

## **ADULT CARE & SUPPORT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of the meeting of the Adult Care & Support Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 at 2.00 p.m. in the Reception Suite, Civic Offices, Telford**

**PRESENT:** Councillors R.G. Chaplin (Chairman), N.A. Dugmore (part), and V.A. Fletcher

Councillor J.M. Seymour (Cabinet Member: Adult Care & Support)  
P. Clifford (Strategic lead – AC&S), P. Taylor (Social Care Specialist), R. Peach (Senior Finance Manager)

#### **ACSSC-7 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor K.L. Tomlinson

#### **ACSSC-8 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

#### **ACSSC-9 MINUTES**

As the meeting was not quorate at this point, it was agreed to defer confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting. However, the notes of the Working Group held on 29 November 2010 were received.

#### **ACSSC-10 SERVICE & FINANCIAL PLANNING 2011/12 - 2013/14 – ADULT CARE & SUPPORT**

##### **(a) Presentation of Budget Proposals**

Councillor J.M. Seymour (Cabinet Member for Adult Care & Support) was invited to present the Cabinet's budget proposals in relation to the Council priority for Adult Care & Support. She stated that it was going to be a difficult budget with a number of budget pressures as well as the reductions in grant from the Government. However, in finding savings, it was the intention to minimise their impact on front-line services that protected the most vulnerable adults. Accordingly, it was proposed that £1.6m of savings would be re-invested back into adult social care services.

The Chairman reported that a number of questions/lines of enquiry had arisen from the seminar/workshop held on 4 January, and these were circulated along with the programme for the re-structuring of the Council's service areas. Members had previously received a copy of the Cabinet's Service and Financial Planning Strategy. Responses from the Cabinet Member, Strategic Lead – AC&S and the Social Care Specialist were then provided to the questions that had been circulated:

**Re: deletion of residential rehabilitation budget for substance misuse (saving of £43,000):**

*What is the success rate for community based rehabilitation compared to residential rehabilitation? How do the costs for community based services and residential services compare? Will some of the money from the PCT be used to fund this service? What are the implications of the proposed changes to mental health services on the Council's budget?*

Response – community based rehabilitation was usually the preferred option of service users, and in most cases was likely to be both more effective in terms of successful outcomes and in financial terms. This budget had historically been underspent, and it was recognised as an area where savings could be made. Very few service users were in residential care – probably no more than 2 or 3 at any one time. Part of the funding stream for this service was provided by the Primary Care Trust. In terms of the implications for mental health services, the revised county-wide Mental Health Strategy was based around investment in community based facilities, although the outcomes of such rehabilitation programmes would be closely monitored.

**Re: ceasing of Putting People First (PPF) project (saving of £300,000):**

*What will the effects be for service users? Will there be any impact on the Council's ability to implement direct payments? What are the timescales for change? Will the services funded through PPF be replaced?*

Response - Putting People First was always a short-term initiative, and the work of the team was due to finish in March 2011. It was recognised that some of the functions of PPF needed to be embedded in the base budget to reflect the changes in the way adult social care would be delivered as part of the Government's personalisation agenda. Therefore, from June 2011 these elements would become part of the mainstream service. In terms of direct payments, there would be no impact from the loss of the PPF team – advice and help to clients was provided through the mainstream service.

(Councillor Dugmore arrived at 2.25pm, and was present thereafter)

**Re: Procurement savings (saving of £170,000):**

*What is the room for negotiation on price? What percentage of the budget does £170,000 represent?*

Response – £170,000 represented about 0.6% of the £25m total purchasing budget. It was felt that there was scope to buy some services at a lower cost, eg: placements. While the ability to negotiate fees and prices was dependent on market capacity, there was a recent example of a tender where the Council had been able to negotiate prices down. Work was being undertaken to standardise prices on domiciliary care, and to accurately work out from an individual's care assessment the cost of meeting their needs.

**Re: Reducing unused capacity in block contracts (saving of £150,000):**

*What were the timescales for renegotiation of these contracts?*

Response – these varied from longer term contracts to ongoing “spot” contracts. Discussions were being held with residential care providers about re-negotiating prices, and it was stated that there was a recognition among external providers that public money was tight and that things might need to be done differently.

**Re: Needs based assessment on Supporting People contracts to determine reconfiguration of service delivery and priority services (saving of £200,000):**

*What were the priorities that the needs assessment would be based on? Will this result in a reduction in continuity of care? How would objections to any reduction or withdrawal of service be handled?*

Response - Supporting People contracts were focussed on providing support for people's housing needs. This support was largely standardised, and it was felt that better targeting could be achieved through a needs based assessment. This would assess whether a person really needed that level of service. This was likely to lead to fewer people receiving the service or a reduced service for some. However, those in most need would get the support they required. In terms of dealing with appeals against a needs assessment, it was envisaged that there would be a review process. Further details would be provided to Members.

