

**ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE - 18 JANUARY 2021**

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2021/22 – 2024/25**

**MINUTE EXTRACT**

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2024/25

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Adults and Communities and Director of Corporate Resources which provided information on the proposed 2021/22 to 2024/25 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 R Blunt CC, Cabinet Lead Member and Mrs Radford CC, Cabinet Support Member to the meeting for this item.

In introducing the report, the Director advised members of the financial challenges facing the Council and the demand and cost pressures facing adult social care services in dealing with an ageing population, an increasing number of people with complex disabilities and increased costs in meeting their assessed needs.

Arising from the comments and questions raised, the Committee was advised as follows:

Proposed Revenue Budget

- i) The revenue budget did not take into account any pay or price inflation. A contingency was held centrally and allocated in year when the position became clearer. In the previous year, a sum of £7.6m million had been transferred for price, pay and pension inflation. The proposed revenue budget did not include the additional revenue that would be generated were the Council minded to levy the 3% social care precept which would generate approximately £9.3million. The consultation on this and the level of Council Tax had just closed and the Cabinet would need to have regard to the outcome of the consultation before taking a decision.

## Growth

- ii) G8 – Learning Disability Demand – Members were advised that there was close working with the Children and Families Service so that the demand was reasonably well known to allow good forecasting. The work between the two Departments also focussed on ensuring that during the transition phase service users and their families were supported with opportunities for independence and elsewhere in the budget a potential saving is being forecast as a result (AC10 refers).
- iii) G9 – Mental Health demand - Members welcomed the proposed growth to address the additional need as a result of the Covid Pandemic.
- iv) G11 – Market Premia - The challenges in recruiting and retaining social work staff were fully recognised and the proposed growth was supported. Members requested that the position be closely monitored given the central role played by social workers in the delivery of services to the elderly and vulnerable.
- v) G6 and G7 – Increased demand from Older People and Learning Disabilities This growth recognised the increasing demands from demographic growth and the increasing complexity of care and fragility of some service users. A report was due to be presented to a future meeting of the Committee on how needs were being met and the impact on carers. It was noted that the demographics and the fact that people were living longer, but often with poorer health, required support to be provided to more people with complex needs.

## Adult Social Care – Savings

- vi) Members noted the savings proposals and commented favourably on the Department's approach. In particular members highlighted the following saving lines in the budget which whilst delivering savings had the added benefit of improving services and outcomes:-
  - AC2 – Social Care Investment Plan
  - AC4 – Revised Operating Model (TOM)
  - AC5 – Digital Assistive Technology
  - AC8 – Digital Self-Serve Financial Assessments
  - AC9 – Review of Mental Health pathways.
- vii) A commitment was given to a report being submitted on the Revised Target Operating Model to ensure that it was meeting its objectives and that all those assessed as requiring services were receiving the necessary support.

### Communities and Wellbeing – Savings

- viii) Members noted that there were no new savings in this area of service.

### Better Care, Covid and other Funding

- ix) Members noted with some concern there was still no clear view from the Government on a number of these important funding streams given that they would affect over 20% of the Departmental Budget.
- x) With regard to the Disabled Facilities Grant members were advised that the figure for the current year included an in-year one-off grant from the Government which had been pass-ported to the District Councils. Officers concurred with member comments that the restrictions placed on the use of DFG and the inability to use some for small 'revenue items' prevented best use of this money. It was hoped that the Government would look at some flexibility in this regard.

### Savings Under Development

- xi) The proposed areas for exploration of savings were noted.

### Capital Programme

- xii) The Capital Programme was noted.

### 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 2021.

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