

Adults and Health Committee Minutes

Date: Thursday 14 October 2021

Time: 10.00 am – 12.41pm

Venue: New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald, PE28 4XA

Present: Councillors David Ambrose Smith, Gerri Bird, Chris Boden, Steve Corney, Adela Costello, Claire Daunton, Lorna Dupré, Nick Gay, Mark Goldsack, Mark Howell, Richard Howitt (Chair), Kevin Reynolds, Philippa Slatter, Susan van de Ven (Vice-Chair), Graham Wilson.

37. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies received from Councillor Anne Hay, substituted by Councillor Mark Howell.

No declarations of interest were received.

38. Minutes – 22 September 2021 and Action Log

The minutes of the Adults and Health Committee meeting held on 22 September 2021 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair. The action log was noted.

39. Petitions and Public Questions

No petitions or public questions were received.

40. Business Planning Proposals for 2022-27 – opening update and overview

The Committee received a summary of the business plan for the Adults and Health Committee 2022-27. The paper detailed previous spending and the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic, strategies to reduce the budget gap, future spending proposals which aligned with the Joint Administration's priorities, saving methods, and areas of pressure.

In particular, the reporting officers highlighted in their presentation:

- The current corporate budget gap in October stood at £19.5 million.
- Officers continued to refine the Demand and Demography figure which currently stood at £10 million. The figure reflected the increase in the number of people that needed support and the amount of support required, and the inflationary increases required for current contract providers.
- The figures did not currently reflect the implications of the social care reforms as they were not yet known.

- A number of proposals had been identified to progress the joint administration priorities with an indicative cost of up to £2.755m in 2022/23, these included
 - Work had been completed on the case for increasing support for carers, the detail of which was included in the investment/pressures table at 4.6.2 of the report.
 - The roll out of the Care Together model across the county over a four-year period commencing in 2022-23.
 - The expansion of Direct Payments Service.
 - In addition to the planned Princess of Wales and Rheola sites, expanding the Independent Living offer to three additional sites.
 - The roll out of the Real Living Wage to Adult Social Care Providers.
 - Targeted tackling of health inequalities, including training on Health Impact Assessments to be rolled out.
 - Health in all Policy and Tackling Health Inequalities: Funding for the roll out of Health Impact Assessments across the authority.

Views were sought from the Committee on these proposals with the final business cases to be presented at the December Committee.

- There had been some movement in savings and increases in income including savings on inflation as acquired more beds on long term contracts and the independent living line had been reprofiled so that the savings were rephased into later years. There had been some rebasing of the Adult Social care budget largely as a result of covid loss. The Adult Positive Challenge Programme was also coming to an end and going into business as usual. There was also increased contributions coming through for services from the Better Care Fund.
- £16.4m of pressures and operational investments for 2022/23 had been identified.

Individual Members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Queried why increased demand was shown as a negative under the pressures table in the report. Officers stated that demand and demography figures reflected the increased number of people needing support and increased complexity of some support requirements.
- Questioned what elements of inflation were included in the calculations. Officers explained that £2m of the inflation figure was directly linked to contractual commitments in terms of uplifting rates to providers. Members also queried what the inflation figures were that were not related to contracts. Officers stated that centrally funded inflation sat separately in the tables with a staff pay increase of 2% in years 1-2 and 1% in years 3-5.

- Discussed the presentation of the ringfenced Health Budget in the report. A Member queried if any money from the general funding budget would be going into the Public Health Budget. The Chair of the Committee clarified that this would not be the case at present. Officers explained that the Public Health Budget was reported in a separate table in the report so that the budgeting was clear.
- Queried the changes in figures on the budget gap within the report. Officers stated that the figures would fluctuate until the budget was agreed in February 2022.
- Commented that officers needed to be clear when they used the term 'Health' whether they referred to the NHS or Public Health.
- Expressed concern about the carers the authority were not aware of and how they could be identified and supported and whether GPs could help. Officers explained that each GP practice was required to have a carers register and that Social Prescribers worked with groups of carers providing support for non-medical issues. Officers explained that some individuals did not want to be identified as a carer and that flexible solutions needed to be identified to support them. Officers stated that this was an area for improvement.
- Discussed the Caring Together proposal and the ways in which neighbourhoods could be enabled to support individuals to remain in their own home. Officers stated that investment for micro-enterprises in the community was key to this initiative and joining things up and allowing flexibility. Officers explained that the way we are commissioning domiciliary care at the moment, does not support this way of working. Officers explained that the Caring Together proposal expanded on the work undertaken by Neighbourhood Cares but went further as it changed the way services were commissioned.
- Discussed the proposed expansion of the direct payments service and the difficulties some individuals had in accessing the service in terms of filling in the forms required and whether there was any support for individuals in this area. Officers explained that they were working hard to make direct payments as accessible as possible and that there was an arms-length organisation that helped people with their direct payments. Officers highlighted that more personal assistants were needed and this was one of the main barriers.
- Highlighted the need to reflect the quality improvements that could be made through the proposals clearly and how they could be measured. Officers explained that this information would be detailed within each of the business cases presented to the Committee in December.
- Discussed the importance of the Occupational Therapy service and the need to tackle the waiting lists. Officers explained that the Occupational Therapy service was delivered by CPFT on behalf of the County Council under a section 75 agreement and that waiting lists were monitored very carefully. Officers stated that they were in discussions with CPFT colleagues to get the waiting list back

