BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 April 2025 at 1400 hours in Committee Room 3&4, Council House, Victoria Square, Birmingham

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Present:

Councillor Fred Grindrod (Chair).

Councillors Saima Ahmed, Kath Hartley, Gareth Moore, Julian Pritchard, and Paul Tilsley.

Also Present:

Councillor Mariam Khan, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care, Birmingham City Council (BCC)
Stuart Lackenby, Executive Director, Adult Social Care and Health, BCC
Shazia Hanif, Assistant Director, Community Services and Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, BCC
Chris Jordan, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods, BCC
Samantha Bloomfield, Finance Business Partner, BCC
Andy Cave, Chief Executive Officer for Healthwatch Brimingham
Fiona Bottrill, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager, BCC.
Sam Yarnall, Interim Scrutiny Officer, BCC.

NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

73. The Chair advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the council's Public-I microsite and that Members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

APOLOGIES

74. Apologies for non-attendance were received on behalf of Cllr. Kath Scott.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

75. Members were reminded they must declare all relevant pecuniary and other registerable interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting.

There were no declarations of interest under this item but under item 6 (minute 78), Cllr Tilsley declared an interest as a trustee of the Yardley Trust who provide bed spaces.

MINUTES

76. Members commented on the minutes of the previous meeting. There was discussion on the apologies of the last meeting. It was noted that there was a clash between the last meeting and the Audit Committee meeting and that Cllr Tilsley's apologies were not recorded in the minutes. It was agreed that this would be reflected and that the Committee Management Information System (CMIS) would be updated accordingly. Members also commented on a previous internal audit report that was suggested to be referred to the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee six months ago and was still not on the work programme. The Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager suggested further discussion on this under the work programme item and that there was now a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Audit and Scrutiny that previously was not in place. This MoU was said to allow for matters that audit deemed as important for scrutiny to review to be referred and vice versa.

RESOLVED:

i) That the minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 5 March 2025 be confirmed, following agreed amendments, and signed by the Chair.

ACTION TRACKER

77. The Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager provided an update on the Action Tracker to the Committee. There was an outstanding action in relation to providing clarity on the call-in process and pre-decision scrutiny. At the time of the meeting there was no further information from the Commissioner's unit that could be shared on this and that there had been engagement work with the Legal team. The Chair highlighted that there was further work to engage with the legal team to be present at meetings to provide legal advice when required.

RESOLVED:

That the actions from the previous Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings were reviewed and updated.

DELIVERY OF 24/25 BUDGET SAVINGS PROGRESS UPDATE AND IMPROVEMENT AND RECOVERY PLAN (IRP).

78. The Chair welcomed the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and Health to the meeting as this was his first meeting since joining the Council. Following this the Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care to introduce the item. The Cabinet Member acknowledged the significant work of the Adult Social Care team to deliver the savings presented within the report. It was noted that the savings were not easy to achieve as the service was a complex field and they remained committed to protecting the most vulnerable in the city. The department was said to have overachieved their savings targets in 2024/25. The focus for the service was not just

about reducing the amount of spending but reshaping how the service operated as a whole. The report was said to reflect the position of the savings in January 2025. There had been further work since the report had been published but the contents of the report would support the development of the savings and IRP in 2025/26.

Following the introduction from the Cabinet Member, the Executive Director and Finance Business Partner provided an update on the savings and IRP programme to the Members. The report presented to Members related to period 10 of reporting and there had been a shift with the red savings that were presented; this shift was said to be as of the 31st March where the data in the pack was up to January 2025. There was said to be three principal areas of focus, these were: day service consolidation of 9 to 5 centres; the enablement services due to their red rating; and the savings attributable to care services. Members were informed that as part of the Medium-Term Financial Plan process, that occurs yearly as part of the budget setting process, there was further work to assess the progress of the savings. There were 115 staff within the service and there had been work to engage with them.

As part of the delivery of the savings, Officers assured Members that consideration had been given to staff working in the service and the levels of anxiety that they might have had was acknowledged. In light of the recent Government announcement of the abolishment of NHS England, there was work with the Integrated Care Board (ICB) as an opportunity to improve and think differently about healthcare in the city. It was also said that there was further guidance with the integrated model of healthcare to support people to 'step down' which looked at reframing intervention and prevention methods. This would look to see how integrated services were more efficient, expediate reporting and provide members of the Committee with a robust understanding of the situation of the service. The Finance Business Partner highlighted that there were 23 projects under their remit for savings and 14 of these related to adult social care; 5 of which were rated as completed (blue), 8 as being on target (on track) and 1 rated as being amber (slightly off-track) which was the enablement service. Members were informed that there had been savings achieved that were mitigated from other savings leading to a £22.24m target of which £22.1m had been achieved as part of month 10.

