

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee**
held on Wednesday, 20th July, 2011 at Committee Suite 2/3 - Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor M J Simon (Chairman)
Councillor B Silvester (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors P Groves, J Jackson, F Keegan, P Raynes, J Saunders and
L Jeuda and I Faseyi.

Apologies

Councillors C Andrew, S Jones and B Murphy and Councillor R Domleo.

In Attendance

Councillor O Hunter

Officers

Phil Lloyd	Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing
Lucia Scally	Head of Strategic Commissioning and Safeguarding
Karen Carsberg	Strategic Housing Manager
Mike O'Regan	Associate Director of Joint Commissioning – Central and Eastern Cheshire Primary Care Trust
Mark Grimshaw	Scrutiny Officer

9 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS/PARTY WHIP

Councillor Irene Faseyi declared a personal interest on the grounds that she was
an employee of Southern Cross Healthcare Group PLC.

10 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public who wished to address the Committee.

11 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2011 be
approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

12 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT AND HOME IMPROVEMENT GRANT

Karen Carsberg, Strategic Housing Manager, attended to present the Disabled
Facilities Grant and Home Improvement Agency (HIA) report. Prior to reporting
on the content, attention was drawn to a discrepancy in the figures in paragraphs

1.3 and 11.2. It was confirmed that the correct figure was £1,316,000 rather than £1,289,000.

It was explained that Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) were mandatory grants worth up to £30,000 which were provided under the Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996. It was reported that for 2011/12 there was a budget of £1,320,000 of which £700,000 was centrally funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) with the remainder funded by Cheshire East Council.

It was reported that the DFGs helped disabled residents to meet the cost of adapting their homes, facilitating independent living and helping individuals to maintain their personal dignity. Attention was drawn to a number of case studies which demonstrated both the cost savings and better outcomes for customers that the DFGs created as opposed to residential care for example. It was also noted that the DFGs helped to reduce the chance of falls in homes, thereby having the effect of saving money for the Central and Eastern Cheshire PCT.

Karen Carsberg continued to explain that the demand for DFGs had increased significantly due to a number of factors – most notably an aging population and an increase in complex adaptations. It was reported that the service had made a number of improvements in order to cope with this increased demand and that these had made a number of impacts. For example, it was described how the timescales for completion of works following grant approval had seen a 38% reduction.

Having said this, Karen Carsberg confirmed that Cheshire East, aware that the demand would continue to grow, would be looking to make further improvements. Of particular importance was the need to form a single HIA Service for Cheshire East. It was reported that this would create more efficiency in work flow and management practice and would help Cheshire East to provide a consistent service across the Borough.

In opening the questioning, the Chairman queried that as DFGs were accessible to all tenures how were they, if at all, linked to benefits. Karen Carsberg explained that anyone could apply for a DFG but that they would have to qualify through a means test unless the grant related to a child. It was also confirmed that if the grant recipient was on benefits and they qualified, they would receive an automatic 100% grant. For someone not on benefits they would not necessarily receive a 100% grant, as their needs would be further means tested.

Continuing the point of means testing, it was queried what classed as 'disabled'. Karen Carsberg explained that whilst there was no definitive classification of disability, it was the Occupational Therapists' responsibility to make the correct assessment on people's needs so that they could continue to maintain their independence.

Attention was drawn to the performance management targets outlined in paragraph 13.3 of the report. It was queried whether the service had the capacity to achieve the targets and whether this would be done quickly. Karen Carsberg reported that the proposed creation of a single HIA would hopefully mean that these targets would be met quickly.

A number of comments were made regarding the 'invest to save' potential of the DFGs. It was suggested that there was a need for more robust figures in terms of

the actual and potential cost savings as a direct consequence of DFGs. For instance, it was contended that if Cheshire East could demonstrate the amount of money that DFGs saved the NHS in terms of reducing hip fractures and other injuries, conversations could be sought with health partners for funding thereby increasing the amount of DFGs available. It was also suggested that these figures be brought back to the Committee at a future meeting so that a case could be made to Cabinet during the business planning process to increase the budget allocation for DFGs.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the report be received.
- b) That the Committee receive robust figures in terms of the potential cost savings as a result of DFGs at a future meeting in order for a possible case to be constructed for increasing Cheshire East's budget contribution and to have conversations with health partners regarding match funding.

13 THINK LOCAL ACT PERSONAL - A NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION

Phil Lloyd, Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing attended to present a report on the Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) strategy. It was explained that TLAP was a national strategy which built on the principles of the 'Putting People First' agenda, first initiated by Government in 2007. This agenda articulated the ambition of making sure that the individual was at the centre of service delivery, helping them to retain independence, well-being and dignity. Attention was drawn to the fact that Cheshire East had been committed to this approach since Local Government Reorganisation and that this could be demonstrated by a recently won 'Personalisation and Choice Achievement of the Year' title in the 2011 MJ Awards.

It was reported that as well as increased personalisation of services, the paper emphasised the fact that prevention was a key theme in the development of an affordable social care system. It was explained that it was desirable to keep people out of social care for as long as possible as this often created better outcomes for Cheshire East residents and also relieved pressure on an increasingly stretched budget. Phil Lloyd reported that as most people accessing care in the geographical area of Cheshire East were not funded by the Council, it was necessary to develop a 'whole system response' and strategy to provide support to the wider public, including self funders and their carers, to maximise their independence and reduce reliance on Council funded care. It was noted that this was not only the responsibility of the Adult Social Care Directorate as other Cheshire East services and Council partners also had an important role. Phil Lloyd explained that the challenge was making sure that this co-operation was achieved.

In providing a summary, Phil Lloyd outlined that the key issues of the paper were 'personalisation' and 'prevention' and that the paper was asking the Council to support this policy.

Prior to opening the floor to questions, the Chairman congratulated the Adult Social Care Directorate on winning the 'Personalisation and Choice Achievement of the Year' title in the 2011 MJ Awards.

A number of comments were made regarding the development of an on-line citizen portal. Whilst it was recognised that it was important that Cheshire East provided such a facility to disseminate information about services to the public, it was asserted that other alternative mediums needed to be sought alongside it as a large number of Cheshire East's older population were not comfortable using the internet. It was agreed that this suggestion be recommended to the Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing.

It was suggested that the Committee continue to monitor the personalisation agenda so that the effectiveness of the policy for vulnerable people could be assessed.

Attention was drawn to the graph on page 6 of the report which gave a financial analysis of Adult Social Care Costs in Cheshire East. It was asserted, that from the evidence in the graph, there appeared to be an approximate £6m gap between demand and budget which the service had to control and mitigate. It was contended that it was this figure which the Committee needed to be interested in. In sum, it was suggested that the Committee receive regular updates on how much service was budgeted for, how much it was spending and how this was affecting service users.

A final query was made with regard to the loss of the Independent Living Fund and how this would potentially affect service users. Phil Lloyd explained that the loss of the fund would cost Cheshire East £1.6m but that this would not absolve the authority of the statutory responsibility to provide certain services. It was reported that Cheshire East would have to find other ways to fund these services through different and more improved ways of working mainly based around the principles of personalisation and prevention.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the report be noted.
- b) That it be recommended to the Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing that alternative means be sought in terms of communicating information about Adult Social Care services to the public alongside the on-line citizen portal.
- c) That the Committee continue to monitor the personalisation agenda to assess its effectiveness for vulnerable people.
- d) That the Committee receive regular updates on the Adult Social Care service, including allocated budget, spend and impact on service users.

14 ADULT SOCIAL CARE BUDGET

Phil Lloyd attended to provide a verbal brief on the Adult Social Care Budget. It was explained that since Local Government Reorganisation, the service had been learning about the profile of the budget. It was reported that the service was

currently at a point where they had an understanding of the drivers behind demand, the cost of this and what was needed in order to manage it.

This could be demonstrated by the fact that although the 2010/11 budget had resulted in a £8.7m overspend, the budget for 2011/12 was expected to balance. Having said this, Phil Lloyd continued to explain that Cheshire East could not afford to be complacent as it was fully expected that growth in demand would continue. It was reported that this was why the personalisation and prevention agenda was key as this would help Cheshire East to absorb growth rather than to just keep funding it.

Attention was also drawn to a range of 'invest to save' strategies which Cheshire East funded in order to attempt to absorb growth in demand. An example was given of the policy of providing six weeks free support in order to facilitate reablement. It was suggested that the Committee might wish to assess the efficacy of this policy in order to ensure that it was still fulfilling the 'invest to save' criteria.

It was also suggested that the Committee have a regular item on the work programme to consider 'invest to save' policies. It was also proposed that the outcomes of the discussions could be fed to the Budget Task and Finish Group for consideration.

It was queried how much of the budget was taken up with discretionary and statutory services. Phil Lloyd reported that the large majority of the budget was for statutory services, leaving little room for manoeuvre. The point was reaffirmed therefore regarding the need for managing demand.

As a final point, in light of Phil Lloyd leaving Cheshire East, the Committee wished to thank and commend him for the excellent and innovative work performed in his role as Director of Adults, Community, Health and Wellbeing.

RESOLVED -

- a) That the Committee review the efficacy of the six week free support policy at a future meeting.
- b) That the Committee consider an item on 'invest to save' policies at every formal meeting, the results of which to be potentially fed into the Budget Task and Finish Group.

15 WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

Members considered the work programme.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be noted and amended as follows:

- a) The item on the Care Quality Commission scheduled for the 27 October 2011 be brought forward to 22 September 2011.

16 FORWARD PLAN - EXTRACTS

The Committee gave consideration to the extracts of the forward plan which fell within the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the forward plan be noted.

17 CONSULTATIONS FROM CABINET

There were no consultations from Cabinet.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 12.05 pm

Councillor M J Simon (Chairman)