

Item 5: Wheelchair Services Update

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 29 January 2020

Subject: Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service Update

Summary: This report invites the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the information provided by Thanet CCG and Millbrook Healthcare.

It provides additional background information which may prove useful to Members.

1. Introduction

- (a) Thanet CCG are the lead commissioner for NHS wheelchair services across Kent and Medway.
- (b) Millbrook Healthcare was awarded the contract for provision of wheelchair services across Kent and Medway in April 2017. During its early months, the provider identified a larger than expected caseload including a significant number of adults and children that had been on the waiting list for more than 18 weeks, and in some cases over a year.¹
- (c) HOSC received notification from Thanet CCG in June 2018 that there was pressure on the wheelchair service provided by Millbrook Healthcare; patients were experiencing longer wait times for equipment, repairs and assessment. These concerns were echoed by Healthwatch Kent.

2. Previous monitoring by the Kent HOSC

- (a) HOSC has received regular updates from the CCG and Millbrook Healthcare since July 2018. Stakeholders such as the Centre for Independent Living in Kent (CiLK), the Wheelchair Service Users Group and Healthwatch Kent have been involved in the discussions.
- (b) The last formal update to HOSC was received on 23 July 2019. Millbrook Healthcare reported that there had been improvement in waiting times overall, but that service user experience continued to be inconsistent.

¹ Thanet CCG (Jan 2019) Kent and Medway Wheelchair Service Update, page 2, <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s88768/190125%20HOSC%20Briefing%20on%20Kent%20and%20Medway%20Wheelchair%20Service%20Final%20v2.pdf>

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- (c) Healthwatch Kent had been liaising with the CCG, and had expressed an interest in carrying out an in-depth piece of work once changes had bedded in. This is included in the agenda pack.
- (d) At the meeting, HOSC was notified that Millbrook Healthcare had been acquired by Cairngorms Investment Company after a decision by its Chairman to step away from the business.
- (e) At the conclusion of the above meeting, the Committee agreed the following recommendation:

RESOLVED that:

a) the report be noted;

*b) Thanet CCG provide a written update as soon as practically possible.
The update should include:*

- i. Assurances that the contractual obligations would remain with the organisation under its new ownership;*
- ii. Details of the new company;*
- iii. Arrangements for existing staff;*
- iv. Any information relating to significant changes in the delivery of services.*

c) Thanet CCG return to the Committee at the appropriate time.

- (f) Thanet CCG provided two documents for HOSC in relation to point b) above. These are attached to this report for information as two appendices.
- (g) In line with recommendation c) above, Thanet CCG and Millbrook Healthcare have been invited to attend this meeting and provide an update on the service performance. This is in the agenda following the above-mentioned appendices.

3. Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the report be noted.

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Appendices

A – Briefing from Thanet CCG about Millbrook acquisition

B – Briefing from Millbrook Healthcare about Cairngorms Investment Company

Background Documents

Kent County Council (2018) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (20/07/18)*',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=7919&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2018) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (13/09/18)*',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8122&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2019) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (25/01/19)*',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=7924&Ver=4>

Kent County Council (2019) '*Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (23/07/19)*',
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=112&MId=8282&Ver=4>

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