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HEALTH AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 5 November 2012

Present:

Councillor S Mountney (Chair)

Councillors

C Povall
M Hornby
A Leech

T Norbury
D Roberts
A Brighthouse

Co-optees:

S Wall
S Saagar

D Hill
B Donaldson

Deputy:

Councillor J Salter (in place of M McLaughlin)

26 **COUNCILLOR ANNE MCARDLE**

The Chair referred to the recent death of Councillor Anne McArdle and the Committee stood in silent tribute to Anne's memory.

27 **MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP**

Members of the Committee were asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or non pecuniary interests, in connection with any item(s) on the agenda and state the nature of the interest.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor Salter declared a personal interest in the item, 'Transformation of Day Services – OSC Sub Group Report' by virtue of him being a trustee of the Lonsdale Trust (see minute 32).

Councillor Hornby declared a personal interest in the all agenda items by virtue of his appointment as a trustee/Director of Voluntary and Community Action Wirral.

Councillor Roberts declared a personal interest in all the agenda items by virtue of her appointment on the Management Committees of Arch Initiatives and Wirral Council for Voluntary Service.

28 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Health and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 10 September, 2012.

In respect of minute 14, Vascular Services in Cheshire and Merseyside, Councillor Hornby remarked upon the campaign against relocating the service from Arrowe Park Hospital to the Countess of Chester. The Secretary of State had decided that an independent committee should look at the whole aspect of the proposed move and there would be an opportunity to make representations to the Secretary of State.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of 10 September, 2012 be approved as a correct record.

Before moving on to the next item of business and in response to a Member's comment, the Chair explained the process which had been followed in moving the meeting from its original scheduled date of 6 November to 5 November at the request of the Director of Adult Social Services and assured the Committee that both spokespersons had been consulted.

The Director confirmed that it was at his request that the Committee date be moved and offered his apologies; he assured the Members that it would not happen in the future.

The Chair confirmed that the next special meeting for the budget consultation process would be on Tuesday 4 December, 2012.

Councillor Salter asked on behalf of Councillor McLaughlin that future agendas contain a copy of the work programme. The Chair confirmed that he would be meeting with the Director and spokespersons to formalise this.

29 CONSIDERATION OF FINDINGS - WHAT REALLY MATTERS CONSULTATION

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which was to be presented to Cabinet on 8 November with the results of the first stage of the consultation process. The consultation results contained within the report were intended to provide a good understanding of residents', partners' and employees' views on the Council's future priorities and appropriate methods in which savings should be delivered. All of the comments provided through the consultation had been analysed and summarised within the report, and all comments would be published on the Council website during November 2012.

Subject to Cabinet approval, the report would be followed by a second stage of consultation which would begin in November 2012. This second stage would involve consultation with residents, employees and other stakeholders to gather views on a range of detailed options for achieving the necessary budget savings for 2013/14.

The Committee received a presentation from Kevin MacCallum, Corporate Marketing Officer, in the Chief Executive's Department, on the process and findings of the consultation. Over the period of six weeks the team of 10 people had spoken to just over 13,000 residents. There had been 6,921 responses to the questionnaire, of

which 1,133 were staff responses. Responses were geographically and demographically representative.

There was broad approval for each of the four main themes:

- Increasing income
- Alternative delivery
- Shaping Community Services
- Stopping or reducing

Charges for some services should be raised but not to disadvantage people and being careful not to create a domino effect of an overall loss of income. People were very strongly in favour of shared services, although with any service which was outsourced there was a need to retain control. The results also showed that the Council should look at consolidating services into a smaller number of buildings but without leaving any community isolated. Officer options for savings would be published at the end of week to be followed by a further period of consultation through to January and Overview and Scrutiny Committees would be meeting again in December to consider these options.

The three top priorities were ranked in order as:

- Protecting our vulnerable adults and children
- Creating jobs and attracting investment
- Tackling poverty and inequalities in health

Members thanked all the officers involved in the consultation process for all their work in what at times could be a difficult and challenging task.

Resolved – That the presentation and report be noted.

