

SOCIAL CARE & INCLUSION SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

THURSDAY 18 November 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

Panel Members Present Councillor T Oliver (Chair)
 Councillor A Paul (Vice-Chair)
 Councillor D Turner
 Councillor J Barton
 Councillor M Burley
 Councillor B Douglas-Maul
 Councillor I Azam

Other Members Present Councillor P Smith

Officers Present Paul Davies – Executive Director, Adult Social Care & Inclusion
 Andy Rust – Head of Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning Unit
 John Fell – Head of Strategic Development
 Lloyd Haynes – Finance Account Manager
 Matthew Underhill – Scrutiny Officer

43/10 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received for the duration of the meeting from Councillor Woodruff.

44/10 SUBSTITUTIONS

No substitutions were received for the duration of the meeting.

45/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

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

46/10 MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting were noted.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2010, copies having previously been circulated, be approved as a true and accurate record.

47/10 MAJOR ADAPTATIONS

The Head of the Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning Unit introduced the briefing (annexed). The main points of the briefing and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The briefing set out the time from referral to approval for major disabled facility adaptations (those costing more than £1,500), split by those instances where the council provided its agency service and those where residents submit themselves, or through a private agent they appoint. A stark contrast was noted with significantly greater lag times between referral and approval for private applications when compared with those that were council agency assisted;
- A key objective was to determine the most effective ways in which to support individuals to choose the council's agency service. However, this was counter-intuitive to the personalisation agenda.

48/10 QUARTER 2 FINANCIAL MONITORING POSITION FOR 2010/11

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

- A breakeven revenue outturn position is forecast for 2010/11, including approximately £5m of new savings together with around £1m of savings generated in the previous financial year. The delivery of the full level of savings will be based in part on the need to achieve an action plan in relation to £896,000, while risks to the overall saving objectives total £500,000;
- The capital position is also forecast as breakeven for 2010/11. Mainstream funding totalling £700,00 is currently being used for building works at Hollybank and Goscote. However, significant ICT costs, including upgrading PARIS, and Social Care and Inclusion property improvements would be met by non-council funding of in excess of £700,000;
- Following a Panel query, officers explained that budget setting was increasingly undertaken via benchmarking of the cost of services with statistical neighbouring authorities. Many of the savings achieved thus far have largely been achieved through changing the model of services and the development of care pathways. For example, moving from the use of residential care to supporting individuals to live independently in the community. There was agreement that it would be important to understand whether service users were satisfied with the service received.

49/10 COMMUNITY MEALS

The Chair introduced the item explaining that he requested its inclusion as an additional item following reports in the local media, as well as concerns expressed previously regarding the contract with Sodexo. He added that it would be important to establish the current position of the service equally for those who were recipients of the service, those employed by it and its supporters.

The Executive Director, Adult Social Care & Inclusion introduced the report (annexed). The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows. Queries were also raised by several individuals also present at the meeting, these included Sodexo employees and the relatives of service users:

- The contract for the delivery of meals with Sodexo was due to expire on 6 January 2011. The contract contains an option, subject to both parties agreement, to extend for any period up to two years. However, while negotiations were underway the presence of a confidentiality clause meant direct discussion of that process could only be very limited at a public meeting;
- The council was currently undertaking the development of a community meals service. However, Cabinet had authorised officers to negotiate a contract extension of up to six months, concluding in July 2011. Thus far Sodexo had indicated that they were not able consider a contract extension;
- The Executive Director explained that the council was responsible for around 8,000 individuals, with Sodexo providing a service to 400 local residents. He emphasised that the council was committed to providing hot meals as required by service users. This included provision in place for the 400 Sodexo clients via the community meal service should the contract not be extended beyond 6 January 2011;
- A Sodexo employee stated that it was her understanding that the company did wish to extend the contract beyond 6 January 2011. However, the Executive Director explained that this was not the position that had been set out by Sodexo in his discussions with the local manager. The Sodexo employee stated that it was her understanding that the company wanted to agree a twelve month extension to the contract as six months was not viable. The Executive director explained that the council had sought a six-month extension which was within the terms of the existing contract as well as having offered the company the opportunity to participate in the community meals service. Thus far both of these invitations had been declined. The Executive Director agreed with the Chair that the move to a different delivery model provided the explanation as to why a contract extension beyond six months had not been offered.
- The Sodexo employee stated that promotional material supplied by the council to service users which listed local delivered hot meals services did not include Sodexo. This would have the effect of undermining the service provided by the company. The Executive Director explained

that no official list existed and that Neighbourhood Community Officers (NCOs) simply put together information based on commercial services available within a locality. The Sodexo employee provided the Chair with a copy of the collection of promotional material that had been to one resident. However, a subsequent review of this document by a Panel Member highlighted that in fact Sodexo was listed;

