

Minutes of a meeting of the Adults and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Tuesday, 17 January 2017.

PRESENT

Mrs. R. Camamile CC (in the Chair)

Mr. M. H. Charlesworth CC

Mr. A. M. Kershaw CC

Mr. S. J. Hampson CC

Mr. M. T. Mullaney CC

Mr. D. Jennings CC

Mr. T. J. Richardson CC

In attendance

Mr. Dave Houseman MBE CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care (minutes 52-53 refer)

Mr. Richard Blunt CC, Cabinet Lead Member for Communities and Wellbeing (minute 52 refers)

45. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016.

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2016 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

46. Question Time.

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

47. 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).

48. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

49. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

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

No declarations were made.

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

There were no declarations of the party whip.

51. Presentation of Petitions under Standing Order 36.

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

52. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 - 2020/21.

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Adults and Communities and Director of Corporate Resources which provided information on the proposed 2017/18 to 2020/21 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) as it related to the Adults and Communities Department. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item '8' 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 and Cabinet Lead Members advised members of the financial challenges facing the Council and the significant demand and cost pressures facing social care services in dealing with an ageing population and an increased number of people with complex disabilities. The Department had over the last few years sought to prevent and delay the need for services by various means aimed at promoting independence and by looked critically at the delivery and cost of services.

In response to questions and comments the Committee was advised as follows:-

Service Transformation

- i) The County Council and District Councils had agreed that the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding would be passported in its entirety to the District Councils on the understanding that any underspends would be returned and be available for use on other health and social care services.
- ii) The funding in connection with Lightbulb Project is yet to be determined.

Proposed Revenue Budget

- iii) The County Council and Departmental approach was not to 'salami slice' services but rather to consider the impact of services on individuals and the local community, consider how the delivery of service might be improved and whether the service could be redesigned and recommissioned in a more cost effective way. The County Council had made it a clear priority to support the most vulnerable in society and to that end the Adult Social Care budget was one of the few in the Council to show a year on year increase in spend.

- iv) The additional 2% precept to fund social care was not shown as a specific line in the budget figures as the Council took a holistic approach to the preparation of the budget. The Department was required to have regard to the guidance issued concerning the use of the additional funding and could confirm that the proposed increase in funding to adult social care would be more than the amount raised through the precept.
- v) The budget figures for 2018 onward in the table at paragraph 14 did not include inflation as this was held as a central contingency.

Growth

- vi) The growth now identified in G3 – Older People Demand was less than that requested in previous years. The Department had undertaken an analysis of the number of people seeking assistance, the size of the care packages and the impact of measures put in place to promote self-care and independence. The result was that demand which had shown growth was beginning to stabilise hence the need for less new resource.

Adult Social Care – Departmental Savings

- vii) The Shared Lives Initiative (AC6) was currently supporting approximately 140 people and had been well received. The Scheme enabled people with additional needs to be paired with families who would provide social support rather than such people being provided support in institutional settings. A detailed report would be made to the Committee on the operation of the Scheme.
- viii) The proposals set out in paragraph 39 regarding a robust review of high cost placements was aimed at looking at the cost of commissioning certain elements of the care package rather than a focus on reducing the care package.
- ix) The Departments approach to Personal Budgets did recognise the variation in the cost of commissioning services across different parts of the County.

Communities and Wellbeing – Transformation Savings

- x) The savings requirement on this area of service was significant with a saving of £1.3million to be found from a budget of £4.9million.
- xi) The proposals regarding the introduction of Smarter Libraries had proved successful elsewhere. Members of the Committee welcomed the proposed approach which it was hoped would lead to greater use of libraries and increased opening hours.

- xii) The business case for the proposed Collection Hub was still being developed. The intention was to bring collections together in a single more central location which would ensure that such collections were accessible. Whilst there would be revenue savings there would be a significant one-off capital cost. In developing the business case Leicester City and Rutland Council would need to be consulted particularly if the new Hub were to include the Record Office.

Health and Social Care Integration

- xiii) The final Better Care Fund (BCF) allocation was still awaited. However, in compiling the budget it was clear there could be a potential shortfall of £3million if all of the DFG funding passported to District Councils was fully spent by them and the need to find savings of £2million to support health service budgets which were under significant pressure.

Capital Programme

- xiv) The £310,000 for Extra Care Provision was to support future provision such as the current development in Loughborough. Members welcomed this investment and a number commented on the success of such developments elsewhere in the County.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report and information now provided be noted;
- (b) That the comments now made be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 25 January 2017.

53. Direct Payment Cards.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Adults and Communities concerning the progress to date and outcome of the decision of the Council to implement pre-paid Direct Payment cards for service users. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

In response to questions the Director advised as follows:-

- i) Service users were invited to take up Direct Payment cards but where they chose not to do so the previous arrangements were continued;
- ii) The experience to date suggested that service users were using the card responsibly and in many cases were able to purchase services at a lower cost which had contributed to some of the savings. Service Users have expressed satisfaction with the new arrangements as it has empowered them and put them in control of their care needs;
- iii) The Department was able to monitor expenditure patterns and this was important not only to ensure that the money was spent appropriately but also to ensure service users were purchasing the services needed for their care;

- iv) The monitoring of the card would be useful to developing an understanding the choices made by service users in purchasing services to meet their needs and this in turn could be useful in contributing to a more outcomes based approach to services;
- v) That an officer from East Leicestershire Clinical Commissioning Group was leading a project on Individualised Personal Commissioning which would look to bringing together, into a single funding stream, personal budgets for social care and personal health budgets.

RESOLVED

That the report and information now provided be noted.

54. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 7th March 2017 at 2.00pm.

17 January 2017

CHAIRMAN