



## **Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Hosted Services**

**Date:** Thursday, 14 December 2023

**Time:** 10.30 am

**Location:** Conference Rooms A and B, Cumbria House, Botchergate, Carlisle, CA1 1RD

**Present:** Cllr C Weber (Chair), Cllr J Battye, Cllr M Harris, Cllr H Hodgson, Cllr H Ladhams, Cllr M Rudhall (Vice Chair), Cllr R Dobson, Cllr C McCarron-Holmes, Cllr B Pegram, Cllr M Mitchelson (substitute for Cllr D Moore) and Cllr H Carrick (substitute for Cllr M Brereton).

**In Attendance** Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland), Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland), Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health and Adults Safeguarding Service Lead (Westmorland & Furness) and Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny).

### **9 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillors David Moore, Matt Brereton and Beverley Morgan, Director of Adult Social Services and Housing (Cumberland), Director of Adult Social Care (Westmorland & Furness) and the Programme Managers (Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness).

### **10 Declarations of Interest**

No Declarations of Interest were received.

### **11 Exclusion of Press and Public**

**RESOLVED** that the press and public not be excluded from the meeting for any items of business on this occasion.

### **12 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 October 2023.

A Member queried whether an answer had been received as to why the “Review of identified risks/Learning and Improvements” agenda item had been removed from the Work Programme. The Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) noted that an answer had not been received but that they would be following up and that a process was in place to ensure that no requests for further information would be missed.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 20 October 2023 be agreed as a true and accurate record.

### 13 Minutes of the Joint Executive Meeting

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the Joint Executive Committee held on 13 November 2023.

A Member asked if the timescales for future disaggregation, specifically for Children's Services, had been met. The Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) noted the query and agreed to have the answer provided after the meeting when the appropriate officer could provide the answer.

A Member requested that a standing agenda item be added to all Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) agendas going forward regarding a programme for proposed disaggregation. To allow the Committee the opportunity to query whether timescales are being met and what possible disaggregation may be taking place. Members agreed to propose adding this item to the Work Programme.

A Member requested that the Senior Manager(s) who has the overview of all hosted services be present at future meetings to help answer the Committee's queries. The Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) agreed to make the request on behalf of the Committee.

Members had a discussion regarding the future of the Integrated Enterprise Partnership (LEP) within Cumbria and sought clarification as to who would be responsible for scrutiny, such as either the JOSC, a collaboration between the appropriate Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Scrutiny Committees or a combination of the two approaches. The Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) agreed to seek that clarity and add the topic to the Work Programme as appropriate.

A Member asked for clarification as to the meaning of "resilience accountability" regarding the Stronger Local Resilience Forum Pilot Programme. As no clarification was able to be provided, and it was noted that responsibility had been given to the JOSC to provide scrutiny for the programme, Members requested that the topic be added to the Work Programme.

A Member noted the importance of being able to scrutinise contracts within the Waste department, which the Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) agreed to highlight to the report author for the Waste agenda item due to come to the Committee in February 2024.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Joint Executive Committee held on 13 November 2023 be noted and the Committees comments be noted and actioned accordingly.

### 14 Adult Social Care

The Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland), Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) and Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health and Adults Safeguarding Service Lead (Westmorland & Furness), gave overview of the report. This included providing the Committee of the background for the Urgent Care Team (UCT). They noted that the UCT is a country wide service, which meets the Council's statutory duty to have in place an all age, 24-hour, 7-day, 365 days per year service for responding to requests for Mental Health Act (MHA) 1983 (as amended 2007) assessments. They also noted that the current UCT also provides the Emergency Duty Team function with respect to out of hours Care Act business for Adult Social Care. Though they did comment that it was not common practice to have an arrangement encompasses a Local Authority 24/7 Approved Mental Health offer and the out of hours Adult Social Care provision and highlighted that many neighbouring Local Authorities separate these functions. They also commented the importance of recognising that the number of Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) within

England and Wales continue to be precarious. The 2019 National Workforce Plan for Approved Mental Health Professionals represents a concerted attempt to address the downward trend in terms of Approved Mental Health Professional training and retention.