- The Executive Director provided further guidance regarding the community services model of service delivery. The council had a duty of well-being for 8,000 local residents and the community meals model would enable individuals to choose the most appropriate form of assistance to suit their circumstances. For example, not all service users would necessarily choose the Sodexo product e.g. the delivery of a hot meal for lunch. For example, some might choose to purchase food from a local fish and chips take-away;
- A Sodexo employee queried how the new arrangements would be suitable for an individual who was not able to get out of a chair and who would not be able to attend a luncheon club. A similar point was made by the daughter of a service user with mobility challenges. A further Sodexo employee highlighted that they also effectively provided a safe and well check and on two separate occasions she had probably saved the lives of service users when delivering hot meals and discovering them in need of urgent medical care. The Executive Director explained that each service user would receive a care package and where deemed appropriate would be provided with a hot meal. As part of their care package an individual's home would be fitted with telehealth care equipment free of charge, connecting them with the council's response centre 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Where appropriate this would also include the installation of additional medical monitoring equipment, for example, a blood pressure monitor, as well as movement detectors. Responding to a Member query, the Executive Director explained that the safeguarding of individuals within their homes would be further supported by the council's telehealth care monitoring, which was delivered in partnership with health care colleagues, by committing to physically attending to an individual in their home within twenty minutes. This new service standard would be introduced by 1st December 2010;
- The Executive Director confirmed that assessments of service users would be undertaken and alternative provision in place should the contract with Sodexo not continue beyond 6 January. This would include where necessary physical monitoring each and the delivery of hot meals. As part of assessments individuals would also be provided with a list of options. He was confident that no individuals would fall through the safeguarding net;
- The Head of the Vulnerable Adults and Joint Commissioning Unit clarified that while organisations such, as Age Concern who were set to be part of the community meals service via a framework agreement, were classified as operating in the voluntary sector, they had paid employees who would be supporting service delivery;
- In response to queries regarding the cost of the delivery of hot meals post the possible expiration of the contract with Sodexo on 6 January

2011, the Executive Director provided guidance that cost to service users of meals was likely to be similar to the existing charge of £3.10. The Executive Director also explained that the supply and installation of telecare is free, with running costs subject to a consultation with service users;

- The Chair expressed concern regarding the implications of the savings targets which appeared to have been identified in relation to the delivered meals service. A further difficulty going forward would be the challenge in being able to identify the charges which would have to be met by individuals with the bundling-up of costs as a consequence of the introduction of personal budgets.

50/10 COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT SERVICES FOR VULNERABLE ADULTS WORKING GROUP REPORT

The Chair introduced the report (annexed). The main points of the report and subsequent discussion were as follows:

- The working group considered a number of issues including the joint work undertaken between the council and Walsall Housing Group (whg) in relation to telehealth care. This was in part prompted by concerns regarding the risk of individuals not receiving telehealth care where obsolete Community Alarm Systems (CAS) were removed and instances where difficulties were experienced in receiving a replacement pendant system. Changes to the council's in-house home carer and NCO service were also considered;
- The working group met with whg and this led to a meeting between council officers and whg to deliver more effective joint-working over the decommissioning of CAS and replacement with pendants. The Chair explained that a key recommendation of the working group was that a joint statement should be received to provide reassurance for the future;
- The Executive Director explained that the obsolete CAS system which was hard-wired into homes was being replaced by the pendant system. This includes a £1m contribution of telehealthcare funding from the NHS. Successful partnership activity has also been undertaken with the Fire Service to also install smoke alarms in the homes of those individuals in receipt of telecare. He also explained he acted as telecare lead for the region and the council recognised the need for an effective and responsive service. The Head of Strategic Development also highlighted to the Panel that work was underway to seek to install broadband connections in the homes of service users to assist in maintaining independence, as well as enabling relatives to remotely monitor an individual via their own computer;
- The Executive Director also explained that the activity to establish the home care and NCO service to effectively support the reablement service was also well-underway.

Resolved:

- **that effective joint working between the council and Walsall Housing Group (whg) operated to ensure that local need for community alarms was met, with a joint-statement made by the two organisations to provide reassurance that this would continue to be the case in the future and that no users would “fall through the net”;**

51/10 WORK PROGRAMME 2010/ 11 AND FORWARD PLAN

The Panel’s work programme 2010/11 and the Forward Plan were noted

52/10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair informed Members that the next Panel meeting would held on 29 November 2010.

The meeting terminated at 8:00pm

Chair:

Date: