

## **Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee**

12 December 2018 – At a meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Turner (Chairman)

Dr Walsh	Dr O'Kelly	Cllr Belben
Mrs Arculus, Arrived at 10.40	Mr Petts	Cllr Boram
Mr Barling	Mrs Smith	Cllr Coldwell
Mrs Bridges	Cllr Bickers	Miss Russell
Ms Flynn	Cllr Blampied	
Mrs Jones	Cllr Belsey	

Apologies were received from Lt Cdr Atkins, Cllr Neville, Mrs Bennett, Mr Cloake, Mrs Dennis, Mrs Hall, Mr High and Ms Lord

Absent: Mr Wickremaratchi

Also in attendance: Mrs Jupp, Mr Baldwin, Mrs Mullins and Mr Marshall

### **Part I**

#### **30. Declarations of Interest**

30.1 In accordance with the code of conduct the following personal interests were declared in relation to item 6, Strategic Budget Options: -

- Miss Russell – as Chair of the Aldingbourne Trust
- Dr Walsh – as a member of Arun District Council
- Mr Turner – as a member of Worthing Borough Council
- Mrs Jones – as a member of Mid Sussex District Council
- Cllr Boram – as a member of Adur District Council
- Cllr Belsey - as a member of Mid Sussex District Council
- Mrs Smith – as a member of Crawley Borough Council
- Mrs Bridges - as a member of Adur District Council
- Dr O'Kelly – as a member of Chichester District Council
- Mr Baldwin – as a member of Horsham District Council
- Cllr Blampied - as a member of Arun District Council
- Cllr Bickers - as a member of Worthing Borough Council
- Cllr Belben - as a member of Crawley Borough Council
- Cllr Coldwell – as a member of Horsham District Council

#### **31. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee**

31.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 15 November be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **32. Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

32.1 Resolved – that the Committee asks its Business Planning Group to consider whether the proposed decision- on the Tobacco Control Strategy for West Sussex should be considered by a future meeting of the committee.

### **33. Strategic Budget Options**

33.1 The Committee considered reports by the Executive Director, Children, Adults, Families, Health & Education and Interim Director of Adults' Services on Housing Related Support and the Local Assistance Network (copies appended to the signed minutes) and a video produced by the West Sussex Coalition of Providers.

33.2 The Cabinet Member for Adults & Health introduced the item and thanked the Coalition for its comprehensive analysis report and engagement throughout the consultation. She also thanked everyone who had responded to the consultation and was particularly encouraged by the Coalition's recognition of the need for some reform of services, as well as its willingness to explore more efficient ways to deliver them. The Cabinet Member also made the following points: -

- The County Council had had to make substantial savings since 2010/11 and faced a gross budget gap of £145m over the next four years, due in part to rising demand for adults and children's social services
- The County Council had lobbied local MPs and Ministers about the need for additional funding, but it had to set a balanced budget and therefore had to look at spending, particularly at that which was discretionary
- The County Council would seek to mitigate, wherever possible, the impact on the most vulnerable residents; and would make these changes in a measured and timely way with providers and partners in order to safeguard the essential core of the County Council's services
- Out of the budget of £6.3m for housing related support services, some helped to meet statutory services whilst some contributed to the prevention of demand on other critical services. The proposal is to set a future budget of £2.3m for housing related support contracts to meet those priorities and to work with partners in a careful and planned way to achieve that level over the next two years
- The consultation showed there was a willingness to work collaboratively with partners and providers to remodel services in order to achieve better outcomes
- Contracts had been extended to September 2019 and work would start as soon as possible to allow nine months to remodel these services and get new contracts in place
- District and borough councils showed a willingness to work collaboratively to bring about the best outcome for the residents of West Sussex
- The Homelessness Reduction Act came into force in April 2018 - the district and borough councils are the housing authorities with primary responsibility for tackling homelessness
- Each housing authority is required to have a five year Homelessness Strategy, which should be reviewed and refreshed - this has been achieved by Worthing and Adur councils and recently by Mid Sussex District Council

- Government also recommended a sub-regional approach to homelessness strategies in two tier areas, reflecting the overlapping responsibilities of housing authorities and county councils as social services authorities
- A pan-West Sussex Homelessness Strategy could benefit the residents of West Sussex and the County Council urged the district and borough councils, as the authorities responsible for homelessness and housing, to lead the work on this, which the County Council would be keen to support and engage with

33.3 The Committee watched a video produced by the Coalition and then heard from the following people/organisations, all of whom confirmed that they were willing to work with the County Council towards remodelling the services: -

33.4 John Holmstrom, Chief Executive, Turning Tides and secretary of the West Sussex Coalition of Providers told the Committee:-

- The Coalition consisted of local and national charities of all sizes catering for many client groups of all ages

33.5 Hilary Bartle, Chief Executive of Stonepillow and Chair of the West Sussex Coalition of Providers told the Committee: -

