

Minutes

SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

23 January 2018

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



	<p>MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillors: Wayne Bridges (Chairman) Jane Palmer (Vice-Chairman) Teji Barnes Peter Davis Becky Haggar Shehryar Ahmad-Wallana Tony Eginton Peter Money June Nelson Mary O'Connor (Co-Opted Member)</p>
	<p>OFFICERS PRESENT: Dan Kennedy - Deputy Director: Housing, Environment, Education, Health & Wellbeing Sandra Taylor - Assistant Director: Provider and Commissioned Care Peter Malewicz - Finance Manager: Social Care including Schools and Education Neil Fraser - Democratic Services Officer</p>
47.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Tony Zaman and Steve Hajioff.</p>
48.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
49.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2017 (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2017 be approved as a correct record.</p>
50.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED IN PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that there were no Part II items, and that all business would therefore be conducted in public.</p>

51. **2018/19 BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR SERVICES WITHIN THE REMIT OF SOCIAL SERVICES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE** (*Agenda Item 5*)

Peter Malewicz, Finance Manager, introduced a report detailing budget proposals for services within the remit of the Social Services, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee.

The Committee was advised that the draft revenue budget and Capital Programme was first considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 14 December 2017. The proposals were since under consultation before further consideration inclusive of comments from each POC, by Cabinet at its meeting on 15 February 2018. Cabinet would then make recommendations to full Council, who would meet to agree the budgets and Council Tax for 2018/19 on 22 February 2018.

The Council continued to operate within the Government's deficit reduction programme, with reductions in central government funding due to continue until at least the end of the decade. The Council was required to find savings of approximately £10m over the next year, and total savings in excess of £56m over the next five years. A growing population, both of younger and older residents, made finding these savings a challenge.

Service areas

Impact of Welfare Reform on Homelessness

The existing level of provision had been retained, with a forecast that the number of families within Temporary Accommodation could rise by more than 3% during 2018/19. However, preventative measures were expected to be sufficient to contain the cost of Homelessness above base budgets, and work was underway to cost the financial impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act and Universal Credit reforms announced in the Autumn Budget.

Members referred to figures included in recent Cabinet papers, which confirmed that the Council had approximately 200 households within B&B accommodation. The Budget report forecast a 3% uplift of families within temporary accommodation, but the provision was unchanged from the prior year. Would this provision be sufficient?

Officers confirmed that, as of the prior day, the Council now had 160 households in B&B's, which amounted to a 40% reduction since April 2017. The Council was seeking to avoid placements, and teams were now focussing on early intervention, which included finding alternate accommodation and negotiating with landlords for lower rent levels. There was capacity in the system to reduce projected spend, though the forthcoming introduction of Universal Credit, and the Council's obligations as a result of the Homelessness Reduction Act, would have an impact.

Members requested that an update on Homelessness and the relevant reforms be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Demographic growth was expected to continue, with an uplift of approximately 5% in eligible student numbers. A major review of transport for SEN children was underway, (including route and vehicle optimisations, group pickups etc), with the aim of absorbing demographic growth within existing routes and services.

Members sought further clarity on the review of SEN Transport. Officers confirmed that as a result of the review, the number of vehicles had broadly reduced. Many children were now travelling to and from school in the most appropriate vehicle, and for some schools, the service had introduced a number of group pickups, all of which had reduced cost. Group pickups were felt to be beneficial to the children, as it increased their self reliance and independence, and despite initial concerns, feedback was very positive.

Members requested that a further update item on SEN Transport be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Adult Placements - Transitional Children

Projections forecasted an uplift equivalent to 39 new clients entering the system during 2018/19. It was noted that a number of clients were staying longer in educational establishments, part of which would be funded through the dedicated school grants and by implication would result in a lower cost of placement in the first instance on the Social Care budget.

Members sought confirmation on whether the reductions set out in the report were calculated per individual. Officers confirmed that the Council was reviewing the needs of residents on an individual basis. The Council was required to perform a Face Assessment for each individual, which assessed all areas of need and how to meet those needs. Individuals were then referred to relevant Health teams for a more specific needs assessment, and funding was then allocated by reviewing those needs against the most appropriate funding stream, such as the CCG. An appeals process was also open to residents, via an independent panel outside of the Borough.

In addition, the Council was attempting to manage children with more complex needs early (where there appeared to be a behavioural theme, which was no longer regarded as a primary need), before they transitioned into adult care, in an effort to reduce cost.

Adult Placements - General

Contingency requirement for other Adult Social Care placements was expected to grow as a result of underlying population growth. Annual uprating of client income to reflect the cost of care packages was expected to secure an additional 380k income, while reviews of current client, CCG and Continuing Healthcare contributions were expected to deliver a £1,759k reduction in the net cost of health care packages.

Over the last 18 months, the Council had worked with care providers to ensure a sustainable environment for open negotiations, to agree a stable budget that allowed the Council to secure skilled workers at a fair rate. For example, Homecare had entered into a dynamic purchasing system framework, which allowed for a smoother transaction process within a new

model, to follow and engage with providers directly.

Savings

A full schedule of savings proposals was outlined as Appendix A to the report.

Within Social Care, work was ongoing, including a review of the reablement service, to manage costs and promote opportunities for efficiencies and savings while limiting the impact on front line services. For example, Homecare, through Electronic Call Monitoring, would extract an effective procurement saving of £300k.

The Public Health Grant was expected to fall to £17,506k for 2018/19 in line with previously released allocations from the Department of Health (a year-on year reduction of £491k over the period 2015/16 to 2019/20.). Service Transformation proposals included a target of £491k to manage the cut in Public Health funding within services historically funded from the grant.

Housing Revenue Accounts

The Council's provision of housing, fully supported by rental income, remained ring fenced. Policy from Central Government set out a mandated reduction in rents of 1%, though the High Value Voids Levy was to be removed for 2018/19.

Capital Programme & Housing Units

Sandra Taylor, Assistant Director, Provider and Commissioned Care, elaborated on the Council's Capital Programme, and specifically the construction of the supported housing unit at Grassy Meadows.

The Committee was informed that accommodation at Grassy Meadows would comprise of flats. All aspects of the design and construction, both internal and external, had been designed to ensure that the facilities met the required standards for people with dementia.

The Grassy Meadows site would include a Dementia Centre as part of the supported housing on site, to open in June 2018. The Centre would include a dementia resource centre, a day care centre that could accommodate up to 30 people a day, and two clinic rooms for Health partners to use. Currently, the Council was working to identify potential residents. All residents on site would have access to 24 hour care support and 24 hour flexi support within their own flat.

Members requested that a further update on the new housing unit, alongside a Member visit to Grassy Meadows once open, be considered for a future meeting of the Committee.

Members Comments

Members discussed their proposed comments to the Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee.

Labour Group Members queried the accuracy of a number of figures within

the report, particularly the reduction figure of £1,877k for expenditure within adult placements, the figures for the HRA Budget Requirement, the inflation forecast figure of £47k for Residents Services, and Independent Living Recharges.

Labour Group Members asserted that they had found it difficult to draw conclusions on the budget while there was uncertainty over some of the figures contained therein.

It was requested that these figures be checked, and where appropriate elaborated upon, via email to Committee Members.

In addition, it was felt that the inflation forecast figure within the Group Budgets, with particular reference to inflation of care provider wages and rising business costs, was optimistically low. It was felt that this could have a detrimental impact on the Council's ability to attract skilled care workers versus competing Local Authorities.

Conservative Group Members praised the budget, and in particular the provision of a new swimming pool within Yiewsley / West Drayton, and the construction of two new housing units at Park View and Grassy Meadows. In particular, Members were enthused at the formation of a dementia centre at the Grassy Meadows site.

Committee Members discussed the format of the comments to be forwarded to the Corporate Services & Partnerships Policy Overview Committee. It was agreed that the clerk would review the required format of the comments, before drafting the Committee's response under consultation with the Chairman and Labour Lead.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That an update on Homelessness and the relevant reforms be brought to a future meeting of the Committee;**
- 2. That an update on SEN Transport be brought to a future meeting of the Committee;**
- 3. That an update on the new housing units at Park View and Grassy Meadows, be brought to a future meeting of the Committee;**
- 4. That a Member Visit to Grassy Meadows Dementia Centre be organised, once the Centre opens;**
- 5. That the Finance Manager provide Committee Members with additional clarity on the budget figures queried, specifically the reduction figure of £1,877k for expenditure within adult placements, the figures for the HRA Budget Requirement, the inflation figure of £47k for Residents Services, and Independent Living Recharges, by email; and**
- 6. That the clerk confirm the required format of the Committee's comments to the Corporate Services Policy Overview Committee, before drafting the comments under consultation**

	with the Chairman and the Labour Lead.
52.	<p>CABINET FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Forward Plan be noted.</p>
53.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18 (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>Members noted that suggestions for information items, including the Council's Support to Hillingdon Armed Forces Community Covenant, and the Work of the Pembroke Centre and Hillingdon Mental Health, had been added to the programme for presentation at future Committee meetings.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Work Programme 2017/18 be noted.</p>
	The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 7.55 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Neil Fraser - Democratic Services Officer on 01895 250692. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.