

MEETING:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Full Committee
DATE:	Tuesday 25 April 2023
TIME:	2.00 pm
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present

Councillors Ennis OBE (Chair), Bellamy, Bowser, Cain, Clarke, Eastwood, Hayward, Lodge, Lowe-Flello, Moyes, Osborne, Peace, Richardson, Smith, Webster, Williams, Wilson and C. Wray

55 Apologies for Absence - Parent Governor Representatives

No apologies for absence were received in accordance with Regulation 7 (6) of the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.

56 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Ennis declared a non-pecuniary interest as a he sat on the board of trustees for Barnsley Hospice 30 years ago.

57 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the following meetings were received and approved by Members as a true and accurate record:-

Healthy Barnsley Workstream – 29th November 2022

Full Committee – 10th January 2023

Sustainable Barnsley Workstream – 7th February 2023

Growing Barnsley Workstream – 7th March 2023

Healthy Barnsley Workstream – 21st March 2023

58 Barnsley Hospice and Palliative/End of Life Care

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:

- Martine Tune – Chief Executive Officer/Chief Nurse, Barnsley Hospice
- Sarah MacGillivray – Director of Governance & Quality, Barnsley Hospice
- Stephen Hall – Director of HR & OD, Barnsley Hospice
- Jayne Sivakumar – Chief Nurse, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (Barnsley)
- Siobhan Lendzionowski – Head of Transformation, Integration and Delivery, South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (Barnsley)

M Tune the Chief Executive Officer at Barnsley Hospice introduced the report to Members, explaining that she started working for the Hospice in 2021 where it had been rated inadequate. Following this the team worked hard to improve the service, in January 2023 the Hospice achieved the best possible rating of 'outstanding' from the Care Quality Commission.

Out of five categories there were three awarded as outstanding:

- Safety
- Caring
- Well-Lead

M Tune continued that very few organisations in the country received an outstanding award for safety, so this was a huge achievement for the service. The other two categories were Effectiveness and Responsiveness, and these were rated as good, however verbally staff were told they were close to an outstanding award – there are hopes for all five categories to be outstanding in the future.

There are high ambitions for the Hospice and the people of Barnsley – the Hospice teams are striving to do more and be the best of the best. Significant investment has been pumped into the structure of the organisation, the structure is ever changing to adapt to the environment and with the upcoming 30-year anniversary it needs to keep evolving as times and needs change.

The main challenge going forward for Barnsley Hospice is related to finance (it always has been). As Barnsley Hospice is a charity it has always relied on fundraising to allow it to operate but due to the cost-of-living crisis the needs have heightened. Additionally, inflation is the highest it's ever been in over 40 years at 10.4% meaning the rates of goods and services cost more which will affect the Hospice drastically.

M Tune provided Members with an example, the insurance costs for the building were previously a lot lower than they are now. This is due to the increase in demand for technology (laptops, etc). The service has moved away from paper so that information can be shared and stored correctly – previous years insurance was £18k whereas insurance for 2023 was £28k.

Overall, in 2024 it will cost £5.4million to run the Hospice, part of this will be funded by an NHS grant which has increased by 20% compared to previous years making it £1.8million. Another third will be generated through a variety of different fundraising

activities which the service relies on to pay the bills. Any additional running costs will be covered by reserves – however this is a short-term solution and will not work long term.

M Tune thanked the people of Barnsley for their continuous support and welcomed any fundraising suggestions for increasing income to the service.

J Sivakumar, Chief Nurse for South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board provided Members with a wider picture of palliative and end of life care in Barnsley.

There has been a working group for end-of-life care for a number of years but now an executive group is needed to drive change and improvement in this field – Martine and other senior colleagues are all members that drive the change.

J Sivakumar continued that dying well is a priority for all ages, the service has undertaken a self-assessment for what is provided to patients. Following this work is being undertaken in areas such as additional support and early identification. Work to support the homeless population is also underway, providing better end of life care and helping those that may find it hard to access services is being considered a priority.

Members raised concerns over funding and queried whether patients ever had to pay the Hospice. Officers explained that patients do not have to pay for any Hospice services, additionally families and loved ones do not pay for anything (this includes food, etc).

