

ADULT SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

14 September 2015

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

Present:

Councillor: Paul Beck (In the Chair)

Councillors: Sandra Belcher, Brenda Loynes and Stephen Thomas

Also Present:

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii) Councillor Sheila Griffin was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Carl Richardson

Judith Gray, Maureen Lockwood, Liz Fletcher, Margaret Allen and Ruby Marshall – Healthwatch Representatives

Frank Harrison – Years Ahead Forum
Members of the Public – Evelyn Leck, Sue Little, Stella Johnson, Gordon Johnson and Mrs Sowerby,

Officers: Sally Robinson, Director of Child and Adult Services
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Services
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
David Ward, Head of Finance, Child and Adult Services
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

26. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Kelly Atkinson, Carl Richardson and Sylvia Tempest

27. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thomas declared a personal interest in Minutes 29, 30, 31 and 32 as an employee of Healthwatch.

28. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 August 2015

Received

29. Matters arising from the Minutes

In relation to Minute 25 Hartlepool Local Executive Group – 2014/15 Performance Report, a Member sought officer feedback from the last Safeguarding Meeting around discussions that had taken place in terms of nursing bed provision across the Teesside area. The Director of Child and Adult Services advised that the Board had discussed the sub regional picture which seemed to indicate that there was some nursing care capacity in both Redcar and Cleveland and Middlesbrough. However, there was a significant pressure in the north of the region. The Board discussed options to address the pressures being experienced particularly in Hartlepool however, as the usual CCG representative was not in attendance at the meeting discussions had been limited. However, the Council's Assistant Director had been advised that the CCG were exploring measures to resolve the nursing bed pressures that existed in Hartlepool.

In response to assurances sought that this issue would be addressed in advance of the winter months and further queries raised by members of the public, the Assistant Director advised that work was underway and that there would be an opportunity to discuss this issue with CCG representatives at the meeting of this Committee on 12 October.

Decision

That the information given be noted.

30. Savings Programme 2016/17 – Adult Services (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To enable Members to consider the initial 2016/17 savings proposals relating to the Committee's remit. Comments made were to be incorporated with those received from each of the Policy Committees in relation to their remits and reported to Finance and Policy Committee.

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 2016/17 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 relating to Adult Social Care of £48.5m, of which £18.5m was income from people's personal contributions as well as details of the outcomes/inputs. The savings target for Child and Adult Services for 2016/17 was £2.684m. Details of how the savings target would be achieved were provided as detailed in the report. It was highlighted that an element of the savings target would be met from reserves. Members were referred to the risk implications, financial implications, equality and diversity considerations as well as staffing considerations, as set out in the report.

A lengthy discussion ensued during which the following issues/comments/ concerns were raised:-

- (i) A number of concerns were raised regarding the implications of cuts on service delivery, the limited options available to achieve the required savings and potential risks to service users given the aims of the Better Care Fund to deliver more services in a community setting. The cost implications for the Council in providing additional services in the community were highlighted.
- (ii) The Committee further debated at length, the impact of continuing Central Government cuts on the most vulnerable, the continuing pressures on the Council to deliver more services in a community setting with a continued reduction in budgets and the potential increase in social isolation issues as a result of the introduction of new technology. The need to consider social isolation and quality of life issues in the future planning process was emphasised. Given the level of cuts, concerns were expressed regarding the risk of services becoming unviable. Members commented on the need to re-evaluate how all services including domiciliary care could be delivered in future. In terms of funding concerns, the Assistant Director advised that the key aim of the Better Care Fund was that emergency admissions to hospital were reduced with funding released to be utilised in the community. The challenges in terms of achieving savings from acute services and the role of the BCF Pooled Budget Partnership Board were outlined.
- (iii) The Assistant Director provided clarification in response to

queries raised by Members and members of the public which included mental health support arrangements, how the departmental salary abatement target would be achieved and the timescales for receipt of confirmation of future budget cuts.

