

Questions and Answers

Health and Wellbeing Board

Thursday, 9th December, 2021

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Public Questions as specified in the Council's Procedure Rules of the Constitution

(a) Question submitted to the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Karen Swaffield:

“What is the total number of children currently in temporary accommodation in West Berkshire, how many families does this relate to, how many families are there by ward and what are the trends for these statistics?”

The Chairman answered on behalf of the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education:

There are 85 children currently in temporary accommodation.

32 out of 49 temporary accommodation households have children (that's 65% of households).

We can't produce raw data - that isn't currently available and the statistics aren't broken down by ward).

The trend is for more household approaches for two bedroom homes.

The Chairman asked:

“Do you have a supplementary question?”

Karen Swaffield asked the following supplementary question:

“I'm afraid my internet connection is a bit unstable, so I missed the first bit of that. Presumably I can get the answer to this in writing anyway?”

The Chairman answered:

We are very happy to send you the answer in writing and if you have a supplementary question in relation to that answer - put it back to us and officers will deal with that, or Councillor Boeck will deal with that.

(b) Question submitted to the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education by Karen Swaffield:

“What is the shortest, longest and average time that a family has been in temporary accommodation in West Berkshire, and what are the trends for these statistics?”

The Chairman answered on behalf of the Executive Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Education:

The Housing Team has recently migrated to a new data system and the figures are being provided to you for the period 14 April 2020 and 7 December 2021. Over that timescale, the shortest time that anyone was in temporary accommodation was 10 days. The longest time that anyone was in temporary accommodation was 602 days. The average time was 202 days, and no specific trends have been identified in that period.

The Chairman asked:

“Do you have a supplementary question?”

Karen Swaffield asked the following supplementary question:

“So you can see what I’m getting at – are things getting better?”

The Chairman answered:

If a trend can’t be identified, to some extent that’s an unknown, but I’m happy to let officers explore that with you. In the same way as we respond with a written answer to the previous question, we will also put the written answer to the question in the same email, and then you can come back and question that if you wish to.

(c) Question submitted to the Executive Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care by Paula Saunderson:

“Please can the report from West Berkshire CCG in relation to the CHC scheme be referred to an appropriate WBC Scrutiny Board as soon as possible?”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care answered:

The CCG’s review of Continuing Health Care will be considered later in this meeting, and I don’t want to pre-empt any decision that the Board might make.

The Health and Wellbeing Board has the option to bring matters to the attention of the relevant scrutiny committee as something they may wish to consider as part of a future review. Also, members of the public can suggest items for scrutiny using the online form that is available on our website.

However, both the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission and the Health Scrutiny Committee are responsible for setting their own work programmes and any such requests would need to be considered by the relevant Chairman and prioritised against other competing items for inclusion in their work programmes.

As Continuing Healthcare is arranged and funded by the NHS, this would suggest that the Health Scrutiny Committee would be the most relevant scrutiny committee to consider this matter.

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care asked:

“Do you have a supplementary question?”

Paula Saunderson asked the following supplementary question:

“Obviously, the session is coming, but the slides don’t seem to relate to the action point. The emphasis of this when I first started asking about it was the level of awards (at the last statistics, we were down to 4 per 50,000) and the reasoning behind why Berkshire West CCG was one of the lowest in the Country, so I wouldn’t want that to be lost.

I appreciate what you say about the Scrutiny Boards and I can put in a public request. But it wouldn’t be unusual – on the 10th December 2013 (8 years ago almost to the day) this very subject went to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, so I would hope that the Health Scrutiny Commission would be able to pick this up.”

The Executive Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care answered:

Paula, I would be very happy to pick up with the Chairman of the Health Scrutiny Committee on the back of this question and this meeting, and the outcome of the conversation later on about the paper we will be looking at. So I’m very happy to do that on your behalf.