30 WELFARE REFORM

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Adult Social Services outlining the significant impact of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 which legislated for the biggest change to the welfare system for over 60 years.

The report indicated that the Act introduced a wide range of reforms contained within the Coalition Agreement to make the benefits and tax credits systems “fairer and simpler” by:

- Creating the right incentives to get more people into work
- Protecting the most vulnerable in society
- Delivering fairness to those claiming benefit and to the taxpayer

Members were asked to consider some of the implications for vulnerable local residents and also for health and social care services; and to agree what actions were required to respond to those.

Rose Boylan, Principal Economic Officer, gave a presentation on the welfare reforms and elaborated in respect of the changes, including:

- Housing Policy, Housing Benefits and Under Occupation
- Localised Council Tax Support
- Local Welfare Assistance
- Benefit Cap Thresholds
- Personal Independent Payment (PIP)
- Universal Credit

Responding to Members' comments, Rose Boylan informed the Committee that PIPs would contain a daily living element and a mobility element. Changes would be made in how assessments were carried out although final details of these were yet to appear from the Government. In relation to changes to Local Welfare Assistance, a Wirral scheme was currently under development. There would be a certain amount of start up and management costs and delivery and administration issues were being worked up in advance of the April 2013 implementation date.

Rose Boylan commented that she would circulate further detailed information in response to Members' questions in respect of the PIP medical assessment, Under-occupancy and older people and LHA and private landlords.

The Chair suggested that visits could be undertaken to other Pilot authorities who were further on with implementation; or that a member of staff could be embedded within another Pilot authority for a period, to learn from that authority's experiences.

The Director suggested that the Committee would need to consider how it monitored and responded to the impact of the reforms.

With regard to the housing changes, there would be a need to establish the scope of the review which was already being undertaken into this aspect of the reforms by the Economy and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was -

Resolved – That

- (1) Cabinet be requested to ensure that the Council had enough resources to work through the reforms from January.**
- (2) The Scrutiny Programme Board be asked to look into the issue of a cross-cutting scrutiny review in respect of the implications of the welfare reforms, particularly in relation to housing matters.**
- (3) The report outlining the significant impact of the Welfare Reform be noted.**
- (4) Further updates be brought back to the Committee as specific social care policies are developed in response to the changes outlined within the report and the Chair and Spokespersons meet with the Director of Adult Social Services and Rose Boylan to discuss the impact in relation to this Committee's scrutiny role.**

31 **DELIVERING THE CORPORATE PLAN: 2012/13 SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Adult Social Services detailing the performance of the Adult Social Services 2012/13 Departmental Plan for the period April to September 2012. The report highlighted issues which weren't achieving on target, and the corrective action being taken to address them.

The report indicated that the "Task and Finish" group had been established to consider a broader range of indicators that would inform committee about the activity within the overall health and well being system beyond those detailed within the report.

Responding to Members' comments, the Director remarked that in respect of indicators the Council had moved away from national indicators to enable indicators to be more Wirral specific. There was a need to know what was valued in Wirral and where resources should be targeted. It was acknowledged that there did need to be some benchmarking for comparison purposes. There was a statutory duty to offer care assessments and the Department did work closely with carer organisations.

The Director of Policy, Performance and Public Health suggested that there was scope to link into some public health outcomes and performance 'dashboards' relevant to Wirral were being developed.

Budget pressures of £10.2 million had been identified, which included:

- Underlying care and demand pressures totalling £8.8 million,
- A further £1 million of pressures relating to the loss of health income and
- £0.4 million vacancy control pressures.

The outcome of consultation with care home providers in respect of fee rates for 2012/13 was reported to Cabinet on 18 October 2012 and a follow up report would be presented on 29 November 2012. This could add further to existing pressures and very detailed discussions were being undertaken with care home providers.

The Director acknowledged that underlying pressures were significant and it was unlikely that the £10.2m overspend would be dealt with in-year. With savings identified for the budget consultation process, the Council was looking at the longer term context.

