

ADULT SERVICES AND HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 30 JANUARY 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Mohammed Ilyas (Chairman), Judith Diment (Vice-Chairman) Dr Lilly Evans and Charles Hollingsworth

Officers: Andy Carswell, Lynne Lidster and Angela Morris

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Lenton and Mills. Cllr Dr Evans was attending as a substitute.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on November 14th 2017 were agreed as an accurate record.

Arising from the minutes, Cllr Hollingsworth asked if statistics relating to the service areas of increasing demand, and reports relating to reviews on spending, were available. It was agreed that these would be circulated separately to Members.

Arising from the minutes, Cllr Diment asked if the grant bid had been successful. The Head of Commissioning – Adults and Children stated that the grant for £500,000 which had been applied for through NHS England had been successful.

APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman nominated Cllr Diment as Vice Chairman of the Panel. This was seconded by Cllr Hollingsworth and unanimously agreed by members.

BUDGET 2018-19

The Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care introduced the item and explained that the Council budget for 2018/19 would ensure delivery of the services most valued by residents, helping to transform the Borough over the next ten years. Outlining the items of note relating to Adult Services, the Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care explained that:

- The budget was based on a 1.95% increase to council tax; however this would mean Royal Borough residents would have the lowest council tax outside London
- A three per cent precept for Adult Social Care would enable additional funding for older people and residents with special needs
- The Council would make an additional investment within the budget to go over and above the £6.4million figure that had already been set aside for Adult Social Care
- The budget would enable the Council to make savings of £5.4million, enabling council tax to remain low while improvements were made to the services that residents value
- High quality and sustainable Adult Social Care services; continued expansion of schools; home to school transport for pupils with special needs and families on low incomes; and temporary accommodation for homeless residents had all been identified as particular needs

- A further precept for Adult Social Care had been made available to local authorities. The total levy of six per cent had been accepted and would be invested in supporting vulnerable adults.

Regarding the table in the presentation slides about the projected net borrowing up to 2025, it was noted that no key explaining the figures was available. However Members were informed that a major Capital Investment programme of £6.8million had been agreed. It was agreed that an updated version of the table would be circulated to Members.

Members were informed that the demographic figures taken into consideration when setting the budget related specifically to the Royal Borough rather than the national average. The statistics took into account information held by the Council; for example adults with learning difficulties who were not currently reliant on Adult Social Care, but may soon be in a position where they were, which would impact on spending within Adult Social Care.

The Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care informed Members that some fee increases were being funded from the Improved Better Care Fund Grant. Partners in the health and voluntary sectors had agreed that an increased need to help support people living at home for longer had been identified as a key area for further investment. Improving delays in people leaving hospital had also been identified as requiring investment, and a number of projects to assist people in leaving hospital more easily were in the pipeline. A bid had been made for the provision of a social worker to work exclusively with self-funders in order to facilitate more manageable hospital departures. Enhancing services to dementia patients also required further investment.

Cllr Dr Evans queried why there was no reference to the Accountable Care Organisation in the report, as the Council was a major stakeholder in the Frimley Health Trust. The Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care stated that although the Council was a part of the Sustainable Transformation Partnership, the Adult Social Care budget was not, and remained fully under the control of the Council. She also stated that the ACO had been taken into account when setting the Council's budget. The Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care stated further that there was currently no formal memorandum of understanding in relation to the ACO, but added that the Managing Director was involved with developing the ACO.

Responding to a question from the Chairman, the Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care stated that all vacancies relating to mental health functions had been filled. More users were now accessing the Recovery College, which provided support for people with addictions that would exacerbate mental health difficulties. The number of people accessing mental health services on a frequent basis was lower than the number of older people and those with physical disabilities; Members asked for figures on the number of people with mental health difficulties who were accessing Adult Social Care. The Vice Chairman asked if there were any figures regarding the number of people accessing the Recovery College and any evaluations to measure its effectiveness. The Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care said she would look into this and provide Members with an update.

Regarding risks, the Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care stated that it was difficult to predict the budget required for supporting adults with learning difficulties. However she confirmed there was contingency in the budget to cover additional costs if needed.

It was agreed that a paper should be prepared for Members on Personal Independence Payments and their impact on the Council, following a recent legal judgment. Following questions from Members, it was also agreed that updates on the effectiveness of the smoking cessation and drug and alcohol treatment programmes should be provided at the next meeting. The Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care said both programmes had seen some success, but it had been harder to engage residents with the smoking cessation scheme and its strategy was being reviewed.

Responding to a question from the Chairman about the challenges in Adult Social Care over the next year, the Deputy Director – Health and Adult Social Care said the main challenges would be ensuring the right workforce was in place, particularly with regards to home care and nursing care, and staff had the appropriate training. Also identified as challenges were managing care transfers in order to minimise delays; responding to changes in the key demographic areas; and informing service users of other services in their communities that their care patterns may be suited to. Members were informed that the introduction of social prescribers – social workers attached to a GP surgery – would aid this process. Feedback was being invited from the voluntary sector to improve the services that were offered, and to improve the communication about what was available.

It was:

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Panel agreed the recommendations made in the report and approved the:

- i) Detailed recommendations contained in Appendix A which includes a Base Council Tax at band D of £933.42, including a 1.95% increase of £17.85.**
- ii) Adult Social Care Precept of 3% (an increase of £28.85 on the £45.89 precept included in the 2017/18 budget) to be included in the Council’s budget proposals, making this levy the equivalent of £74.74 at band D.**
- iii) Fees and Charges contained in Appendix E.**
- iv) Capital Programme, shown in appendices I and J, for the financial year commencing April 2018.**
- v) Prudential borrowing limits set out in Appendix L.**
- vi) Business rate tax base calculation, detailed in Appendix P, and its use in the calculation of the Council Tax Requirement in Appendix A.**
- vii) Deputy Director and Head of Finance in consultation with the Lead Members for Finance and Children’s Services is authorised to amend the total schools budget to reflect actual Dedicated School Grant levels.**
- viii) Responsibility to include the precept from the Berkshire Fire and Rescue Authority in the overall Council Tax charges is delegated to the Lead Member for Finance and Deputy Director and Head of Finance once the precept is announced.**

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 7.42 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....