

ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

1 September 2014

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

Present:

Councillor: Carl Richardson (In the Chair)

Councillors: Paul Beck, Kaylee Sirs, George Springer and Stephen Thomas.

Also Present: Lynn Allison - Healthwatch
Frank Harrison, Years Ahead Forum
Members of the Public - Evelyn Leck and Stella and Gordon Johnson

Officers: Gill Alexander, Director of Child and Adult Services
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Services
David Ward, Head of Finance (Child and Adult Services)
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

18. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Brenda Loynes and Health Watch representatives Ruby Marshall, Zoe Sherry and Maureen Lockwood.

19. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thomas declared a personal interest in Minutes 21 and 23 and Councillor Beck declared a personal interest in Minute 23.

20. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 August 2014

Received.

21. The Care Act 2014: Update and Proposed Use of Implementation Grant for 2014/15 (Director of Child and Adult Services)

Type of decision

Key decision test (i) and (ii) apply – Forward Plan Ref CAS030/14

Purpose of report

To provide the Adult Services Committee with a further update on the changes to adult social care proposed in the Care Act, following an earlier report in February 2014.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director presented the report which provided a further update on the changes to adult social care proposed in the Care Act.

The report set out progress towards implementing the Care Act from April 2015, information on the national implementation stocktake programme, and the proposed use of the Care Act Implementation Grant for 2014/15, a one off grant of £125,000 which had been allocated to local authorities to support their change management programmes in preparation for the Care Act implementation from April 2015.

The Care Act received Royal Assent on 15 May 2014. The key changes to adult social care proposed in the Care Act were provided including the preparations for implementing the Care Act in Hartlepool. The report included details of the implementation framework, set out at Appendix 1, as well as details of regional and national support to implement the Care Act.

It was proposed that the following developments, as outlined in the report, be supported by the Care Act Implementation Grant:-

- (i) Project Management Capacity
- (ii) Training and Awareness Raising
- (iii) Information and Advice

In the lengthy discussion that followed the Committee discussed the impact of the Care Act in terms of the way adult social care services were delivered as well as the budget in terms of funding pressures and included the following issues:-

- (i) Concerns were expressed regarding the recent announcement

by the Chancellor of further cuts for local government in the region of £29 billion and the impact across Council departments as a result. The Assistant Director advised that global cuts for local authorities had not been examined by individual departments as yet and it was difficult at this stage to determine the actual benefits of the one-off grant to support implementation of the Care Act given the risk that this could be offset by cuts in other areas. Consultation was currently ongoing in relation to the formula grant allocation and further information was awaited in this regard.

- (ii) In response to a request for clarification, the Assistant Director provided details of the additional responsibilities/duties that would be placed upon local authorities from April 2015. Further concerns were expressed regarding the impact of the requirements of the Care Act and the pressures that such additional responsibilities/duties would place on the Council.
- (iii) The Assistant Director responded to a number of queries raised by the Committee which included clarification on the revised funding/charging reforms/changes to means testing arrangements and operational/workforce issues. It was noted that details of the changes to means testing arrangements would be available following completion of the consultation process.
- (iv) Whilst the identified one-off Government Grant to assist with implementation of the Care Act was welcomed, a Member raised concerns that there were a number of unknowns in terms of the ongoing financial implications facing the Council as a result of the changes. The Committee was advised that there was financial modelling work being undertaken to establish the extent of what the additional costs might be. Work was also currently ongoing as to which funding formula was most beneficial to Hartlepool and, until such time as the financial modelling works had been completed, it was difficult to quantify whether the national allocations would meet the anticipated costs. Upon completion of the financial modelling, an update report would be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee.
- (v) Members were keen to receive an update on the financial implications facing the Council as a result of the Care Act as soon as possible to enable this to be considered as part of the budget process.

Decision

The Adult Services Committee:

- a) Noted the framework in place to implement the Care Act from April 2015.
- b) Approved the proposed spend in respect of the Department of Health Implementation Grant 2014/15.
- c) Noted that a further update report be received in Spring 2015 following the national stocktake which would take place in January 2015, with an update report on the financial implications facing the Council as a result of the Care Act provided as soon as possible to feed into the budget process. .
- d) Noted that the requirement for detailed financial and activity modelling in respect of the implications of the Care Act 2014 would be available in early summer 2015. This work would inform the implementation of the financial reforms which were not due to be progressed until April 2016.e

22. Strategic Financial Management Report – AS at 30 June 2014 (*Director of Child and Adult Services and Chief Finance Officer*)

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

The report informed Members of the 2014/15 Forecast General Fund Outturn, 2014/15 Capital Programme Monitoring and provide details for the specific budget areas that this Committee was responsible for.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Head of Finance, Child and Adult Services presented the report which provided the background and financial reporting arrangements for 2014/15 as well as the General Fund budget outturn information in relation to the Child and Adult Services Department.

As recently reported to the Finance and Policy Committee, Members were advised that there would be an overall underspend in the current year. The net forecast uncommitted budget underspend at the year end was between £0.547m and £0.662m. Finance and Policy Committee had approved this be used to fund potential one-off protection costs arising from the Terms and Conditions Review and to continue the use of one-off resources to support the budget.

Details of the overall budget position for the Child and Adult Services

Department was summarised in a table included in the report which included the reasons for the forecast outturn. Further details of specific budget areas was set out at Appendix A. Members were provided with details of recommended reserves together with planned capital expenditure, as set out in the report. Members' attention was drawn to the unbudgeted costs relating to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). It was noted that the forecast outturn had been reduced as a result of the Council having to fund DoL'S costs, forecast to be between £0.330m and £0.4m. The costs would be funded from a combination of the 2014/15 Adult Services managed budget underspend and the use of reserves.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

23. Matters Arising from the Minutes

In relation to Minute 17, Any Other Business – Hartfields GP Surgery, a Member requested that a copy of the letter to the Chair of Audit and Governance Committee in relation to the proposed closure of GP practices in the town be circulated to all Members of this Committee following the meeting.

Decision

That a copy of the letter to the Chair of Audit and Governance Committee in relation to the proposed closure of GP Practices in the town be circulated to all Members of this Committee following the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10.40 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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