- The proposals represented a 63% cut in funding for important services
- Existing funding levels were a lever in obtaining a further £2.5m funding from the Government in enhanced Housing Benefit
- The support for 8,000 people in 2017/18 cost £5.1m which avoided £38.3m being spent in other areas, such as children and adults' social care, criminal justice and acute health care
- The timescales proposed by the County Council were challenging and unrealistic – a twelve month extension to contracts was sought
- The proposals would lead to more people on the streets and more deaths among rough sleepers, homeless people, young people, older people and those with mental health issues
- The recommendations did not appear to have been through a thorough equality impact assessment or to have taken on board the 700 consultation responses

33.6 Nigel Lynn, Chief Executive, Arun District Council on behalf of all the district and borough councils in West Sussex told the Committee: -

- This was a shared responsibility involving people with chaotic lives and multiple issues
- There was a willingness to co-operate between authorities and voluntary organisations as there had been in the past e.g. with the national Supporting People grant before 2011
- The amount of time needed to remodel services would not be known until the work began as people and processes were complicated, so the district and borough councils were asking for up to twelve months for this task and believed that better outcomes could be found for West Sussex residents

33.7 Luca Badioli, Chief Executive Officer, Arun & Chichester Citizens Advice told the Committee: -

- Citizens Advice was concerned about the effect reduction in Local Assistance Network (LAN) funding would have on it as an organisation
- Citizens Advice was already in deficit and any further reduction in funding could mean it would have to make staff redundant and stop providing some services at a time of high demand (10,000 people could lose services)
- Citizens Advice was concerned at the effect of cuts to energy top-up money as 9,700 older people died every year due to the cold

33.8 Julie Martin, Chief Executive, Citizens Advice in West Sussex (north, south, east) told the Committee: -

- The long-term impact on health caused by debt was unknown, but there was a correlation between debt and mental health problems
- This would lead to worsening poverty amongst the most vulnerable needing more costly interventions

33.9 Jerry Westerman, Chief Superintendent, Sussex Police representing the Safer West Sussex Partnership told the Committee: -

- Cuts to housing related support would make West Sussex less safe as housing played a key part in preventing re-offending

33.10 Mark Burden, Acting Head Sussex, National Probation Service told the Committee: -

- This was a critical time for offender accommodation
- The probation service was managing 905 sex and violent offenders in West Sussex with twice as many low level offenders being managed by its community rehabilitation company
- Several hundred more offenders were due to be released in the first half of 2019
- Accommodation was the building block to the reintegration of offenders with supported housing being critical
- The temporary accommodation provided to dangerous offenders with complex needs played a vital part in protecting the public
- If the current provider was lost, another would have to be found

33.11 Martin Pannell, Associate Director for Operations and Performance, Coastal West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group representing all West Sussex clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) told the Committee: -

- The CCGs were concerned that 97% of consultation responses were critical of the proposals and welcomed the confirmed six month extension to the contracts
- They were also concerned about the timescale for remodelling services and whether this was sufficient
- If risks were not mitigated there would be negative affects on individuals and the health system with more people entering general and acute mental health hospitals and staying longer than before reducing capacity to admit other patients, especially during winter

### 33.12 Summary of Members' comments and question responses: -

- Members raised the following concerns if funding was reduced: -
  - The effect on vulnerable people and the cost implications to other organisations if any of these services, which included the LAN, were withdrawn as a result
  - The Police & Crime Commissioner's view that there would be an increased risk to the public from sex and violent offenders
  - Insufficient time to reconfigure services
  - Some people could slip through the net if only statutory services were funded
- The ring-fence for the Supporting People grant was removed in 2011. The funding was transferred into the County Council's core funding, which has been reducing continuously since then
- The County Council continued to fund HRS services that are non-statutory for a significant period of time after other councils had cut the funding
- The County Council forecasts that it will have reserves of £175m at the end of March 2019, £155m of which are earmarked for specific uses with the remaining £20m to be retained for unforeseen circumstances
- There was pressure on the County Council's Adult Social Care budget with the number of older people with learning disabilities increasing
- 5% of this budget paid for discretionary services so had to be reviewed
- The Government had made an extra £11m available to district and borough councils across the country for homelessness reduction
- District and borough councils were also under financial pressure and couldn't afford to take on the funding of housing related support services
- The County Council had been working for some time on identifying buildings that it could let cheaply to district and borough councils
- The County Council had taken all responses into account and was now proposing not to withdraw all funding, but leave £2.3m to reconfigure services and carry out its statutory duties
- The consultation had shown that there was a commitment to partnership working and the County Council was confident that remodelling services could be achieved within the timescale it proposed
- Some remodelling could be done by looking at historic contracts and providing services differently for less money
- An officer group with representation from across all agencies would work on the remodelling
- The timing of the proposals conflicted with the Homeless Reduction Act, Rough Sleeping Strategy and the roll out of Universal Credit
- The County Council had put in a joint bid for extra funding for homelessness with the district and borough councils and was working on another bid with district and borough councils
- The strategic officer group of the district and borough councils was looking at how services were commissioned to erase inconsistency
- The County Council was lobbying MPs for more funding for adult social care

