

ADULT AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

24 OCTOBER 2019

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

Present:

Councillor: Sue Little (In the Chair)

Councillors: James Brewer, Amy Prince and Stephen Thomas.

Also present: Frank Harrison and Gordon and Stella Johnston.
Edwin Jeffries, Hartlepool Joint Trade Unions Committee.

Officers: Jill Harrison, Director of Adult and Community Based Services
Gemma Ptak, Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based
Services
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

23. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barbara Ward, and Mike Young.

24. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Thomas declared a personal interest as an employee of Hartlepool Healthwatch.

25. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2019

Received.

26. Savings Programme 2020/21 *(Director of Adult and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework.

Purpose of report

The purpose of the report was to enable Members to consider proposals to achieve savings in 2020/21 and to provide feedback on those proposals to the Finance and Policy Committee.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Adult and Community Based Services reported on the general financial situation facing the local authority and set out details of the government's one year Spending Review for 2020/21 as announced on 4 September 2019. This included proposals to address children and adult social care pressures through the provision of £1 billion and the Government had confirmed the Adult Social Care precept would continue for 2020/21 at 2%, which would generate £500 million if all councils implemented this increase.

The downside to the one year Spending Review was a further period of uncertainty in relation to the significant reforms to the funding system that the Government now proposed to implement in 2021/22. These risks had simply been deferred one year, albeit that the 2020/21 settlement provided a better base line than previously forecast. The Government's one year Spending Review for 2020/21 provided some recognition of the pressures on children and adult social care services which made up 58% of the Council's budget.

The proposals for this Committee were based on a range of actions that were being taken to better manage demand, and were summarised in Appendix A to the report. Work was underway through the Better Care Fund plan to prevent avoidable admissions to hospital and residential care. The number of permanent admissions of people aged 65 and over to care homes in 2018/19 was 130, a significant reduction when compared to the two previous years (164 admissions in 2016/17 and 147 in 2017/18). Over the same period, the number of people supported in their own home by telecare services has increased over the last three years from 2,170 in March 2016 to over 3,100 in March 2019.

A panel was in place to review all packages of support in the community where costs were higher than the indicative resource allocation or where an increase in the support package is proposed. Different models of support such as Individual Service Funds and Shared Lives provision were being explored, which provided more cost effective ways of meeting needs as well as improving outcomes. The current model of Direct Payment Support provision through a commissioned service would also be reviewed and alternative options explored.

The Director confirmed that there were to be no compulsory redundancies or posts deleted through these proposals. The savings would deliver £225,000 in 2020/21 with a further £75,000 in 2021/22. The Director stated that it was a credit to the workforce that these savings could be made without compromising the provision of front line services.

A Member raised concern at the Equality and Diversity Considerations within the report. The Member considered that there had to be significant equality issues created through the potential increase in charges. The Adult Social Care precept had increased Council Tax by 6% on its own over three years and this, along with the other Council Tax increases was having a significant impact on families in Hartlepool. Members considered that there were undoubtedly equality issues that needed to be reported on this and many other budget reports across the Council. The Director acknowledged Members concerns and indicated that she would raise the issue with the Corporate Management Team.

Members welcomed the Director's comments. A Member stated that the Care Quality Commission (CQC) had reported that there were significant levels of unmet need in the wider community and services were becoming even more difficult to access. Another member considered that frontline services were already being impacted with access to social workers often being very difficult. Members also commented that they objected to some of the language being used in the reports and how real cuts were being referred to as savings

The Director stated that the department had implemented significant savings over the past nine years of austerity but had always done its utmost to protect frontline services and the teams that delivered them. The level of cuts that have had to be implemented simply could not have been carried out without some impact on frontline services, but efforts had been made to minimise this; officers were well aware of the impact and shared some of the frustrations expressed by members.

The Chair stated that she would take up Members comments in relation to the Equality and Diversity Considerations in reports with the Leader of the Council. The Chair noted members frustration with the proposals and indicated that she would bring back to the next meeting a response to the concerns on the savings proposed.

Decision

That the Committee noted the content of the report and the savings proposed and that a response on the proposed savings to be presented to the next meeting of the Committee and the comments made in the debate be shared with the Finance and Policy Committee.

27. Preventative and Community Based Services – Update on Summer Programmes *(Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide Committee with information regarding a range of programmes that have been delivered by Preventative and Community Based Services over the summer of 2019.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Preventative and Community Based Services gave a presentation to the Committee outlining some of the events that had been offered in Summer Programme 2019. These included – the 2019 Summer Reading Challenge; the free swim programme; the Family Time Programme; National Play Day at Summerhill; the Big Lime Triathlon; and a Reminiscence Event at Carlton Adventure Centre.

The Chair thanked the Assistant Director for the outline of the events held over the summer and particularly wished to record her thanks to the team that had supported the Big Lime Triathlon and other events. The Assistant Director indicated that the event had been very successful with competitors from across the country. It was hoped to develop the event further in future years working towards it being included as a national qualifier event.

Members welcomed the events and particularly the link with social prescribing and encouraging older people into more activity. A Member particularly referred to the development of dementia friendly sporting activities through the Sport England dementia swimming programme and the walking football programme. The Assistant Director stated that in relation to social prescribing, officers were working with health partners in developing a wider programme of activities and, in response to Members requests, these would be reported to a future meeting.

Members noted the activities at both Summerhill and Carlton and suggested that a future meeting where Children's Services Committee members were invited could discuss a wider range of programmes at both venues targeted at those children and young people in the town who did not have other opportunities to access countryside activities.

Decision

1. That the report be noted.
2. That a report be submitted to a future meeting on the development of activities linked to 'social prescribing'.
3. That options for extending the summer holiday programmes for Summerhill and Carlton to provide a wider range of countryside activities for children and young people from disadvantaged communities in Hartlepool be explored in conjunction with the Children's Services Committee

28. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 21 November 2019 at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre.

The meeting concluded at 11.05 am.

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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