

ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4 May, 2016

PRESENT - Councillor S Richmond (in the Chair); Councillors Culley, Kane, Knowles, Lyonette, Mills, T Richmond and Storr (8)

APOLOGIES – Councillor M Nicholson

ABSENT – Councillors Mrs Jones and Lister (2)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

AH47. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AH48. MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 TO 2019/20 – The Committee met to consider its response to the proposals contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan which were within its remit.

Reference was made to the various meetings of this Scrutiny Committee which had been held to discuss the proposals contained within the core offer, the Impact Assessment Forms and the Futures Fund and to a task and finish review meeting which had looked specifically at the impact and mitigation against the proposal to cease floating support for domestic violence victims, vulnerable adults and drug and alcohol

Reference was made to the review of the whole care and support system across adult social care to achieve the proposed savings across the service by not only preventing the need for formal support but by maximising an individual's potential by improving their independency and what they could do for themselves through access to a range of health care information and assistive technology and it was reported that this work would inform the on-going work programme of this Scrutiny Committee.

Reference was made to the discussions which had taken place around the proposals within the core offer and the level of service delivery to be provided in the future within that offer and particular reference was made to the potential impact of reducing the training and development package in place to ensure that staff were adequately trained and aware of legislative changes and to the potential safeguarding risks associated with the proposal to reduce the number of staff within the Commissioning and Contracting Team.

Members expressed concern at the impact of ceasing a number of discretionary services and it was stressed that innovative working by the Council and its partners was vital in the future to mitigate against those proposals, particularly in relation to floating support, which would affect the most vulnerable groups in

society and welcomed the proposal to include, within the Futures Fund, a budget of £160,000 for Housing Related and Outreach Support for Vulnerable Adults, which would provide some support to many of the beneficiaries affected.

Particular reference was also made to the cumulative impacts of some of the proposals across the same individuals or groups of individuals and it was reported that further work in relation to that cumulative impact would be undertaken by the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of this Scrutiny Committee, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and reported to the Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the following views/comments be forwarded to the Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee as this Scrutiny Committee's majority response to the proposals contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2019/20 which are within its remit :-

(a) that the thanks of this Scrutiny Committee be extended to all the Officers who have supported and provided information to enable it to make an informed recommendation on those proposals, contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2019/20, which are within its remit and to the input of Mr Elliston, who spoke on behalf of the 700 Club, in relation to the proposal to cease funding for Drug and Alcohol Floating Support;

(b) that this Scrutiny Committee accepts that to achieve the proposed savings across the Adult Social Care Service, a review of the whole care and support system needs to be undertaken, not only to prevent the need for formal support, but by maximising an individual's potential by improving their independency and what they can do for themselves through access to a range of health care information and assistive technology and will monitor this review, its progress and impact as part of its future work programme;

(c) in relation to the Core Offer, this Scrutiny Committee notes the review of services which has been undertaken to ascertain which services the Council must provide by law, the cost of those services and to what level they should be delivered using a risk based approach and supports the findings of that review (with the caveat that the core budget for Performance/Project Management of £35,000 is split between children and adults) however, although it notes that assurances were given that any risks could be managed and mitigated against, it is particularly concerned about :-

(i) the impact of reducing the training and development package in place to ensure that staff are adequately trained and aware of legislative changes; and

(ii) the potential safeguarding risks of the proposal to reduce the number of staff within the Commissioning and Contracting Team;

(d) in relation to the Impact Assessment Forms, the Scrutiny Committee regrettably accepts the proposals and information contained therein however, :-

(i) it is particularly concerned about the cumulative impact of the proposed reductions on particular groups of individuals across a range of services, some of whom are the most vulnerable in society and disproportionately on those from deprived wards within the Borough and notes that further work is currently being undertaken to map those groups and the potential impact and will be looked at across this Scrutiny Committee, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee; and

(ii) it is particularly concerned about the proposals to cease floating support for Domestic Violence Victims, Vulnerable Adults and Drug and Alcohol as ceasing this work will have a substantial impact and encourages future innovative working to be investigated by the Council and its partners to achieve the best outcomes and service delivery for those affected; and

(e) in relation to the Futures Fund, this Scrutiny Committee feels strongly that the proposed budget of £160,000 for Housing Related and Outreach Support for Vulnerable Adults should be retained as an absolute minimum and that additional funding, if possible, should be provided, particularly to support the provision of floating support services in the future

(NOTE – The minority view of the Scrutiny Committee was to defer any recommendations until all of the Scrutiny Committees have completed their investigations).