

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
26 JANUARY 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Monday, 26 January 2015

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, Peter Curtis, Veronica Gay, Mike Lowe, Hilary McGill, Dave Mackie and David Wisinger

SUBSTITUTE: Councillor: Ron Hampson (for Andy Dunbobbin)

APOLOGY: Councillor Cindy Hinds

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Richard Jones and Mike Peers

CONTRIBUTORS:

Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Chief Executive, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Chief Officer (Social Services), Corporate Finance Manager, Senior Manager Commissioning and Provider Services Manager

IN ATTENDANCE:

Environment & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

No declarations of interest were made.

49. BUDGET CONSULTATION PROCESS 2015/16

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

The Leader outlined the budget consultation process to date, which included briefing meetings with Group Leaders and Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees, culminating with the Overview & Scrutiny mop-up session scheduled to be held on Friday, 30th January, 2015, prior to the final budget proposals being presented to County Council on the 17th February, 2015. Regular updates had been given to Members over recent months and the Leader commented on the unprecedented financial challenges facing all Councils across Wales. The draft budget report, presented to Cabinet on 16th December, 2015 highlighted a £16.4m budget gap for 2015/16. Following intensive work a balanced budget had been achieved. The risk to frontline services was a unique challenge with no magic formula and no additional money available.

The Leader commented on the consequential revenue provision and briefed Members on his lobbying of Ministers and the Welsh Government (WG). He expressed his disappointment following the Autumn Statement that no additional funding for service protection was being allocated to Local Government.

The Chief Executive and Chief Officer (Social Services) gave a detailed presentation which covered the following areas:-

- National Position
- Revised Local Position
- Strategy to close the extended gap
- Up to date Strategy position
- Remaining Strategy Actions
- Big Budget Conversation
- Member Involvement
- Final Steps in the Budget
- Social Services Budget 2015/16
 - Previous years decisions
 - Targeted price inflation
 - Pressures and investments
 - Our Strategy
 - Our approach
 - Managing the change
 - Principles for change
 - Voluntary Sector
 - Recovery of CHC
 - Business Plan efficiencies

The comments and questions which were raised by Members of the Committee on the presentations, together with the responses given, are detailed in Appendix 1 (attached).

During discussion, the Chair thanked Officers for the openness in which the workshops and verbal updates had been delivered to Members and felt members of the public were better prepared for the year ahead.

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

50. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the public and one member of the press in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.55 am)

.....
Chair

Overview & Scrutiny Budget Consultation 2015/16

Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 26 January, 2015

Section	Issue/Question	Response
1. Refocus eligibility criteria for day care	The Ewloe Over 50s Forum is currently accessed by people with early dementia. The Forum would like to be considered when looking at possible day care opportunities in future.	Acknowledged.
2. Review the number of sites where In-House day care is provided.	How are you going to re-focus the eligibility criteria without people slipping through the net?	<p>By looking at people's individual day care needs and looking at opportunities to explore alternative models of day care provision to meet those needs.</p> <p>In response to concerns around the eligibility criteria, the Leader of the Council outlined the importance of Overview & Scrutiny Committee's receiving information over the coming year in order to monitor the impact certain budget proposals had on service delivery.</p>
3. Review and revise eligibility criteria for respite	Concern over the reduction of respite days which could be traumatic for the user and family.	The efficiencies do not propose a reduction in the number of respite days. There will continue to be an individual assessment of need but if an individual currently accesses 35 nights, if their need is the same, they will continue to access 35 nights of respite. Consultation on this proposal is required.
	How would the direct payments work?	<p>Further work and consultation needed on direct payments.</p> <p>It was agreed that information on direct payments and different operating models would be provided to Members.</p>
	What support does the Council provide for pooling resources for	It was agreed that this information be provided to Cllr

	respite?	Hilary McGuill.
	If the same number of respite days are to remain how will the £150k savings be met.	The Chief Executive suggested tracking arrangements for high risk proposals for each respective Overview & Scrutiny Committee with the Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee receiving updates on the high risk proposals as part of their regular monthly budget monitoring reports.
5. Consult on the potential to commission provision currently provided by In House Supported Living houses.	The difficulties that could be experienced when there are a large number of people with learning difficulties living together need to be taken into account.	Acknowledged. Would be dealt with sensitively.
8. Implement thresholds for supplying minor equipment (Occupational Therapy)	Why can't we look at the model used by the Red Cross where families are asked for a £30 bond which is returned to the family when the equipment is returned?	Happy to look at the Red Cross Model. Currently looking into the availability of small pieces of so that people can go and test the equipment before purchasing them.
	Concern out of step with suppliers not out of step with other local authorities.	Acknowledged.
9. Renegotiate joint funding with Health	Is the £200k agreed in principle with Health additional to the £394k efficiency saving?	The £394k is the total figures including the £200k.
	Think this risk should remain Red until the Council has received the £200,000 from Health.	A bill has been sent to Health for the £200,000.
16. More targeted approach family group	Concerns around re-commissioning this service given the small level of efficiencies expected.	The purpose of re-commissioning this service is to provide a different delivery model whilst maintaining the same level

meetings and alternative delivery model		and quality of service.
19. Review commissioning with Action for Children	Concerned with the potential for funding not to be given to summer play schemes provided by Action for Children, which would impact greatly on families with disabled children.	The summer Playscheme is currently run by four separate contractors. Consultation is currently being undertaken on how this could be delivered differently in the future, with the possible introduction of a small charge. It was agreed that further information on this would be provided to Members.
21. Review and realign funding to voluntary sector	Would the 10% budget reduction to the voluntary sector impact each of the social service commissioned providers.	Work was continuing to encourage providers who had similar aims and objectives to pool their resources and reduce the impact of the 10% reduction in funding.
26. Remove recharge for Library Headquarters	Would the proposal have an impact on other service area budgets?	No. The savings would be realised across the Council and would not impact the budget of any other service area.
28. Review contracts for Grounds Maintenance	Like to support Tri Ffordd. Is it possible to ask them to reduce their costs?	Trying to reduce the level of budget for this provision.
General Comments	Would the comments/questions/suggestions received from members of the public be included in the final budget proposals, to enable Members to cross reference their comments with the responses from the Council?	Any comments/questions/suggestions from members of the public would be included in the final budget documents to ensure Members take these into account when setting the 2015/16 budget.