

## **Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

### **Tuesday, 17 November 2015, County Hall, Worcester - 10.00 am**

#### **Minutes**

#### **Present:**

Mr T A L Wells (Chairman), Mrs J L M A Griffiths (Vice Chairman), Mr R C Adams, Mr A Fry, Mr P Grove and Mrs A T Hingley

#### **Also attended:**

Richard Harling (Director of Adult Services and Health), Sandy Bannister (Corporate Equality and Diversity Manager), Suzanne O'Leary (Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Manager) and Jo Weston (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

#### **Available Papers**

The members had before them:

- A. The Agenda papers (previously circulated);
- B. Presentation handouts for item 5 (circulated at the Meeting)
- C. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 October 2015 (previously circulated).

(Copies of documents A and B will be attached to the signed Minutes).

#### **202 Apologies and Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially Sandy Bannister, the Corporate Equality and Diversity Manager and Peter Pinfield, the Chairman of Worcestershire Healthwatch.

Apologies had been received from the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.

#### **203 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Griffiths declared an interest as her daughter was employed by a care home.

#### **204 Public Participation**

None.

#### **205 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 October 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**206 Corporate Strategy Planning and 2016/17 Budget: Adult Services and Health**

The Director for Adult Services and Health gave a presentation on the Corporate Strategy Planning process for 2016/17.

Members were reminded that the process included 3 discussions with Cabinet Members between June and September, with final proposals being submitted to the 19 November 2015 Cabinet meeting.

Further cost pressures including the implementation of the Living Wage from April 2016 and the introduction and embedding of the Care Act had added to the already difficult discussion on how to achieve necessary savings.

The Director reported on progress against outcomes, highlighting the 'Your Life, Your Choice' website as a resource for information and advice to assist with promoting health and independence. Over 300 services were accessible with information expected to be reviewed regularly. The next phase was to develop a community resilience and volunteering plan.

Despite savings of £8.5m being achieved from prevention services since March 2014, there had been no obvious impact on social care demand. A review of integrated recovery services had taken place with a view to recommission the service. The implications of the unexpected in year reduction to the Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant were being worked through.

Around 1,000 people were in receipt of a direct payment, equating to around 32% of eligible residents. Further promotion of this was anticipated.

Quality Assurance continues to be a driver for the Directorate to ensure that quality and productivity of services is maintained. A new framework had been developed and further review was expected.

The introduction of the Care Act had brought challenges, yet the Directorate was well positioned to comply with the legal duties after committing to thorough staff training. Phase One changes had been embedded and were undergoing audit, however nationally, Phase Two changes had been deferred until 2020.

In relation to savings, Members were reminded that when original savings targets were set in 2013 (for the period 2013 – 2018) the Care Act was not known about.

During the current financial year, of the £12,628,000 savings required, £9,053,000 had been delivered and £381,000 was on track to be delivered. The Director suggested that over £3m worth of savings were at risk of not being achieved this year, however, the Cabinet Member and Director had acknowledged that Directorate Reserves could be needed to meet the savings required.

Of those programmes which were at risk, three made up the majority of funding. These were reducing the demand on older people residential and nursing care, new model of social work and extra care & supported living.

In addition, other cost pressures were cited, including the rising demand and cost of older people in residential and nursing care and older people requiring homecare. Furthermore, the transition of care for people with complex learning disabilities had moved from the NHS to the Local Authority.

The Director discussed future developments, with lots of good practice around integration of health and social care referred to. The Better Care Fund had facilitated the integration programme and Worcestershire was a national pioneer. It was made clear that no new money was available, but allowed innovative ways of working.

A summary of the progress made of commissioning of in-house provider services was given and an update on the care market review was provided, with a final report expected by the end of the year.

The Director expanded on the 'New Technologies' project, where its aim was to improve outcomes and experience of people in receipt of Council funded care. Savings may be achieved by increasing productivity for care providers and by working in partnership with technology companies, further opportunities exist.

In summary, the Director reiterated that:

- there were risks to savings plans
- demographic and other cost pressures (including the introduction of the Living Wage) were unforeseen
- the use of Directorate Reserves was likely to be unavoidable
- the development of the use of new technology was a positive step forward.

In the following discussion, the following key points were

made:

- Members commended the Director on the progress made in difficult times
- In relation to the cut to the Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant, Members were informed that services would be maintained for the current financial year
- Although the savings plan was very ambitious, around half of savings were anticipated to be achieved through invest to save programmes
- Members asked about Directorate Reserves, which were around £14m, and agreed that their use was regrettably unavoidable
- When asked if there was a delay in assessing older people, the Director stated that was not the case
- One Member was concerned that compassion could be lost when having to re-assess people with Learning Disabilities for the Independent Living Fund. The purpose being to confirm funding eligibility under the new Care Act criteria. The Director reiterated that there was a legal duty to meet need, regardless of complexity, and the assessment was done as sensitively as possible
- In relation to new models of social work, it was suggested that with better ways of working and reduced administration, Social Workers could free up 10–15% more capacity, a move welcomed by Members. However, when asked whether increased productivity would mean that demand exceeded supply, the Director was keen to point out that could be the case and the programme would have to be managed carefully
- One Member had suggested Councils should provide loans for Disabled Facilities Grants, where £2.4m of the Better Care Fund was distributed by District Councils. The Director stated that demand was above what funding was available, and the suggestion needed exploring further
- In relation to assessments, Members learned that everyone in receipt of funding was re-assessed annually, most were done in person, although in the future with better ways of working, many could be done electronically.
- Questioning how the Directorate ensures quality of providers, Members were told that intelligence comes from a variety of sources and that as Commissioners there was a duty to ensure quality and best value
- The Chairman of Worcestershire Healthwatch

commended the Director and Cabinet Member on the proposals put forward at a time when the needs of an aging population were increasing. He also urged public engagement on proposals and stated that Healthwatch had always been supportive

The Panel Chairman summed up the discussion by stating that although difficult times, it was pleasing to hear of changes that would have a positive impact, especially freeing up Social Worker time. The advances in technology were exciting and the Chairman looked forward to updates in due course, however, the necessary use of Directorate Reserves was a concern.

The meeting ended at 12.15 pm

Chairman .....