Brian Donaldson suggested that it would be beneficial if reports had an additional paragraph showing any implications for vulnerable adults or children. The Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management confirmed that the report template was universal and changes would require Cabinet approval.

Resolved –

- (1) That the report in relation to the performance of the Adult Social Services 2012/13 Departmental Plan for the period April to September 2012 be noted.**

- (2) That Cabinet be requested to amend the report template with an additional paragraph on implications for vulnerable adults or children.**

32 TRANSFORMATION OF DAY SERVICES - OSC SUB GROUP REPORT

The Committee received a verbal update from Councillor C Povall in relation to the Transformation of Day Services sub-group review.

She commented that the staff working in the day centres with vulnerable adults were tremendously dedicated and expressed the hope that they would be given all the support they required. The issue of differing charges between day centres was something that needed to be addressed along with the issue of transport, whereby some service users were arriving at day centres at 11.00am and having to leave at 2.00pm.

Members had commented that the condition of some of the buildings was felt to be not fit for purpose. Some centres had management committees whereas others did not.

The Director, in response, stated that the report gave a useful insight into an area which was a key area for strategic change. Transport had historically been a difficult area and he also acknowledged the need for a different management model for day centres.

Councillor Norbury during the course of the discussion on this item declared a personal interest as an employee with Merseytravel and commented that Merseytravel were carrying out some innovative work with St Helens Council on transport provision.

Resolved – That the update be noted and the thanks of the Committee be accorded to Councillor Povall and Roberts and Diane Hill.

33 PROGRESS REPORT OF ACTIONS TAKEN TO IMPLEMENT OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS IN RELATION TO DASS: PERSONAL BUDGETS

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Adult Social Services following a request from Audit and Risk Management Committee on 19 September 2012 regarding the actions taken to implement the outstanding recommendations in relation to the Department of Adult Social Services (DASS) Personal Budgets Audit Report, in line with the revised target dates.

Resolved – That the report be noted and the Committee receive a further report in March 2013.

34 TACKLING THE LIFE EXPECTANCY GAP

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Policy, Performance and Public Health which provided an overview of the key issues associated with the recognised measure of Life Expectancy within the Authority boundary.

The report explained how the measure was constructed; what was likely to affect it; what the measure indicated about the local population and the programme of

investments to be delivered through the Public Health Annual Plan to improve life expectancy in Wirral.

The activities described in the report were those identified for the final year of the delivery of NHS Wirral's Strategic Commissioning Plan, and for a number of other existing public health programmes.

The Director elaborated upon the details in the report and responded to comments from the Committee. Tackling alcohol related issues was one of the key priorities. She stated that although there would be a £22m budget for public health there was a need to look at the totality of the Local Authority budget to tackle health inequalities. She suggested that the Committee could look at the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the need to scrutinise that the authority was getting value for money.

Members emphasised the need to encourage a healthy lifestyle as a key priority for the Council and to ensure targeting of the most deprived wards and BME communities.

Resolved – That

- (1) the report on tackling the life expectancy gap be noted;**
- (2) update reports be submitted to the Committee on a regular basis; and a presentation on tackling alcohol related diseases be made to the next meeting.**
- (3) a session be organised for Members to illustrate the processes followed within Public Health from the initial identification of need through the completion of a needs analysis to the development of a specification and the commissioning of an appropriate service to meet the identified need.**

35 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee had been invited to review the Forward Plan prior to the meeting in order for it to consider, having regard to the Committee's work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

36 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee was requested to consider what issues should form the basis of its work programme for the ensuing municipal year.

The Chair informed the Committee that he would be meeting with the party spokespersons to agree future items for the work programme.

Christine Beyga, Head of Personal Support, would be drawing up a schedule for further visits to facilities and the Director of Policy, Performance and Public Health suggested that this could also include some public health services.

Resolved - That the comments of the Chair and officers be noted.

37 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS APPROVED BY THE CHAIR**

Brian Donaldson co-opted member for the Carers Association suggested the need to include induction / scrutiny training for new co-opted members and the Acting Director of Law, HR and Asset Management stated that this would be referred to Organisational Development and the Scrutiny Officers.