A Member asked why the UCT had gone down the model route that they had. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) explained that it followed a historic narrative arrangement which was dictated by circumstances but that, with the new authorities, a chance to review the model within the prescribed processes would take place.

A Member asked if a number of options for operating models were being considered, what the Police approach is like now and what the volume of demand is for the service. The Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) highlighted that officers are having weekly meetings to discuss the various options available and their viability, with discussions taking place with the relevant trusts and each authority taking to opportunity to create the right model for their respective residents. Regarding the Police and their approach, the Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) explained the 'Right Care, Right Person' operating model, which focuses on ensuring that the right person, resources and services are available for a situation. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) noted that this was a nationwide mandated process, though Cumbria had decided to only focus on implementing Articles 2 (Right to Life) and 3 (Right not to be tortured or treated in an inhuman or degrading way) from the Human Rights Act 1998. Other elements would be implemented at a later date following national guidance. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) also noted that both authorities were undertaking work with the Police and working on a 'Memorandum of Understanding'. The Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health and Adults Safeguarding Service Lead (Westmorland & Furness) assured the Committee that the Police still had their duties and requirements to attend certain incidents. Regarding the volume of demand, the Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) highlighted that there was currently a weekly assessment volume of 25-30, with slow weeks being around 20 assessments. Although the Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) commented that while the recording system is able to provide key metrics, applying metrics is difficult due to each assessment having a different type of demand which then requires a different amount of time to complete.

A Member asked what the basic training was for Social Workers and whether it was possible for them to be trained to become an AMHP. The Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) explained that Social Workers undertake a degree, with general training lasting two years and then undertaking the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) 12-month, employer led and employment-based programme of support and assessment. To become an AMHP, regulations require experience as a Social Worker for a few years. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) added that conversations were being conducted to see if it would be possible in the future for Social Workers to be able to indicate early on whether they would like to undertake AMHP training and perhaps create a discipline of Social Work informed by AMHP regulations. The Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health and Adults Safeguarding Service Lead (Westmorland & Furness) also noted that AMHPs are the premium for mental health professionals due to their experience and training and their willingness to do the job. He also explained that options for increasing the number of AMHPs are being reviewed, but the focus is currently on maintaining the current AMHPs.

A Member asked if the following metrics could be supplied:

- How many 'clients' are seen within a 12 month period.
- Is there a trend in demand.

- What is the impact of Covid and the Cost of Living Crisis on that trend in demand.
- What is the geographic spread in the demand for the service (rural v town/city).
- Is the pool of Section 12 Doctors large or small.
- What is the division of AMHPs between the two authorities with disaggregation.
- What are the key drivers which would be achieved by disaggregation.

The Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) noted that the information would need to be supplied after the meeting as the officers did not have the information to hand, but that the UCT currently had 14 Full Time Employed (FTE) AMHPs which would be split equally between the two authorities with disaggregation. The Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health and Adults Safeguarding Service Lead (Westmorland & Furness) commented on the importance of asking about the need for disaggregation for each service and highlighted that the team were currently focused on what was best needed for Cumbrian residents.

A Member commented on the important relationships the authorities have with the two relevant NHS Trusts which cover large areas and a number of authorities. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) noted that the UCT were working with the Trusts to provide Section 12 Doctors, with tools available to put calls out when they are required, but that the current challenge is a reliance on independent doctors in Cumbria rather than through the previous provider. But he commented that actions are being undertaken to find ways around these challenges.

A Member asked for clarification as to who the “honorary contract” within paragraph 1.9 of the report referred to, whether the figures within paragraph 1.15 of the report were the figures as what was expected to be the cost or the actual cost and whether the costs noted in paragraph 1.17 of the report for an Externally Provided Workforce (EPW) were an additional cost. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) answered that the contract referred to both trained AMHP staff and those who were currently in training where Cumberland would become the approval authority, with the logistics of where the AMHP is based being considered to help reduce some of the demand for working out of the area. Regarding the figures, the Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) explained that they were the actual costs and they reflected the agreed inter-agency arrangements. It was also noted that the EPW costs were additional to the other figures.