Following the update Members asked the following questions and made the following comments:

- The Chair thanked the Executive Director for their introduction and for discussing the work with health colleagues/partners. He added that it was important to note the impact of the savings on partners
- Members asked if the green listed savings should be blue now and why this was not reflected within the report. The Finance Business Partner highlighted that the report was the position at the end of month 10 and the outturn had not been completed at the time of the report being drafted. This was said to be ready for the end of April and it was anticipated that the green savings would be blue.
- Members noted the comments made about the enablement service, both in-person and in the report, and highlighted that there were seven options presented regarding this service. The levels of anxiety from the staff were noted and recognised the work but highlighted that information was scarce, especially on why certain options were discounted and others were not on the transformation of the

service. The report highlighted that there were challenges with trade unions and Members asked what could be shared with the Committee regarding ongoing discussions and negotiations. The Executive Director responded that he would not go into details of the discussions/negotiations as they were ongoing. He did say that the intervention was being reviewed, and the service had dated back to 2011. It was highlighted that the work of the service was to move away from traditional means of domiciliary care to a method that could take the capacity. It was highlighted that there was work with the community in a 'step up' facility to support the care needs. Members were informed of a consultation from over a year ago with vulnerable adults in which the results highlighted levels of apprehension regarding support and the future of the service. Members were informed that the community and the people they serve were the priority.

- Members raised concerns regarding the cuts being made by the local ICB. It was reported that there was a requirement by the ICB to cut staff by 50%. It was noted that this would create a profound impact on the services and the efficiencies in the system. There were two areas of concern addressed by this; the first was the impact on the enablement service to support the most vulnerable, and the second was the impact on finances of both the Council and the wider community. The Executive Director responded to this by assuring Members that they were in talks with the CEO of the ICB and would work to address both the challenge and concerns raised. Members were reminded of the role of the ICB to provide an integrated approach to healthcare with some delegation of services given to the local authority. An example was given of the purchasing of beds to use as part of the social care services (*Cllr Tilsley declared a non-pecuniary interest under this point, due to being a trustee of the Yardley Trust).* Members were informed that there was further work to be done and that a further update on the local delivery model could be shared.
- The Chair and the Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager explained to Members that there was a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Solihull the following week and the paper set out the challenges faced by the ICB. There was a standing item on the delivery and performance of the ICB. The papers were circulated to Members.
- The Chair welcomed the approach to working with partners, especially around data collection, to look at the impact of the savings and the recent legislative changes. It was also noted that the Council was seen as a trusted partner. The Executive Director highlighted that adult social care provision provided by the Council was rated as 'Good' by the Care Quality Commission. The Council was seen as a trusted partner. There were a few areas that were highlighted as the reason for the rating. Including the ward level public heath profiles and need assessments. The Chair highlighted that this was challenging but a positive statement that illustrated what was being done well.
- Members asked about the savings for the next year, 2025/26, and when the Committee would receive that information. The response was that this was currently being worked through to enable more live discussions. Officers acknowledged it was right to note concerns of one-off savings not being delivered or transferred to the next year as it highlighted the difficulty in delivering savings and the hard work of the team to achieve them. The next year's work on the budget had already begun and there was a shift to deliver sustainable progress. The Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager highlighted that there was work with colleagues in

the risk, performance and finance teams to enable more timely reporting of information.

