

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2008/09 TO 2010/11

The Committee considered a joint report of the Director of Adult Social Care and Health and the Director of Corporate Resources concerning the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the period 2008/09 to 2010/11. A copy of the report marked 'C' is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Mr. D. A. Sprason CC the Cabinet Lead Member for Adult Social Care.

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health in introducing the report drew attention to the additional demographic demands being placed on social care authorities, the increasing complexity of cases and emphasis on improved quality of services and personalisation of care packages. All this necessitated a rethink of the delivery of services leading to a move away from institutional care towards more community based services. The budget proposals seek to move the Department in this direction.

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

General

- (i) The £50,000 saving on welfare rights in 2007/08 was not shown in Appendix B but would be shown in the financial information at year end for 2007/08. This was a saving proposal agreed in 2006/07 and implemented following a review which resulted in a refocusing of the services and increased working with the voluntary sector and Works and Pension Service to improve benefit taken up by specific client groups.
- (ii) The full year effect of the growth agreed in 2007/08 for Direct Payments was £600,000 and this amount was included in the growth figures now reported for 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- (iii) The total growth of £10.9m included £6.6m to offset loss of specific grants.

- (iv) The additional growth in services promoting independence such as Home Care and Direct Payments was offset by reduced growth or savings in more traditional service areas. The Director acknowledged the need for greater transparency so that members and stakeholders could scrutinise the budget in relation to priorities and the need for the Department to respond to the national agenda of personalised care. In this regard the Director indicated that he would consider arranging a workshop for members to discuss how the Department should move to deliver this agenda which would inevitably involve disinvestment in more traditional methods of service provision.

Growth

- (v) The growth in independent home care was higher than forecast. The Department was investigating this and had engaged consultants to assist in improving its forecasting model (para. 24(a)).
- (vi) The growth in nursing and residential placements was for one year only and the trend was for a reduced requirement as the investment in non-residential care provided alternatives. The Director also advised that the forecast had regard to the number of young adults who would be moving from Children's Services into Adult Learning Disability Services (para. 24(b)).
- (vii) The growth included for supported living was difficult to estimate precisely. The assumption was for 12 new placements but should this be exceeded it would be necessary for this to be managed as a budget pressure in the current year and higher growth would be sought in subsequent years (para. 24(c)).
- (viii) The growth bid for Adaptations and Community Equipment was based on trends and was an increase on growth allocated in 2007/08. The Director indicated that he was confident that the additional growth was sufficient to deal with the growing demand (para. 24(d)).
- (ix) The Department currently provided 1200 meals, a reduction of 400 on the previous year. The main cause of the reduction was the increased emphasis on promoting independence which had resulted in service users previously using the service now being assisted to prepare their own meals. The increased cost of the meals was not a major contributory factor in the fall in demand as the charges made were not considered to be high. The Director went on to inform the Committee that a review of the Community Meals Service was underway and a detailed report would be submitted to members (para. 24(g)).
- (x) The additional growth of Extra Care Housing Night Staff related to existing schemes. These homes currently have 'sleep in night staff' and the proposal to fund 'waking night staff' would enable those homes

to cater for people with higher care needs. The staff would not be directly employed by the County Council (para. 24(j)).

- (xi) The need for good and timely information was critical to service delivery. The County Council had reviewed its Management Information requirements at a Corporate level and the proposed new system which would replace SSIS would not only need to be 'fit for purpose' for social care purposes but would need to be compatible with the Corporate Framework. The business case would also address the ongoing maintenance of the system (para. 24(l)).
- (xii) A review of the Learning Disabilities Commissioning Team was underway and the outcome of the review might result in the growth requirements in 2010/11 being revised (para. 24(m)).

Savings

- (xiii) Proposals for achieving the efficiency savings in 2009/10 and 2010/11 would be reported to members. A significant proportion of savings would be through improved procurement and commissioning of services as well as a critical look at how services were provided (para. 30).
- (xiv) A dedicated officer has been appointed to the Adult Placement Scheme to ensure increased benefit take up. Initial indications were that this was proving successful and the saving of £100,000 would be achieved (para. 31(b)).
- (xv) Prompt charging for home care would result in service users being provided with an interim financial assessment. Charges would be levied immediately services commenced. Currently there was a 19 day delay between services commencing and charges being levied. Any overcharging due to incorrect initial assessments would be refunded (para. 31(c)).
- (xvi) The savings from targeted inflation for independent sector providers did carry some risk. However, the Department was confident that this was achievable without adversely affecting both the quality and quantity of residential care provision. These proposals would not have a detrimental effect on the proposals to sell six homes as going concerns. Some members however expressed concerns that the proposals would impact on service standards and that there was a risk that additional costs would be passed on to residents through higher top up fees (para .31(d)).
- (xvii) The differential home care hourly rate for 'shopping calls' was in recognition of the fact that this was a less demanding role than providing personal care. The Director was confident that the revised

rates would not result in providers moving out of this area of service, or have an adverse effect on the quality of staff (para. 31(g)).

- (xviii) The proposed reduction of duty teams/points was the subject of review within the context of the Customer First Programme (para 31(h)).
- (xix) The additional charges proposed were not considered to be significant so as to impact on take-up. Most of the charges were comparable or lower than those charged by neighbouring authorities.
- (xx) The £50,000 efficiency saving for Respite Care for disabled people was a result of a review of how the service was provided. This was an efficiency saving and there was no reduction in service; further information on this would be forwarded to members.

Capital Programme

- (xxi) The business case for telephony (VOIP) would also address security issues.

RESOLVED:-

- (a) That the information now provided be noted;
- (b) That the Cabinet be advised that some members of the Committee remained concerned at the likely impact on service users of proposals to:
 - i) increase charges;
 - ii) not to fully fund inflationary increases in the independent sector;
- (c) That the Director of Adult Social Care and Health be requested to submit further reports in due course on the following reviews:-
 - (i) Community Meals Service;
 - (ii) Duty Teams and Points;
 - (iii) Management Information requirements and the proposed replacement of SSIS;
- (d) That further reports be submitted to this Committee on how the £2.3million efficiency savings identified for 2009/10 are to be achieved with a view to achieving early involvement of members in that debate; a workshop could be organised to facilitate this discussion;
- (e) That the proposal of the Director to arrange a workshops for stakeholders and members to discuss how the Department should move to deliver national agenda of personalised care and at the same time begin a phased disinvestment programme in traditional institutionalised service provision be welcomed;

- (f) That a report be submitted to the Chairman and Spokesmen of this Committee on the arrangements for the transition of young adults from Children's Services into Adult Social Care Services;
- (g) That the Director of Adult Social Care and Health be requested to provide detailed information on the Community Meals Service particularly in relation to:-
 - (i) number of service users in the last six years;
 - (ii) number of meals provided per year for the last six years;
 - (iii) price of meals for the last six years;
- (h) That the Director of Adult Social Care and Health be requested to provide detailed information on increased demand in 2007/08 for independent home care and for services for people with brain injuries.