A Member noted their concern regarding police response for residents within rural areas, especially within the farming communities, due to isolation and the current high rates of self-harm and suicide. The Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health and Adults Safeguarding Service Lead (Westmorland & Furness) recognised the vulnerability of the farming community and highlighted that under the ‘Right Care, Right Person’ operating model, the police still retain the responsibility to respond to any immediate risk concern. He also noted that processes were in place with the police regarding attending situations for welfare checks and risk assessments.

A Member highlighted the importance of all Social Workers sharing their first professional training as all areas of Social Work experience stresses and strains. The Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) agreed with the Member, noting the importance of conducting value based training due to the relationships established during Social Work to help make sure people are seen as being valued within their communities.

A Member asked how the council’s dealt with Mental Health issues for Children. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) explained that the Mental Health Act was ageless, so the team worked with children and young people when their help was required and appropriate.

Members queried whether the £56k for enhancements/allowance was an additional figure or included within the total costs for staff. The Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) agreed to seek that clarity with the Finance Team.

A Member noted the high cost of employing EPWs, and queried what the impact of impact of disaggregation would have on both the staffing costs and the risks on the pinch points. The Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) explained that an EPW is only paid as and when they work but that it is a higher cost than having a FTE member of staff. When considering the cost of disaggregation, the Assistant Director of Operations (Cumberland) noted that it would be significantly higher due to needing to ensure the sufficiency of the service and the cover for any staff on sick or leave, which would require EPWs to provide that cover. The Learning Disabilities, Autism, Mental Health and Adults Safeguarding Service Lead (Westmorland & Furness) note that the pinch points would be different for each council, such as Westmorland & Furness finding it easier to access Section 12 Doctors compared to Cumberland. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) also noted that the impact of the pinch points would be determined by the operation models and preference of AMHP models chosen by each council following disaggregation.

A Member asked whether AMHPs were able to explore options such as job shares or returns to prevent losing them altogether and whether there was support available should an AMHP require help. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) explained that there was a rich supervision programme, with training, as support for all staff was taken very seriously by both authorities. It was also noted that there are numerous arrangements in place to help keep as many AMHPs in position as possible, such as flexible retirement arrangements, bank arrangements and being able to utilise previously authorise AMHPs.

A Member asked if Cumbria had access to Section 12 Doctors from Scotland. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) explained that yes, Cumbria was able to draw them down due to them being able to be Section 12 Doctors in England and Wales.

A Member asked if non-Section 12 Doctors, such as GPs who previously allowed for home visits, were still able to help the UCT. The Acting Senior Manager—Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Safeguarding (Cumberland) explained that due to the high demand on GPs, they were less able to support assessments for the UCT than they had been able to previously.

**RESOLVED** that,

- a) The information contained within the report regarding the activity undertaken by the Adults UCT and the update be noted.
- b) The requested information be provided after the meeting.

## **15 Work Programme**

The Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny) provided the Committee with an overview of the current Work Programme before inviting Members to ask any questions or propose any amendments.

Members agreed that the proposed items under agenda item 5; the Disaggregation Progress Programme as a standard item, the future arrangements of LEP and the Stronger Local Resilience Forum Pilot Programme be added to the Work Programme.

**RESOLVED** that the JOSC noted the current Work Programme and agreed to the proposed additional items as recorded above.

## **16 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Members had a discussion regarding the meeting venues for the next two scheduled JOSC meetings, considering potentially moving them to alternate venues within West Cumberland, but agreed that it would be beneficial to keep the venues as Cumbria House, Carlisle.

However, Members did note that all potential venues for the 2024/25 JOSC meetings should be considered when creating the calendar.

**RESOLVED** that the next JOSC meeting be held on Monday 26 February 2024 at 10:30am in Cumbria House, Carlisle.

The meeting finished at 12.24 pm