

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
11 DECEMBER 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at County Hall, Mold on Friday 11th December, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Andy Dunbobbin, Veronica Gay, David Healey, Cindy Hinds, Hilary Isherwood, David Mackie, Ian Smith and David Wisinger

APOLOGIES: Councillors: Adele Davies-Cooke, Brian Lloyd and Hilary McGuill

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillors: Peter Curtis (for Mike Lowe), Ian Dunbar (for Mike Reece) and Paul Shotton (for Carolyn Thomas)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors: Helen Brown, Kevin Jones, Richard Jones and Mike Peers

CONTRIBUTORS: Councillor Aaron Shotton, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Chief Officer (Social Services), Senior Manager – Commissioning and Performance, Development Officer, Workforce Development Manager and Finance Officer (Social Services)

IN ATTENDANCE: Environment & Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Housing & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator

43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

44. COUNCIL FUND REVENUE BUDGET 2016/17

The Chairman welcomed the contributors to the meeting.

The Cabinet Member for Social Service explained that the proposals contained within the report set out the main risk areas covered in the business plan for 2016/17. The wider position regarding the funding of social care remained uncertain with recent media reports outlining concerns from the independent sector organisation Care Forum that the funding of the care homes sector was at critically low ebb and specific funding was necessary from UK and Welsh Government.

The Cabinet Member continued to explain that within the budget plans, efficiencies needed to be made, and within the areas the Committee was asked to focus on were changes to improve and develop learning disability services, changes in children's services and voluntary sector services. Although the position did not assume savings for extra care within the 2016/17 financial year, the Committee would also be asked to consider this.

The Leader of the Council provided information on the draft Local Government settlement. He explained that there was a reduction of 1.5% in the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) which was slightly above the average reduction and an improved position against the forecast.

Under the Intermediate Care Funds (ICF), the amounts ringfenced for mental health and older people would require discussion in the New Year on how these could be accessed. There was some protection given for the Supporting People Grant, however the Families First grant had been reduced by at least 10%. The Council was currently working through the implications of these reductions.

Whilst he said that the Council's strong representation to the Welsh Government (WG) on restricting cuts to the RSG had proved successful, more needed to be done on lobbying for a review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and greater flexibility on fees and charges. He thanked Members for their support in lobbying the WG.

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

- Purpose of today's meeting
- Corporate overview
- Service business plan proposals
- Local pressures and inflation – social services
- National timetable
- Local timetable

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

RESOLVED:

That the presentation be noted.

45. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS 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 11.45 am)

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Chairman