 24 years old;
- The stage of completion of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment;
- The outcome of the application in respect of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme:

HWSP.58/21 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021/22

The Policy and Communications Manager submitted the Quarter 1 2021/22 performance against the current Service Standards and a summary of the Carlisle Plan 2015-18 actions as defined in the 'plan on a page'. Performance against the Panel's 2020/21 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were also included (PC.34/21)

The Policy and Communications Manager drew the Panel's attention to the summary of exceptions and provided an explanation for the missed target.

The Chair congratulated Officers on their performance against service standards in the context of the restrictions brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions.

The Vice Chair moved the recommendations of the Member Task and Finish Group on performance which were agreed by the Panel

RESOLVED - 1) That report PC.34/21 be noted.

2) That the Panel agree the recommendations of the Member Task and Finish Group on performance.

HWSP.59/21 COVID 19 RECOVERY STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

The Policy and Communications Manager submitted report PC.31/21 Covid 19 Recovery Strategy and Partnership Update. The report provided updates on: The National Integrated Review and Resilience Strategy; Overview of pandemic response and recovery; Risk of Concurrent Events; Recovery Structure and Strategy; Vaccination Programme in North Cumbria; Community and Local Partnerships; and contained the Cumbria Covid 19 Recovery Strategy. The Carlisle Partnership Manager gave an overview of various partnership projects which had been undertaken in response to the pandemic.

In considering the report Members raised the following questions and comments:

- The increasing number of cases in Scotland was a concern, what measures were in place to minimise cross border increases?

The Policy and Communications Manager responded that case numbers in Cumbria were currently stable albeit at a relatively high level. The Directors of Public Health in the respective areas were aware of the issue as Dumfries and Galloway in particular was part of the travel to work area for Carlisle District.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder noted that the Public Health Alliance, hosted by Cumbria County Council was monitoring the situation and would respond quickly to any identified issues.

The Carlisle Partnership Manager added that as a result of the work in respect of the Borderlands programme, effective means of communication had been established between the relevant authorities.

- The impact on people's mental health had varied through the pandemic, how would those with anxieties about returning to their regular activities be supported?

The Carlisle Partnership Manager agreed that it was important to appreciate that the impacts to peoples' mental health had been varied and that there was an awareness of that across a range of organisations. Both the City and County Council had provided £25,000 each of funding to enable work to support those with mental health issues, that funding had been provided to organisations such as Carlisle and Eden Mind, Mencap, People First, Carlisle Youth Zone and Citizens Advice to assist them to deliver services to those in need.

Encouraging people to make use of outdoor space was an aspect of the recovery strategy and the Council's Guided Walks booklet had recently been updated as part of that work.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder advised that a lot of high level strategic work was going on in relation to mental health. In addition to the joint funding provided by the City and County Councils, the Green Spaces Team and Healthy City Board were working with a number of NHS programmes to address the matter, for example the 'Space to Talk' project.

- When would data on the success of training on the new Emergency Assistance Centres registration scheme be available.

The Policy and Communications Manager explained that the system was a replacement for pre-existing equipment that could be installed on laptops and website and was simple and intuitive to use. He undertook to provide feedback when the software had been used.

RESOLVED - 1) That report PC.31/21 be noted.

2) That a further update report on the Covid 19 Recovery Strategy be submitted in 12 months time.

3) That the Policy and Communications Manager provide feedback to the Panel on the use of the Emergency Assistance Centres registration scheme.

HWSP.60/21 SANDS CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT – PLANNING PROGRAMMES

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted report CS.35/21 Sands Centre Redevelopment - Planning Programmes which set out the current progress of the redevelopment of the Sands Centre site. The report provided an update on the measures undertaken to manage or adapt the existing project proposals to deal with: progress with the main contract works; working practices evolving from the management of risks associated with the Covid 19 pandemic; working practices evolving from the management of the Brexit Agreement arrangements; social value management; and, developing health and wellbeing programmes.

As part of the contract, data was collated on the social value management. The Deputy Chief Executive anticipated that activity in that area would increase as the project progressed and he undertook to provide further data on the issue in a future report on the project.

The Health and Wellbeing Team, in conjunction with the Highways Manager were considering the cycling and walking infrastructure required to access the site.

The former Newman School site was currently being used to deliver some of the services that were ordinarily provided at the Sands Centre. The Deputy Chief Executive advise that GLL, NHS and the Health and Wellbeing team were beginning to consider the possibility of continuing to deliver some services from that site following the completion of the Sands Centre project.

In considering the report Members raised the following questions and comments:

- A Member asked whether the provision of public transport to the site had been considered and if infrastructure such as a turning circle and drop off / pick up points would be provided?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that, following the decision to proceed with the redevelopment of the Sands Centre had been agreed initial discussions with bus service providers had taken place. Now that the project was progressing Officers would look to restart those talks. In terms of the design of the outside space, it was hoped that door step provision for public transport would be available.

The Economy, Enterprise and Housing Portfolio Holder considered public transport access to the site to be critically important.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the likely continued use of the former Newman School site, the Deputy Chief Executive reiterated that the matter was at a very early stage of consideration.

A Member suggested that were the former school site to be put to continued use, it could operate as a social prescribing hub.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder advised that a social prescribing was already available through the Healthy City Forum.

A Member commented that he was pleased to see references to social prescribing in the report.

The Health and Wellbeing Manager thanked the Member and noted that GLL were continuing to provide a range of health and wellbeing activities including through its outreach programme.

The Chair proposed that the Panel resolve to request that Officers liaise with bus service provider to ensure connectivity to the Sands Centre, Members indicated their agreement.

RESOLVED - 1) That report CS.35/21 be noted.

2) That Officers liaise with bus service providers to ensure connectivity to the Sands Centre.

HWSP.61/21 OVERVIEW REPORT

The Overview and Scrutiny Officer submitted report OS.22/21 providing an overview of matters relating to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel. The latest Notice of Executive Key Decisions had been published on 27 August 2021 and contained the following items there were within the Panel's remit:

- Review of Housing Renewal Assistance Policy (KD.20/21);
- Sustainable Warmth Competition (Local Authority Delivery (LAD)) Phase 3 and Home Upgrade Grants (HUG) (KD.21/21).

The Panel agreed to include the Review of Housing Renewal Assistance Policy (KD.20/21) on its Work Programme.

At its meeting of 22 July 2021, the Panel resolved to undertake a site visit to the Turkish Baths (Minute HWSP.51/21 refers). The Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that, following liaison with Officers and the Chair of the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel, a joint site visit comprising members of the Health and Wellbeing and Economic Scrutiny Panels would be held. A report on the matter would be submitted to the October 2021 meeting of the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel, members of the Health and Wellbeing Panel would be invited to attend.

A Member requested that Social Prescribing be included on the Panel's Work Programme. The Panel indicated its assent.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Key Decision items relevant to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel be noted (OS.22/21).

2) That Social Prescribing be added to the Panel's Work Programme.

The Meeting ended at: 12:06