

SOCIAL CARE AND INCLUSION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

THURSDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2011 AT 6.00 P.M.

Panel Members Present: Councillor Oliver (Chair)
Councillor Paul (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Ali
Councillor Barker
Councillor Ditta
Councillor Douglas-Maul
Councillor Rattigan
Councillor Turner

Officers Present: Paul Davies, Executive Director, Social Care & Inclusion
Lloyd Haynes, Social Care and Inclusion, Finance Account Manager
Matthew Underhill - Scrutiny Officer

103/11 APOLOGIES

No apologies were received for the duration of the meeting.

104/11 SUBSTITUTIONS

No substitutions were received for the duration of the meeting.

105/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or party whip identified at this meeting.

106/11 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted.

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2011, copies having previously been circulated be approved as a true and accurate record.

107/11 CHANGES TO THE SOCIAL CARE LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The Executive Director introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The coalition government has continued with the Personalisation and individual budget policies of the previous government. However, guidance is still awaited on a national level on a number of key issues, including future funding of a growing group of vulnerable people.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

108/11 FINANCIAL MONITORING: OUTTURN 2010-11

The Finance Account Manager introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The Revenue Outturn 2010/11 position was an underspend of £93k, while the total savings target for the year was £6.319m. Actual savings achieved were £6.257m, representing a shortfall of £62k. However, the shortfall was offset by a directorate action plan which identified and managed alternative in year savings;
- The Capital Outturn 2010/11 position was £559k. This represented slippage on total mainstream resources of £141k against a total budget of £700k. However, this related to work undertaken but not invoiced. This position was resolved early in the new financial year;
- Following a Member query officers acknowledged the significant spend on agency of staff of £736k. However, significant reductions in the number of agency staff had been achieved over the last eighteen months with just fifty agency staff contributing to a workforce in excess of eight hundred. Officers also pointed out that the existence of some specialist care packages and staff sickness meant that the use of agency staff was often necessary;
- Officers explained that further in-years savings of £570k required by government, but which had not been originally programmed into the savings targets, had also been achieved.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

109/11 FINANCIAL MONITORING: FIRST QUARTER 2011-12

The Finance Account Manager introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The forecast revenue outturn was an underspend of £105k. The savings agreed for the directorate budget are £7.133m. In addition, the full year effect of the previous year's investments are £1.690m;
- In relation to the forecast capital outturn position for 2011/12, expenditure to date was low, at £271k against a total budget of £3.122m. However, it was anticipated that the level of expenditure will substantially increase in the remaining quarters, including significant spend on domestic adaptations.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

110/11 SUPPORT FOR LIVING AT HOME PROCUREMENT

The Executive Director introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- There had been one hundred and twenty expressions of interest in relation to the invitation to tender. From this cohort, ninety-five had progressed to the next stage. The Executive Director highlighted the importance of continuing with the process and ensuring that the correct appointments were made. Following a Member query it was explained that the process did require significant staffing resources, although this had been built-in to the planning;
- Following a further Member query, the Executive Director explained that there was no set hourly care market price as this was not deemed appropriate. However, the council would use benchmark pricing to ensure difficulties encountered with firms engaged via e-auctions were not repeated. This would also support individual service users in deciding from whom to receive care services. However, the council would not permit any arrangements which were funded by an individual budget if they did not meet the individual's outcomes;
- Officers also acknowledged the importance of reflecting the Think Walsall approach during the procurement process. It would also be important that any potential service provider used locally based employees. Officers agreed to confirm whether or not it would be possible for service providers to sub-contract. However, it was the Executive Director's understanding that it would not be possible for sub-contractor arrangements to be made and firms who did so risked losing regulatory approval. In addition, quality monitoring of providers would also be undertaken. In terms of risk management, a core of specialist care staff would be retained in order to respond to any potential service provider failures.

Resolved

That

- (1) officers will confirm whether successful care providers would be permitted to sub-contract care services;
and
- (2) the report be noted.

111/11 COMMISSIONING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Executive Director introduced the report. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- A recent public meeting to consider the approach to service delivery at Broadway North was well attended. An article subsequently appeared in the Express and Star which suggested that the centre was set to close. The Executive Director

emphasised that this was not the case and that this had neither been said nor was it intended. He further explained that a number of stakeholders participated in the management of Broadway North, including the council and the Joint Mental Health Trust and decisions would need to be taken collectively. However, he highlighted that given the pressure on mental health services it was timely that a review of service delivery at the centre was undertaken and the value of the services it provides. For example, the respite unit at Broadway North was currently operating at 29% occupancy. It was unclear whether this reflected a lack of demand for the service or if individuals were not being referred. The building itself was also significantly under occupied following the transfer of staff using office space at the centre to other council buildings. The Executive Director highlighted the importance of not confusing good services with a building;

- The review process would include undertaking individual reviews of ninety individuals who currently use these services, including art therapy and it would be important to ensure that a proper ambition is identified for service users. For example, that they could anticipate departure from the centre and a productive life in future. However, he acknowledged that some service users would find this difficult. A number of service user queries had been lodged with Andrew Moulton, Walsall Disability Forum. It was agreed that responses to these queries would be shared with Panel Members;
- A number of Members also explained that they felt much more re-assured by the Executive Director's verbal update regarding the future of Broadway North than the original report to the Panel. It was also agreed that the Panel would identify a method for participating in the review process. For example, inviting service users or their representatives to attend a Panel meeting.

Resolved

That

- (1) responses to the queries raised by service users will be shared with Panel Members;
- (2) the Panel participate in the review of services provided at Broadway North;
and
- (3) the report be noted.

112/11 TASTE FOR LIFE

The Executive Director introduced the update. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- A total of 131 referrals had been received during the year to date to the service. In addition, no concerns or complaints have been received since the new arrangements were introduced in January 2011. The Panel requested further guidance at its next meeting regarding the outcomes for 150 service users who have been offered a range of support options but have chosen to not use Taste for Life.

Resolved

That

- (1) Further information be provided to the Panel regarding follow-up activity with the 150 individuals who have chosen to not use Taste for Life;
and
- (2) the report be noted.

113/11 CARE HOMES UPDATE

The Executive Director introduced the update. The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- There were no concerns with either Southern Cross or any other local providers. In addition, all Southern Cross homes have been visited and care provision is meeting required standards. This will be further supported by a project which has been established jointly with the PCT to create a team aimed at improving and maintaining the quality of care provided. This will include working directly with homes to improve the quality of care. The activity would also be supported by the use of lay and volunteer visitors as part of efforts to improve the service user experience. It was very apparent that desk-top reviews of care home performance as previously required by the regulator were ineffectual;
- Following a Member query, it was explained that in the event of problems being experienced at a care home, council officers could be deployed to provide guidance in the operation of a home. However, they would not be legally permitted to directly operate the facility.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

114/11 BENEFITS-BASED CHARGING WORKING GROUP

The Chair introduced the working group's Terms of Reference. The main points of the update and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The working group had met with both officers and service users. It was anticipated that the final report would be submitted to the Panel's next meeting.

Resolved

That the report be noted.

115/11 WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12 AND FORWARD PLAN

The Panel considered the work programme and Cabinet's Forward Plan.

Resolved

That the work programme and Forward Plan be noted.

116/11 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chair informed Members that the date of the next meeting would be 6 October at 6:00pm.

The meeting terminated at 7:20 pm

Chair:

Date: