

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 20 January 2015.

PRESENT

Mrs. R. Camamile CC (in the Chair)

Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC
Mr. S. J. Hampson CC
Mr. J. Kaufman CC
Mr. P. G. Lewis CC

Ms. Betty Newton CC
Mr. A. E. Pearson CC
Mr. R. Sharp CC

60. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

61. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

62. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

63. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

No such declarations were made.

64. Declarations of the Party Whip in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 16.

There were no declarations of the party whip.

65. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

The Chief Executive reported that no petitions had been received under Standing Order 36.

66. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2015/16 - 2018/19

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Adults and Communities and Director of Corporate Resources which provided information on the proposed 2015/16 to 2018/19 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as it related to the Adults and Communities Department. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed Mr D W Houseman MBE CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Mr R Blunt CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Heritage, Leisure and Arts to the meeting for this item.

In introducing the report the Director of Adults and Communities and Cabinet Lead Members advised that the Department was facing unprecedented budget pressures as well as demand pressures. In response to the challenge the Department was focused on:-

- Reducing demand by investing in early intervention and prevention;
- Ensuring care was provided in the most cost effective way which would mean some restriction on choice;
- Closer working and commissioning of services with partners, particularly the NHS.

There were some key risks facing the Department particularly in relation to resources required to implement the Care Act and the level of fees payable to care providers. In addition, the Committee was advised that monies from the Better Care Fund coming into the County Council were subject to the achievement of challenging targets for reducing hospital admissions.

General

In response to comments from members the Director undertook to provide:-

- Figures for departmental income over the last three years (*copy attached as an appendix to this minute*);
- Figures for the overall spend on learning disabilities, mental health and physical disabilities to enable members to see the proposed growth outlined at G6, G7 and G8 in context (*work on this is being undertaken and details will be provided to members shortly*);
- An analysis of the transformation savings outlined in paragraph 29 to 34 of the report and the impact of these programmes on service users to a future meeting of the Committee.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

Communities and Wellbeing Savings

- (i) In relation to the departmental saving D28 – Reduction in funding for Community Museums, members noted the proposals to develop community partnerships to operate community museums. Whilst this was generally welcomed, concern was raised regarding community capacity given that there were already proposals for communities to operate local libraries. Officers noted concerns expressed and advised that the County Council would work to build capacity in local areas which would include working with parish councils, schools and community groups. The County Council would provide some professional museum support as well as access to museum collections;
- (ii) With regard to the reduction of the overall Communities and Wellbeing budget which would reduce to approximately £3 million by 2017/18, the Director advised that work was underway to consider the future shape of the service with a view to understanding how to achieve best value for that level of investment. This work would cover both libraries and museum services, explore options for future delivery and consider how to maximise income;

- (iii) Members were advised that savings targets for Communities and Wellbeing services for 2015/16 totalled £710,000, of this a total of £180,000 had been identified. The balance of £530,000 remained unallocated pending further consideration of business cases and outcomes of consultations currently underway;
- (iv) In relation to the savings requirements for libraries members were advised that £180,000 was to be achieved by a reduction in the opening hours at the 16 main libraries;

Adult Social Care Savings

- (v) Members welcomed the work undertaken in developing the Shared Lives service which had not only delivered savings but improved quality of care as evidenced by the high level of satisfaction from service users;
- (vi) With regard to proposals for outcome based commissioning for domiciliary care members were advised that a Scrutiny Review Panel was looking at new models of commissioning including a proposal to reduce the number of service providers. The outcome of the Panel would be reported to the Committee at a future meeting;
- (vii) In relation to the new model for early intervention and prevention support the Committee was advised that existing contracts were being decommissioned and new services commissioned under the new model. A report would be made to a future meeting of the Committee on the outcomes expected from this new approach;
- (viii) In relation to an issue concerning outsourcing of services, members were advised that the Adults and Communities Department was operating within the framework set out in the County Council's Commissioning and Procurement Strategy. The Adults and Communities Department had developed a robust mixed economy for the delivery of care services and had demonstrated that better value could be achieved in a number of areas through commissioning from external providers;
- (ix) It was explained that work was underway to look at the development of Extra Care schemes in the Melton area. The site for Catherine Dalley House was one potential area for development. A report would be submitted to the Committee once an outcome of evaluation of potential sites was completed;
- (x) With regards to the review of the reablement programme, the Director advised that reablement was increasingly a mainstream function. The review would seek to identify better ways of targeting provision which might include some externalisation. In undertaking the review consideration would be given to ensuring that the service delivered on the prevention and early discharge agenda;
- (xi) With regard to day service placements and reduction in day centres, members were advised that this formed part of the ongoing strategy of promoting independence and reducing institutionalised care. Research in this area had indicated that offering community based solutions was preferable;
- (xii) The proposed reduction in equipment and adaptations would not impact on priority cases as the aim was to reduce spend on low value equipment. Savings would be achieved by reviewing all areas of expenditure. Priority would be given to those people in most urgent need;

- (xiii) The Department had undertaken a robust analysis of the requirements it would face under the Care Act. The Director indicated that he was reasonably confident that the resources identified would provide the capacity necessary to carry out new assessments;
- (xiv) Every effort was made to maximise income within the Adults and Communities Department. In doing so the Department needed to have regard to the Government guidance on Fairer Charging as well as adopting a firm but reasonable way to collect fees and charges recognising that many service users were vulnerable;

Capital Programme

- (xv) Members welcomed the Capital Programme. With regard to the investment of £200,000 per annum in mobile library services this would provide for one new mobile library per year. The Department currently operated six vehicles which carried out 340 visits per fortnight;
- (xvi) Members were advised that the County Council policy on Section 106 agreements included provision for library services to service new developments.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report and information now provided be noted;
- (b) That the comments made at the meeting be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 28 January 2015.

67. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Tuesday, 3 March at 2.00pm.

2.00 - 3.50 pm
20 January 2015

CHAIRMAN