



Housing, Wellbeing, Leisure and Early Intervention Policy Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Housing, Wellbeing, Leisure and Early Intervention Policy Committee of South Norfolk Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Tuesday 28 November 2018 at 9.30am

Committee Members Present: Councillors: D Bills (Chairman), S Blundell, J Hornby and J Overton

Apologies: Councillors: F Ellis, N Legg and A Pond

Substitute Members: Councillors: B Riches for F Ellis
C Gould for N Legg and
G Minshull for A Pond

Cabinet Member in Attendance: Councillor: Y Bendle

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Communities and Wellbeing (J Sutterby), the Head of Early Help (M Pursehouse), the Head of Health and Leisure Services (S Goddard), the Early Help Hub Manager (L Pickering) and the Housing and Benefit Manager (R Dunsire)

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Minute	Declaration
S Blundell	29	Member declared an 'other' interest, that she was in receipt of Council Tax Benefit, and chose to leave the room for this item.
G Minshull	29	Member declared an 'other' interest, that he was in receipt of Council Tax Benefit, and chose to leave the room for this item.

27 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Housing, Wellbeing, Leisure and Early Intervention Policy Committee held on 30 August 2018 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

28 SOUTH NORFOLK EARLY HELP APPROACH

Following a brief introduction by Cllr Bendle, the Head of Early Help presented his report which sought to review the South Norfolk early help approach and to look at the future of early help within the District.

Members were provided with an overview of the coordinated support provided to residents by partners working together to go beyond traditional organisational boundaries and provide a holistic and more joined-up provision, enabling residents to be connected to the help they needed, via the Help Hub. Officers explained the importance of primarily trying to set firm foundations by ensuring that residents had suitable housing, community support networks and a form of meaningful occupation in place, as a base on which any further support could be provided.

The Committee was provided with statistics relating to the cases referred to the Hub, as detailed within the report, and noted that there had been a significant growth in social prescribing due to 100% of GP surgeries in the District now offering the service. Members were pleased that this meant more vulnerable residents could be reached and that less GP time was being spent on non-medical issues.

The Head of Early Help drew members' attention to the financial information contained within his report, advising that the Early Help service was comprised of statutory and non-statutory functions. The Committee was advised that, in addition to the inward investment attracted, the Council had been required to provide additional funding to support the work. However, it was noted that there had been savings to the housing department and, although difficult to evaluate, there would be future savings to the Council and its partners, and a lessening of the burden on other public services, due to early intervention. Members agreed that, although the Council had an obligation to be cost-effective and was not required, by statute, to provide this service, it did have a moral obligation to provide vulnerable residents with a solid foundation and to help enable them to remain independent.

Members recognised the work of Early Help and thanked officers for their commitment and enthusiasm, agreeing that South Norfolk was well-regarded by other organisations for the services provided by its Help Hub. In response to a member's question regarding whether residents realised that the service was provided by the Council, the Head of Early Help advised that much of the provision was funded by partners and also suggested that some residents might be reluctant to engage with help if it was branded as a Council service. The Director of Communities and Wellbeing stressed that all partner organisations provided similar functions but that it was more beneficial to spread out a whole range of services in a wide-ranging offer, rather than to give sovereignty to individual organisations.

Some members suggested that various groups were not aware of the Help Hub and it was agreed that, although much work had already taken place in promoting the service, this should be repeated frequently, especially amongst groups for the more elderly and/or vulnerable. Cllr Bendle also requested that members continued to spread the word to ensure that residents were aware that help was available from the Help Hub and through social prescribing.

The Committee discussed the opening hours of the Help Hub and concerns were raised that limited help was available to residents at weekends. Officers advised that there was an after-hours telephone service operated by NORSE which helped with

emergencies such as homelessness but agreed that this could be an area which required further investigation and costings.

In response to a question from Cllr J Hornby regarding the percentage of callers to the Help Hub with lower-level mental health issues, the Early Help Hub Manager suggested that this was around 33-50% but confirmed that he would investigate further and advise members, by email, after the meeting.

The Director of Communities and Wellbeing requested, and it was agreed, that the Committee adjust the recommendation to request that Cabinet endorse the Early Help approach in the medium-term forward plan. It was then:

RESOLVED:

1. To recommend that Cabinet endorse the Early Help approach in the five-year medium-term forward plan; and
2. To recommend that Cabinet endorse the project proposed to take forward in 2019, taking into account the comments from the Committee, as detailed above.

29 2019-20 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

The Housing and Benefit Manager presented his report which proposed that there be no changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme for the financial year 2019-20. Members were advised that, although there would be a need to review and amend the Scheme for 2020/21, due to the impact of Universal Credit, it was currently fit for purpose.

In response to a member's question regarding the amount and reasons for claims, officers advised that around 47% of claimants were for pension credits, around 10% were in temporary or supported accommodation, with the remainder being working-age claimants on low or no wages.

Following a brief discussion, it was:

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Cabinet that the Council Tax Support Scheme remains in its current form for a further 12 months.

30 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was:

RESOLVED:

To exclude the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

31 LEISURE PRICING PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DELIVERY

The Head of Health and Leisure Services presented his *exempt* report which detailed the annual review of the Council's pricing structure for its leisure centre activities.

Members were advised that officers had reviewed other providers throughout the District to ensure that the Council continued to offer a competitive and quality service that contributed to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of its residents.

Following a brief discussion, it was:

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Cabinet the Leisure Pricing Proposal, as shown in Appendix 2, and the offers as detailed at paragraph 4.4 of the exempt report.

32. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Director of Communities and Wellbeing advised of items for consideration at a future meeting of the Health, Wellbeing, Leisure and Early Intervention Policy Committee:

- Diss Leisure Centre;
- Health and Wellbeing Board priorities and the District sub-group; and
- Community Leisure – improving access to leisure facilities and bringing leisure and early help together.

The Committee noted that the date for the next meeting would be communicated to members in due course.

(The meeting concluded at 10.53 am)

Chairman