Members also asked whether people outside the area were able to use the facilities at the Hospice and were told that it is only for people registered with a GP in Barnsley.

Members questioned whether funds were received from Barnsley Council. Officers started that although the Council do not directly give the Hospice money, there has been a meeting with Wendy Lowder the Executive Director of Place Health and Adult Social Care at Barnsley Council to discuss possible ways in which the Hospice can reduce costs in different areas and support to help access grants, etc.

A discussion took place around staff turnover since the Hospice Improvement Plan was implemented. Officers explained that in the last 5 years the turnover had been 25-28%, it did increase during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, but it has reduced again. Since November 2021 a lot of work has taken place around engaging staff to ensure information is passed to all areas of the service, this is done via the staff newsletters, staff forums, monthly leaders briefing and the team briefings.

Officers continued that last summer a thank you event was held for all staff alongside a staff away day. Results from the staff survey showed that there were overall good levels of engagement and the teams felt proud to work for the Hospice. Additionally,

an employee assistance programme is available to staff with a 24/7 support helpline, counselling and psychological debriefs.

Members asked if the employees assistance programme had received any feedback, Officers explained that there hasn't been any direct feedback, but it was an improvement on the previous employee's system.

Officers continued that it is actively encouraged for patients and loved ones to provide the Hospice with feedback – this has been central to responding to any criticism from the CQC and the CQC action plan. So far there have been very few negative patient feedback forms, in the previous year 5 were received.

In response to questioning around the volunteers that live outside the borough, Officers explained that there are 7 volunteers working in the gardening team that live in Doncaster but choose to help out as they had a relative that passed away in the Hospice.

Further discussions were taken around the finances as Members queried how long the reserves would last the Hospice. Officers explained there is an upcoming board meeting in May where a 3-year forecast will be presented which will include a fundraising and retention strategy. If nothing was to change the Hospice would run out of money in 2027 however that is not the intention.

Members expressed their thanks to the Hospice for caring for family and friends, they stated it was an excellent support service and Barnsley would be lost without it. Members added that they believe the Hospice should be fully funded by the NHS and asked about lobbying groups and MP involvement. Officers thanked Members and explained that their current funding model is not sustainable long term, there is currently an organisation called Hospice UK that is campaigning for Hospice's to be fully funded by the government.

A discussion took place around bed occupancy, it averaged out over the year at 75% and there are only 10 beds available. In March the bed occupancy went up to 90% with the average length of stay being 16 days – the majority of patients then went home or to other facilities. Officers added that the age range is a majority of over 65's and the general split is almost even between men and women.

In regard to staff qualifications Members asked how many formally qualified staff/nurses are employed by the Hospice and what are the rates of pay. Officers answered that there were roughly 115 members of staff, all of which are qualified and are paid a competitive wage.

Further discussion took place around the fundraising and the Hospice Shops around the borough, Members questioned whether any more shops would be opening in the Town Centre. Officers explained that currently the retail hub is an excellent source of

income for the service bringing in between £8k to £10k each week (not deducting staff costs). Officers continued that following the meeting with Wendy Lowder there are hopes that the local authority could provide the Hospice with a rent-free space potentially on the marker floor where residents could bring their goods.

Further discussions took place around the Hospice collection service, Officers explained that details were available on the Hospice website highlighting what items will and won't be taken alongside the opening times and a phoneline.

When questioned about wider end of life care, Members also heard that the South-West Yorkshire Partnership Foundation Trust (SWYPFT) Neighbourhood Team provides for people who chose to die in their own homes, District Nursing and Specialist Nurses. The service is commissioned by South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (SY ICB).

Following further questioning from Members, officers explained that there were plans to roll out training for Domiciliary Care Workers.

Councillor Ennis thanked the witnesses for attending and the Hospice for their hard work.

RESOLVED that:-

- The witnesses were thanked and the reported be noted;
- Members of the committee to consider a volunteering session at the Hospice Retail Hub;
- Members to promote the message that the hospice was not just about end-of-life care, it also offers palliative care to help with life limiting conditions; and
- Members to consider writing to MPs to lobby for fiscal support for the Hospice sector.