**Re: Review of Adult Social Care services (saving of £750,000):**

*What will the impact be of lower ongoing care package costs from investment in reablement and rehabilitation for service users?*

Response - the transformation of adult services based on the personalisation model would involve being more selective in the use of intensive long-term care packages. It could be that clients received rehabilitation and care support for a short period to get a better understanding of their needs. From this, it could be identified that some people did not need long-term care, and that a lower level of support was more suitable to meet their needs. In terms of re-ablement, the Council needed to work closely with the NHS on delivering this investment.

**Re: Increased income from Low Level Preventative Service (£50,000):**

*What are the low level preventative services that will see an increase in charges? Does this include aids and adaptations, and if so, is this provided in-house or contracted out?*

Response – these were services that the Council did not have to provide, because they were below the threshold for mainstream services. No more than 2 hours a week support was provided to clients. It was proposed that the client's contribution be increased from £6 per hour to £8 per hour, although this would still mean the service was subsidised by the Council. Charges had not increased since 2008/09. This proposal did not apply to aids and adaptations.

In response to general questions regarding the adult care budget, the Senior Finance Manager reported that the percentage of savings for 2011/12 was around 4.2% increasing to an additional 12.8% in 2012/13 as the full effect of the restructuring proposals was phased in. The total annual contribution from charging was £5.6m. The Strategic Lead Officer added that future years' savings would have a significant impact on services, and that the Council was looking at completely reconfiguring adult care services to try and work within the reductions in Government grants. Some funding would be transferred to the Council from the Primary Care Trust, but there would still be a need to reduce funding for care packages from 2012/13 onwards. The Cabinet Member stated that it would be an opportunity to do things differently, with potentially a wider range of care options and help being provided at a more appropriate level to meet a client's needs. The personalisation of services would, in future, see the relationship between the Council and clients

change. The Council would provide a sum to help meet the assessed need, and the service user would commission the service from a provider. If the service user wished to receive an enhanced or modified service, they could do so by arranging and paying for it themselves. There would need to be further consultation on the changes to the way services were provided and on what options were available.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and Officers for their attendance.

**(b) Comments on Budget Proposals**

The Chairman advised that the Committee now had to consider any comments on the budget proposals relating to Adult Care & Support, which would be forwarded to the Community Focussed, Efficient Council Scrutiny Committee for consideration as part of the overall scrutiny response to the budget proposals.

**RESOLVED** – that the following comments be referred to the Community Focussed, Efficient Council Scrutiny Committee for consideration:

- The Committee are satisfied that the process to consider and agree the service and financial planning proposals for 2011/12 – 2013/14 has been open and transparent ;
- The Committee recognise that a significant proportion of the savings for 2011/12 are based on efficiencies already achieved and through one off savings. The Committee support this process to enable further consideration to be given to the major changes that will be required to make the further savings necessary during 2012/13 and 2013/14;
- The Committee welcome that the Council will consult the public, service users and the Scrutiny Committee on the proposal for future savings and the impact this will have on service provision;
- The Committee recognise the increase in personalisation and personal budgets will be a key part of the redesign of adult care services through which savings will be made. It is recognised that while individuals will have greater freedom to buy the services that best meet their needs, the amount of money available will be reduced;
- The Committee recommends that as decisions are made to make further savings, safeguards are put in place to ensure people who are most vulnerable and with the greatest need receive appropriate support. There need to be sufficient safeguards to ensure that any reductions in service, and the reasons for it, are clearly explained to service users;
- The Committee support the renegotiation of contracts to find further efficiencies and to ensure that the services provided are more personalised to individual needs;

- The Committee support the inclusion of funding for further development of Extracare provision in the Borough. Members requested clarification on the number of Schemes that could be supported by the provision made in the budget for 2011/12 (£ 1,200,000) and 2012/13 (£ 1,000,000);
- The Committee recommends that the Council continues to work closely with the PCT and NHS organisations to ensure that, in a time of great change, services are delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible. There needs to be proper monitoring of the £2.1m being transferred from the PCT so as to ensure that it is being spent effectively and in the right areas.

**ACSSC-11 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**ACSSC-12 SCRUTINY RESPONSE TO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONSULTATION : TRANSPARENCY IN OUTCOMES – A FRAMEWORK FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

The Scrutiny Manager presented a report that set out a suggested response to a Department of Health consultation paper on the future regulation and assessment of adult social care. A copy of the document had been circulated to members of the Committee. Members had met on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010 to finalise the Scrutiny response to the consultation, and the final draft was appended to the report.

The consultation document proposed new arrangements which would reduce top-down performance management and support transparency, as well as enabling the sector to take charge and innovate. Local communities would be empowered to hold Councils and providers to account. The general objectives were to improve outcomes for those with care and support needs and to improve the quality of social care services.

It was suggested that the Chairman liaise with Cabinet Members to decide if it would be appropriate to submit a joint Scrutiny and Executive response to the consultation paper.

**RESOLVED** –

- (a) that the draft response, as shown at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved;
- (b) that the decision to submit a joint Scrutiny and Executive response be delegated to the Scrutiny Manager, in consultation with the Chairman.

The meeting ended at 3.53 p.m.

**Chairman:** .....

**Date:** .....