- Some district and borough councils had homelessness strategies in place which would be reviewed, with a willingness to work on an holistic strategy across West Sussex
- Around 300 offenders would be released into West Sussex in the first six months of 2019
- The County Council should look elsewhere for the savings
- Social housing was a key part of all district and borough councils' plans – Arun District Council was also building its own houses and paying for temporary accommodation – Worthing Borough Council had allocated £11m for temporary accommodation
- More detailed work was needed to assess the affect on children looked after both now and in the future if women's refuges were closed – an assurance was given that the County Council's provision for looked after children would not be affected
- Members were grateful to all those who had contributed to the consultation, through reports or in person at the meeting

33.13 Resolved – that requests that the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health:-

- i. Has a moratorium of up to twelve months, to the end of March 2020, in order to have the best chance to remodel and preserve services and therefore not reduce funding in 2019/20 in regard to both housing related support contracts and the LAN
- ii. Identifies and engages with other stakeholders that could have a positive impact on housing support
- iii. Supports the creation of an officer working group with representatives from West Sussex County Council and each of the housing authorities (district and borough councils) to look at how joint efficiencies can be sought, provision remodelled and what alternative funding streams could be identified and made available, including from other agencies, to include the development of an holistic homelessness strategy for West Sussex
- iv. Considers, with the housing authorities and associations, the overlapping geography that occurs to determine any efficiencies across areas of West Sussex, rather than solely housing authority boundaries
- v. Provides detail of the impact these proposed cuts will have on West Sussex County Council's internal budgets, particularly in relation to Adult Social Care and Children's Services statutory obligations, and how it intends to discharge those duties in the absence of supported housing funding to local providers
- vi. Provides details of proposals moving forward to a future meeting of the Committee which will include an invitation to members of the Children & Young People's Services Select Committee

33.14 The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Children, Adults, Families, Health & Education and Interim Director of

Adults' Services on the Minimum Income Guarantee for Working Age Adults (copy appended to the signed minutes).

33.15 The Cabinet Member for Adults & Health introduced the item thanking individuals for responding to the consultation and groups who invited her and officers discuss the proposals in person. She also told the Committee: -

- The consultation included wider public and key stakeholders such as the voluntary sector and health
- People proposed new ideas, e.g. earlier advice and information, the County Council to work with local businesses to create more job opportunities or work experience
- Concern over the financial assessment service provided dominated the consultation – the County Council would therefore arrange to review the financial assessment service
- Consultation responses, the witness statements and comments from this committee will be considered carefully before the decision is taken next week

33.16 The Committee heard from Andrew Walker, co-chair of the Learning Disability Partnership Board who told the Committee: -

- Making people with learning disabilities pay £5 more was a disgrace and felt like the Council was picking on people with learning disabilities – cuts should be made elsewhere or council tax should be increased
- People with learning disabilities needed the money to be able to do things they liked to do – this proposal made people with learning disabilities think that it was bad to have a disability
- Cut Impact Action Now is researching the effects the proposed cuts will have on people with learning disabilities
- Support for people with moderate learning disabilities was cut in 2012 and there have been cuts to public transport meaning that people with learning disabilities have less access to transport
- Benefits have also been cut and lots of people with learning disabilities are in a lot of debt with having to pay back money to the Council for the support they receive
- People with learning disabilities need this money to be able to go to social events or save for things they like to do
- The Council should be helping people with learning disabilities
- People with learning disabilities should be treated the same as other people, not picked on

33.17 Summary of Members' comments and question responses: -

- The Committee had concerns over: -
  - the impact the proposals would have on people's lives, especially their health
  - no other options being considered
  - potential loss of social activity
  - people not being able to afford support

- the proposals being inconsistent with the Council's objectives to increase the number of people with learning difficulties in employment and tackle social isolation
- poor funding from Government for the Council with regard to social care
- Budget pressures meant that difficult decisions had to be taken
- The level of the MIG is recommended by Government. Customer contributions, as now, will remain means tested
- Specific impacts on individuals was not known
- Change in payments for support was unknown as the proposals were based on averages to give people an idea of what they might have to pay
- A transition period had not been considered as this would require further financial modelling and lead to unequal funding
- West Sussex was an expensive place to live and people with learning disabilities had little chance of finding work that would improve their income
- The Council was working on a new offer to help unpaid carers – a group of people who could be indirectly affected by the proposals
- Extra money from Government recently announced for social care is one-off, some of which also has strict conditions as to how it could be spent. Using it as an alternative funding source for the Minimum Income Guarantee would be inadvisable
- Heating costs were covered by Disability Related Expenditure so weren't counted as part of people's income

33.17 Resolved – that the Committee welcomes the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health's assurance that the financial assessment service will be reviewed, in response to comments received throughout the consultation and that work will continue with local businesses, as referred to by the Chairman, to improve job opportunities for working age adults with learning disabilities, and asks that if the proposal is to be taken forward that the Cabinet Member for Adults and Health considers a transition period for existing claimants and continues to lobby government regarding future funding for adult social care.

#### **34. Possible Items for Future Scrutiny**

34.1 The Committee agreed that the Business Planning Group should look at the treatment of refugees in the detention centre at Gatwick.

#### **35. Date of Next Meeting**

The meeting ended at 1.37 pm

Chairman