- Members followed up the previous comment by stating that if the work had already begun then the information should be available to share to enable the work of the Committee to monitor the savings. Officers responded that they could share the time frames regarding the period of reporting and provide live data at the next meeting.
- The Chief Executive Officer of Healthwatch Birmingham commented that the pack highlighted that local people were the priority when it came to the savings, however, the report did not highlight the impact on local people. It was urged that this should be monitored and reported on the basis of accountability.
- Members asked about the over-delivery of savings, especially with the day centres and the attempted call-in of the decision surrounding closures, and whether alternative options were considered. This was in light of recent national changes as well as looking at alternative options to mitigate impact on service users. Officers responded that they would be able to provide a written response at a later stage.
- There was a question on the difference between the overall and finance RAG ratings. The difference between the two was said to be over the complexity of the savings. The Care Centre savings were given as an example, where the savings were overachieved, but the service was still to be monitored.
- The Chair queried the impact of the 'Blue' and 'Green' savings on the overall delivery of savings in the service and asked whether officers would be able to report in future updates the alternative methods, unintended consequences of savings and the impact on the community. The Executive Director responded that there would always be impact on the public and that they would work to mitigate this. Members were informed that the service had learned from previous cases to ensure that the correct mitigations were in place. There was also work to ensure that the savings had little to no impact on statutory duties. This included reviewing care packages and focus on proportionate level of care. This was to orientate the work to work with individuals with complex needs. There was further work to review children that would soon move to adult provisions of social care.
- The Chair noted the comments and recognised the improvement needed for operation. It was asked, however, how often the 'green' and 'blue' savings would be reviewed in the future as well as the timescales of the savings as a whole. Officers responded by highlighting that the reviewing of savings was not just down to key performance indicators (KPIs) as indicated within the savings themselves, but as a delivery mechanism. An example of the enablement services was given; this service was not delivered since 2018 and rather became a domiciliary care service. The intention of the service now was not as it was when first set up. In terms of the reviewing of timelines it was said that there was work with the sector providers and inspectors (CQC) to monitor this to ensure that targets were being delivered.
- The Chair responded that there was difficulty with assurances when there were no measurables to be seen within the report. The Executive Director responded that the report was to report on the savings delivered and what was mitigated.
- The Chair highlighted that under the previous Section 151 Finance Officer there were discussions to look at the impact of costs of Adult Social Care on the Council as it provided a larger challenge than the focus on ORACLE and Equal Pay. These two

issues were noted as large concerns for the Council, but it was highlighted that the demand of social care was a continuous demand.

- The Chair thanked officers for their comments and welcomed the opportunity to work with the new Executive Director, a comment shared by the Executive Director.
- The Chair asked about saving 137 in the report and asked what the over delivery meant. The Finance Business Partner highlighted that this was an ongoing project that had gone beyond the original projection. This had been achieved through the voluntary redundancy process and would be delivered in full in 2025/26.
- The Chair asked the Assistant Director for Neighbourhoods if they had any comments on the report. He highlighted that savings for their area were either delivered or close to being delivered. There was a transfer of Great Barr to the Academy Trust that was agreed in principle but on schedule to be delivered by the end of the year.
- The Chair summarised that there were concerns raised about the learning around the day centres and that this was raised to a senior level. Members further added that there was risk around the enablement service on delivery and/or consultation with staff and trade unions in relation to impact on saving.
- The Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager added that the pre-decision on the care centres was noted to take place in June 2025. Members highlighted that this was on the forward plan to go to Cabinet in June and the Executive Director said that he would be happy to provide an updated timeline.

Following this, Members agreed the recommendations:

RESOLVED:

That:

i) The Committee noted the report.

WORK PROGRAMME 24/25 APRIL UPDATE.

79. The Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager highlighted that there were two items for May 2025 on the work programme. One being a report on the active sports strategy, following recommendations of the Commonwealth games impact work. The other report was to be the NHS quality report, but this had been deferred to the June 2025 meeting. In response to there being one report for the next meeting, there was a question of the public health impact of the bin strikes to be included but given the short timeframes this might not be possible. There was a request to see if Members would be happy for a written response instead of a formal report given the short timelines to get a report to the next meeting. Members commented that given the nature of the bin strikes, could the Director of Public Health attend the meeting in May 2025 to discuss the health implications of the strike. The Chair suggested that the request be made but it was noted that the new Director of Public Health might not have started by the time of the next meeting, but it would be asked to the Officers. The Chair highlighted that, under the requirements of the Commissioners, agenda items required a written report and therefore the Committee could not have a verbal presentation. Members suggested that a written briefing may be the best option as it would not need to go to

Commissioners. There were concerns regarding items being pulled, such as the food strategy report being removed. Members were informed that the work of the committee had not synched with the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee reports but there was work on this to join up work as much as possible. The Chair concluded the item by inviting comments from Members on the work programme to be sent through to them and the Senior Overview and Scrutiny Manager to start planning the next municipal year. Members agreed the work programme report.

RESOLVED : -

i)That the report be noted.

ii)That, subject to further input from the Chair and Deputy Chair outside of the meeting, the work programme will be submitted to Corporate and Finance O&S Committee to enable work to be planned and co-ordinated throughout the year.

REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS (IF ANY)

80. None.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

81. None.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

82. **RESOLVED: -**

i) That the next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, 14th May 2025 at 1400 hours in Committee Room 3 and 4.

The meeting ended at 15.38 hours

Chair's signature: