

ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE DECISION RECORD

4 November 2013

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Carl Richardson (In the Chair)

Councillors: Keith Fisher, Ged Hall, Alison Lilley, Linda Shields and Kaylee
Sirs

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii) Councillor
George Morris was in attendance as substitute for Councillor
Brenda Loynes

Also Present: Councillor Geoff Lilley
Steve Thomas and Liz Fletcher, Healthwatch

Officers: Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Services
Geraldine Martin, Head of Service, Adult Social Care
Neil Harrison, Head of Service, Adult Services
Laura Stones, Scrutiny Support Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

42. Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Brenda
Loynes.

43. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Fisher declared a personal interest in Minute 45.

44. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2013

Received.

45. Matters Arising from the Minutes

In relation to Minute 39 relating to Hartfields, a Member referred to attendance at the last meeting by representatives of the Joseph Rowntree Trust/Hartfields and reminded the Committee that further feedback from residents indicated that it was too early to determine whether any improvements to the heating system had been effective given that the winter months had only recently commenced. A Member reiterated concerns raised at the last meeting regarding the inability of residents to choose a preferred energy supplier and was keen to obtain clarification as to whether this issue had been addressed. The Chair requested that a report be provided to the next meeting to respond to the issues raised.

Decision

That the information given be noted and a report be submitted to the next meeting to respond to the issues raised.

46. Annual Complaints Reports 1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013 *(Assistant Director, Adult Services)*

Type of decision

For information only

Purpose of report

To present the Annual Complaints Report of the Child and Adult Services Department on complaints and representations for the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

The Annual Report was attached as an Appendix 1 to the report.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Annual Report provided information on the complaints and representation frameworks and drew together information on activity during the reporting period. The report included details of complaints relating to Children and Community Services.

The report offered an opportunity to demonstrate that learning had occurred from complaints and also consideration of trends emerging through the year's activity within the Complaints Framework. The report included details of complaints and representations received by type, outcomes of

complaints, compliance with timescales, analysis of recorded complaints, compliments and representations and drew comparisons with the previous year.

The Chair welcomed the approach noting the benefits of learning from complaints. Whilst the Committee was pleased to note the low level of complaints received, the potential weaknesses of the complaints procedure in terms of elderly vulnerable groups was highlighted. The need to further explore complaints of this type and complaints that may not reach the formal complaints stage was suggested. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the reluctance of service users to complain for fear of reprisal as well as the importance of advocacy support. The Assistant Director went on to provide clarification in response to queries raised by Members in relation to advocacy support arrangements, the formal complaints and lower level complaints process and outlined the robust departmental procedures in place to deal with issues raised.

Decision

- (i) That the annual report be noted.
- (ii) That online publication of the annual report be agreed.

47. S136 Mental Health Act (MHA) 1983/2007 Place of Safety *(Assistant Director, Adult Services)*

Type of decision

For information only

Purpose of report

To inform the Adult Services Committee of a decision made by Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) to close the Sandwell Park Place of Safety (PoS) in Hartlepool for a six month pilot.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information in relation to Section 136 of the Mental Health Act and the purpose of removing a person to a place of safety. Statistical information in terms of use of the place of safety for the period August 2012 to August confirmed infrequent use of the facility, details of which were included in the report.

Members were advised that the current Place of Safety at Sandwell Park in

Hartlepool did not meet the required standards. With regard to future proposals, it was noted that TEWV would close the interview room at Sandwell Park Place of Safety in Hartlepool for a trial period of six months from 1 October 2013, the benefits of which were provided. From this date all people detained on a S136 would be taken to Roseberry Park Hospital of Safety for assessment.

In the lengthy discussion that followed, concerns were raised regarding the proposal to remove services from the town, noting the potential impact on individuals as a result as well as the cost implications. Members also expressed concerns as to why standards had been allowed to reduce to an unacceptable level. The Assistant Director and Head of Service provided clarification in response to issues highlighted in the report which included clarification on the requirements of the Mental Health Act.

A Member suggested that Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust be asked to reconsider their proposals to transfer the Place of Safety to Middlesbrough and explore the feasibility of adapting the current building to enable the service to be retained in Hartlepool. Disappointment was expressed that the decision had been taken without any consultation or input from the Council or Healthwatch on the proposals and Members were keen to explore this issue with the Trust as well as receive information of their vision for mental health services in Hartlepool for the next few years. Members were also keen to seek the views of service users. Given that a representative from Trust had been invited to today's meeting, had been unable to attend and the level of concerns of this Committee, Members requested that a representative from Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust be invited to a future meeting of this Committee to respond to the issues raised.

Decision

- (i) That Tees Esk and Wear Valley's intention to trial a change of venue for their Place of Safety for Hartlepool residents from Sandwell Park to Roseberry Park at Middlesbrough be noted.
- (ii) That a further report be presented to the Committee in May 2014 to evaluate the impact of the change of venue and to consider any positive or adverse impacts that it may have on our Approved Mental Health Practitioner workforce.
- (iii) That Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust be invited to a future meeting to respond to the issues raised by Members, as set out above.

48. Tees Place of Safety Scheme (Assistant Director, Adult Social Care)

Type of decision

For information only

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is to provide the Adult Services Committee with information on the current arrangements for a Tees Place of Safety Scheme.

Issue(s) for consideration

It was reported that the Council was committed to encouraging access to facilities in the town via a range of transport options and the Council's Integrated Transport Unit had developed a Hartlepool Community Travel Support Network. The Council had also introduced an Independent Travel Training Scheme (Safe on the Move in Hartlepool). The network now had a number of volunteers and volunteer organisations trained to assist people to travel safely and independently, details of which were attached as an appendix to the report. In addition to the Safe on the Move Scheme an Autism Alert Card had been rolled out. Details of support arrangements by key stakeholders to assist with developing the scheme were provided, as set out in the report.

It was proposed that the existing Safe on the Move in Hartlepool scheme was rebranded and, along with other similar schemes across Tees, carried the new Tees Place of Safety Logo as detailed at Appendix 3. Inclusion North and key stakeholders of the Tees Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Board had agreed to promote the scheme within their local areas, ensuring a consistent approach across Tees.

In response to a request for clarification, the Head of Service outlined the benefits of the Safe on the Move Scheme.

Decision

The report together with the plans in place to further enhance the Safe on the Move in Hartlepool Scheme were noted.

49. Savings Programme 2014/15 (*Assistant Director, Adult Services*)

Type of decision

For information. It is recommended that Members of the Committee note the content of this report and formulate a response to be presented to Finance and Policy Committee on 29 November 2013.

Purpose of report

To identify proposals for the delivery of savings in Adult Services for consideration as part of the 2014/15 budget process.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director presented the report which included the proposals for delivery of savings in Adult Services as part of the 2014/15 budget process, the risks associated with the proposals and the considerations which had been taken into account in developing them.

The report included a breakdown of expenditure of £44.5m as well as details of the outcomes/outputs. The savings target for Adult Services for 2014/15 was £1,325,000. Details of how the savings target would be achieved were provided as detailed in the report. Members were referred to the risk implications, financial equality and diversity considerations and staff considerations, as set out in the report.

In response to Members' concerns regarding the impact of the deletion of posts and continuing reductions in staffing levels on individual staff and front line services, the Assistant Director, whilst acknowledging Members' concerns, reported that the savings had been identified from areas which would result in the minimal level of impact on frontline services. Whilst the Committee were reluctant to agree savings proposals relating to Adult Services, Members considered there were no alternative options and emphasised the need to try to maintain front line services as far as possible.

Following further discussion, Members reiterated great concern at the scale of the cuts and the longer term implications that the cuts would place on services, staff and the community. Concerns were also expressed at the potential implications of further cuts in 2015/16 and beyond.

Decision

- (i) The Committee reluctantly agreed the savings proposals relating to Adult Services and emphasised the need to try to maintain front line services as far as possible.
- (ii) That the contents of the report and comments of Members be noted and be utilised to formulate a response to be presented to Finance and Policy Committee on 29 November 2013.

50. **Strategic Financial Management Report as at 31 August 2013** (*Director of Child and Adult Services and Chief Finance Officer*)

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

The report informed Members of the 2013/14 Forecast General Fund Outturn; 2013/14 Capital Programme Monitoring, and provided details for the specific budget areas that the Committee was responsible for.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director indicated that the latest report submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 18 October 2013 advised Members that there would be an overall underspend in the current year. The report also advised Members that this position reflected action taken by the Corporate Management Team to achieve underspends to help address the significant financial challenges facing the Council over the next few years and to fund one-off commitments not provided for in the approved 2013/14 budget as these items were not known at the time.

The agreed approach was that no specific decisions would be taken in relation to the use of underspends until the details of the Government's grant settlement were known. It was likely that this would not be available to the Council until November/December. Members were advised of the overall budget position for Child and Adult Services by Committee, the reasons for the forecast outturn together with planned capital expenditure, as detailed in the report.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.55 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 11 NOVEMBER 2013