- (iv) In relation to information sought in terms of drug and alcohol statistics and levels of need, the Assistant Director advised that drug and alcohol services were commissioned by Public Health and information in relation to levels of need would be covered within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- (v) Given the need to utilise reserves and the impact of any delays in receipt of savings from the Better Care Fund, a Member requested that the Committee receive regular updates of any financial announcements. The Assistant Director clarified the timescales and process for updating Members on the Council's financial position and impact on Adult Services.
- (vi) In response to a Member of the public's concerns regarding anti-social behaviour problems at a service for young people that was located near her home, the Assistant Director advised that this issue fell within the remit of Children's Services Committee and therefore those concerns would be passed to the Director of Child and Adult Services and the Chair of Children's Services Committee.
- (vii) With regard to equality considerations, as set out in the report, it was noted that there was no disproportionate impact anticipated for people who shared protected characteristics. It was suggested that the Council undertook an Impact Assessment covering the next five years to explore how the ongoing cuts would impact upon quality of life and support to vulnerable people.
- (viii) The Assistant Director responded to further queries raised in relation to nursing bed provision and concerns regarding the limited availability and the associated increase in out of area placements. It was reiterated that information on nursing bed trends would be presented to the meeting in October, to which the CCG as responsible commissioner of nursing bed provision and the CQC had been invited to attend.
- (ix) Reference was made to the importance of patient choice and the need to avoid placing individuals outside of the area. A Health Watch representative was disappointed to note that care homes had a choice in terms of the type of care they provided and often chose to use beds for general care as opposed to nursing care and queried what powers were

available to improve this. The Committee was advised that some homes that were dual registered were able to provide both residential and nursing care to people with a range of needs. This was a model that many residents and families preferred as it enabled an individual to stay in the same setting if their needs changed. The Assistant Director outlined some of the challenges associated with providing nursing care, including recruiting and retaining appropriately qualified and skilled staff. It was noted that these issues were having an impact across the country, not just in Hartlepool. A number of options were being explored by the CCG, working in partnership with the Council, to try and address these issues in the short and longer term and further detail would be provided at the next meeting. The Committee requested that the questions/concerns of the Committee be raised with the CCG in advance of the next meeting to ensure all Members' questions could be fully answered.

- (x) Discussion ensued in relation to the impact of the removal of services out of the town and reduction in services at the University Hospital of Hartlepool. Reference was made to information previously requested in relation to mortality rates as a result of hospital transfers outside of Hartlepool to which the Scrutiny Manager advised that whilst this information had previously been circulated under separate cover, arrangements would be made to re-circulate this information as necessary. A Member reminded all attendees that the next meeting was to specifically focus on the care situation, which was a priority of this Committee. Other forums were available to discuss hospital related concerns.
- (xi) Whilst the Committee were reluctant to agree savings proposals in relation to Adult Services, Members acknowledged that the savings had been identified from areas which would result in the minimal level of impact on frontline services and accepted that there were no alternative options.

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, as outlined above, be noted and be utilised to formulate a

response to be presented to Finance and Policy Committee.

- (iii) That the questions/concerns, as outlined above, be conveyed to the CCG in advance of the next meeting to ensure that all questions could be fully answered.
- (iv) That regular update reports be received in relation to the financial position.
- (v) That the requests/suggestions made at the meeting, as outlined above, be actioned as necessary following the meeting.

31. Strategic Financial Management Report – as at 30 June 2015 *(Director of Child and Adult services and Chief Finance Officer)*

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

The report informed Members of the 2015/16 Forecast General Fund Outturn, 2015/16 Capital Programme Monitoring and provided details of the specific budget areas that the 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 2015/16 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 estimated net underspend of between £669,000 and £889,000.

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 were outlined at Appendix A. Members were provided with details of recommended reserves together with planned capital expenditure, as set out in the report.

Decision

That the contents of the report be noted.

32. Implementation of the Care Act (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To provide the Adult Services Committee with an update on the implementation of the Care Act.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information in relation to the Care Act and set out progress towards implementing the Care Act. The impact for Local Authorities of implementing the Care Act, the approach taken in Hartlepool as well as the National Care Act Stock take was also included in the report. There had been four stock takes across the year and the fourth stock take in June 2015 indicated no major concerns in relation to the Care Act implementation in 2015/16. A number of risks were highlighted in relation to the proposed introduction of funding reforms from April 2016 and the unknown levels of additional demand that this could generate.

It was announced in July 2015 that, in response to a letter from the Local Government Association, calling for a delay, the implementation of the cap on care costs, which was due to take place in April 2016 had been delayed until 2020. The main risks identified for Hartlepool in association with delivering the Care Act were the unknown levels of additional demand from carers and self funders, unknown additional workforce capacity and unknown total implementation costs.

The Committee was referred to the financial implications of implementing the Care Act, as set out in the report.

Decision

- (i) That progress to date in relation to implementation of the Care Act be noted.
- (ii) That a further report be received in six months time which

would identify how resources had been used to meet increasing demand for services.

33. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was reported that the next meeting would be held on Monday 12 October 2015 at 10.00 am.

The meeting concluded at 11.30 am.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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