59 FOR INFORMATION ONLY - 2021-22 Task & Finish Group Progress Reports

Members were invited to consider three reports relating to the 2021-22 Task & Finish Group Progress.

RESOLVED that the reports be noted.

60 FOR INFORMATION ONLY - Children's Social Care Performance Report (REDACTED)

Members were invited to consider a cover report relating to the Children's Social Care Performance Report. The redacted report was provided for information only.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

61 Exclusion of the Public and Press

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from this meeting during consideration of the items so marked because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the specific paragraphs of Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, subject to the public interest test.

62 Children's Social Care Performance Report

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:

- Carly Speechley – Executive Director, Children’s Services, BMBC
- Councillor Trevor Cave – Cabinet Spokesperson, Children’s Services, BMBC
- Michael Potter – Service Director, Business Improvement HR and Communications

C Speechley introduced the report to Members explaining that it was still in the development stages however progress had been made.

Members queried whether there were issues with regards to the capacity of social workers visiting children. Officers explained that currently there are not any particular issues with the capacity as significant progress in relation to this had been made which allowed staff caseloads to reduce. Visits are also manually tracked which means data can be quantified in the future.

There was discussion around the support that the Council had provided to the service, the current focus is based on recruitment and retention strategies to encourage applicants to make Barnsley the place of their career.

With regards to increasing care needs, Members questioned whether there were certain patterns over the seasons. Officers answered that there were no specific patterns to note, however there has been an overall increase of children in care especially when it comes to those aged between 14 and 16. Out of the 420 children currently in care 97 of those are teenagers which is likely to have a negative impact on their future outcomes – there is a focus on investment in this area.

Members queried the reasons behind an increase in school exclusions, Officers explained that the increase is not just related to children in care it likely to be a general increase. However due to the number of older children/teenagers in care it is common for their behaviour to be very challenging, many schools would struggle to deal with this. The main struggles were based around attendance and exclusion rates, particular schools were discussed, and concerns have been raised with OFSTED and the Department of Education.

Members sought assurances following the high-profile issues with some regional private care homes. Officers confirmed that no children from Barnsley were affected, and any children based outside the locality are being closely monitored – currently the results are showing that the children are well cared for.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

63 Strengthening Children's Services

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:

- Carly Speechley – Executive Director, Children’s Services, BMBC
- Councillor Trevor Cave – Cabinet Spokesperson, Children’s Services, BMBC
- Michael Potter - Service Director, Business Improvement HR and Communications

C Speechley introduced the report explaining that it was the second paper following on from the first in November 2022.

Members queried how the workforce had been engaged in the improvement journey the service had undertaken. Officers responded that the investment wasn’t needed with regards to the culture as a lot of work had been done across the board, including SEND and Education departments. There are regular fortnightly communications in the form of newsletters and staff events which have received positive feedback.

A discussion took place around the budget and the accountabilities in place. Officers explained that the service has a development plan in place which stretches 80 pages, it shows where and how the money will be spent alongside the expected impact it will have. Additionally, there is an independently chaired development board alongside several workstreams – including finance which is chaired by the Director of Finance.

Questioning took place around caseloads and the timescales involved with them reaching the desired levels. Officers explained that it was a work in progress as most teams have now got caseloads to a manageable level. The children and young people teams have a higher caseload as they are often the most challenging – also making those teams harder to recruit to. Officers added that the service is currently reaching out to different providers to help with interim recruitment as one of the biggest concerns is around staff retention. As part of the South Yorkshire Teaching Partnerships the service attendees’ sessions at Barnsley College to develop their children’s services academy plan.

Further discussions took place around additional funding and the impact it will have on the adult care sector once children move to adult status. Officers stated that the teams are working with the Executive Director – Place Health & Adult Social Care to

ensure all children are tracked in the system. However, it would be ideal if young people were prevented from entering the care sector in the first place, therefore reducing their chances of needing adults' services.

Members asked if there is any provision to help parents dealing with children that have problems, officers responded that there have been 27 family support worker roles created to combat the issue which reduces the chances of children coming into contact with social workers.

Councillor Ennis thanked the officers and members for the attendance and highlighted the importance of the work Childrens Services are doing.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Chair