on track and that the community equipment service was currently being retendered.

- Discussed the expansion of the Independent Living offer and highlighted concerns about the possible overlaps between district and county services in this area. Officers explained that the Disabilities Facilities Grant sat with the District Councils and there was a lot of work ongoing with colleagues to understand the overlaps and where services could be more seamless.
- Queried the difference in the figures outlined in the report regarding the Independent Living Offer against the figures in the presentation. Officers explained that the Rheola costs sat under the revenue budget and this cost would be split out against the other three sites to aid understanding going forwards.
- Discussed the Real Living Wage and its link to delivering social value. A Member requested further detail on what social value would be delivered in return. The Chair explained that the added value would be in training and career development as well as improvements in working culture and conditions. Officers stated that they were working with providers around what and how they could contribute to their local communities and the people living in their local communities and the outcome of the discussions would be fed back in the report to the December Committee.
- Discussed the Public Health proposals and queried whether any further proposals would be identified to utilise the current reserves. Officers explained that there had been underspends had accrued due to activity-based contracts and challenges posed by Covid-19. The Director of Public Health stated that work was underway to identify further proposals and that the priority was to support post covid recovery including supporting Children's and Adults mental health. A Member also queried when the Public Health Grant was likely to be announced. Officers stated that the announcement was usually around Christmas time.
- Discussed the ongoing work on Integrated care and noted the successful integrated care systems workshop that had taken place the previous week. Officers stated that it was about a whole system change that would have significant implications, shifting towards an early help and prevention approach.
- Sought assurances that none of the savings identified would lead to a deterioration in service that the authority provided or that people would pay more. Officers explained that there would be no deterioration in services and that there was investment to delivery services differently, including investing in early intervention and microenterprises, and increasing support carers. The Chair stated that he had not yet fully scrutinised the Client Contributions Policy Changes which had been made by the previous administration. Officers explained that the changes that were made to the policy were thoroughly consulted upon and debated and they brought the policy in line with other local authorities. Officers also advised that the policy would need to be reviewed in light of Social Care Reforms recently announced.

- Questioned whether the Physical Disability Board still met. Officers explained that they would review and come back to the Committee with further information.**ACTION**
- Queried the Prisons Grant underspend. Officers explained that the grant had been underspent for a number of years.
- Discussed the funding of the Care Home Support team. Officers explained that £240k was allocated for a two-year pilot through the business planning process last year.

It was resolved by majority to:

- a) Note the progress made to date, comments made during the meeting and next steps required to develop the business plan for 2022-2027. unanimous
- b) Note the impact of COVID-19 on the Council's financial planning. unanimous
- c) Endorse the budget and savings proposals that are within the remit of the Committee as part of consideration of the Council's overall Business Plan, at this stage.

41. Adults and Health Committee Agenda Plan and Training Plan

The Committee discussed the scrutiny items on the forward agenda plan. Officers explained that there were a number of scrutiny items identified for the meeting in December which included:

- East of England Ambulance Trust – Performance update and organisational changes
- Discussion on Scrutiny Training programme

During discussions members also identified the following items to be included as possible agenda items for the December meeting:

- Occupational Health Services waiting lists
- Primary Care Pressures – GP service provision

Officers also explained that a training session was being organised in November focused on an Introduction to Integrated Care System. Officers stated that this would take place ahead of a full scrutiny session on the Integrated Care System which officers were looking to schedule for the New Year. Members also requested that a Covid Vaccinations and Lessons learnt item be pencilled in for further discussion in March.**ACTION**

The Committee noted the agenda plan and training plan.