

Item 5: Wheelchair Services Update

By: Kay Goldsmith, Scrutiny Research Officer
To: Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 23 July 2019
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.

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

1. Introduction

- (a) Thanet CCG are the lead commissioner for wheelchair services across Kent and Medway.
- (b) Millbrook Healthcare was awarded the contract for wheelchair services across Kent and Medway in April 2017.
- (c) During the early months of the contract, Millbrook Healthcare 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
- (d) 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) Thanet CCG attended HOSC on 20 July 2018. Following a discussion, HOSC concluded with the following recommendations:

RESOLVED that the Committee:

- i. expresses grave concerns about the wheelchair services contract and its management by NHS Thanet CCG.*
- ii. writes to all Kent CCGs to express its concerns about the wheelchair services contract and its management by NHS Thanet CCG.*
- iii. requests that NHS Thanet CCG provide a written response to the Committee, within two weeks, as to whether it is considering terminating Millbrook Healthcare's contract and the reasons for that choice; and to*

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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provide an action plan detailing how the issues will be resolved in the interim.

- iv. upon receipt of the written briefing, determines whether to have an additional meeting of the Committee or to have an item at the September meeting of the Committee.*

(b) At the request of the CCG, an informal briefing was held by Thanet CCG for HOSC on 15 August 2018. At the conclusion of the briefing, the Chair requested an additional meeting of HOSC in order for the Committee to formally consider the item. This was held on 13 September 2018.

(c) At the conclusion of the September 2018 meeting, the Committee agreed the following recommendations:

RESOLVED that:

- i. the reports and Joint Wheelchair User Group statement be noted;*
- ii. Thanet CCG, representative from Millbrook and the Joint Wheelchair User Group be requested to provide an update in January.*

(d) As per the request above, Thanet CCG and Millbrook Healthcare attended HOSC on 25 January 2019. The Centre for Independent Living in Kent (CiLK) and the Wheelchair Service Users group had been unable to attend but submitted a statement which was shared with the Committee.

(e) At the conclusion of the January 2019 meeting, the Committee agreed the following recommendation:

RESOLVED that the reports be noted, and Thanet CCG provide an update, with additional information as requested by the Committee, at the appropriate time.

(f) In line with the above recommendation, Thanet CCG have been invited to attend this meeting to provide an update on the service performance.

3. Recommendation

RECOMMENDED that the report be noted and Thanet CCG provide an update at the appropriate time.

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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>

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