

COMMUNITY & ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

17 JANUARY 2018

Present: County Councillor McGarry(Chairperson)
County Councillors Asghar Ali, Carter, Goddard, Kelloway and
Lent

38 : APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ali Ahmed.

39 : DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

40 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2017 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

41 : DOMICILIARY CARE PROCUREMENT

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Susan Elsmore, Cabinet Member for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Tony Young, Director Social Services, Amanda Phillips, Assistant Adult Services and Leon Goddard Project Officer to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which she emphasised the importance of this issue due to the £23million spend, it was noted that the current approach had previously been seen as a contentious issue but the Cabinet Member was assured that from the presentation, Members would see the benefits it has brought to the procurement system, particularly to the balance of spend and quality.

Members were provided with a presentation on Procurement of Domiciliary Care which included key information on the Background of Domiciliary Care in Cardiff; Current Approach to Commissioning Domiciliary Care; Impact of the Current Approach to Commissioning Arrangements; Risk and Mitigation; Recommendations and Next Steps.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for the presentation and invited questions and comments from Members;

- Members were concerned that the Cabinet report had no analysis of any of the other options, no comparators to other local authorities to show if savings had been made using different models, and no detail of whether there were cheaper models available. Officers explained that the Inspectorate had endorsed the introduction of this system and that the gains had been recognised. Providers had also endorsed the whole new approach. Members were reminded that this was a vehicle to procure care and it is the work around it that is critical to its success. Members were advised that there were now double the number of providers compared to when the system was

introduced, these providers were commissioning at competitive and sustainable rates. Officers advised that an option appraisal has been carried out by the project group.

- Members asked about the cost of the IT support package and whether this was a worthwhile spend compared to employing staff to undertake the work. Officers explained that without the IT system other costs would be incurred which would be higher than the cost of the system. Officers also felt that there was an opportunity to halve the current costs.
- Members asked how long it takes from an initial visit to someone starting a care package. Officers advised that it depends on the complexity of the case but there is generally no delay and as soon as someone is on the system, a care package can be procured the same day. Officers added that there are currently no packages of care waiting from hospitals and delayed transfer of care performance is the best it has ever been.
- Members asked what was done in terms of spot checks to monitor the providers' services. Officers advised that there is a robust contractual arrangement with the providers, spot and announced visits are undertaken and Officers go out and view the providers at work. There are also robust escalating concerns procedures in place.
- Members noted from the report that 80% of care packages submitted through the DAPL are taken on at the first attempt (without having to be resubmitted through the DAPL) and asked what happens to the other 20%. Officers advised that this data was taken from a long period of time and more recently, they are being contacted by providers asking to take on care packages and that the current situation is much better than the figures suggest.
- Members asked out of the 2200 people receiving care, how many of them are receiving 24 hour care. Officers advised that this is a very small number, there are some service users with a night sitting service but this is a very small number in the domiciliary market.
- Members noted the timescale of 4 November 2018 and asked if this was enough time to implement the process. Officers considered it was ample time, all of the preparatory work had been front loaded and undertaken already so that there was enough time to deal with any obstacles that may occur. Officers anticipated that they would be ready well in advance of November. The Cabinet Member added that she was delighted that this had been run properly in relation to project management and she was happy with the timescales.
- Members referred to the average rate per hour for care packages commissioned by the Council, which showed 2 different months and 2 different years for the comparison, and considered that the same month in the same year would be more comparable.
- Members noted that provider rates have reduced recently and asked how this affects the organisations. Officers stated that if there was a huge variation in rates between providers they would be concerned. They explained that the

way in which care packages are set up, lots of the work is done behind the rates. The rates submitted show what is sustainable for the organisation, they may impact their profit but there is no impact on staffing or the quality of service. The Director added that the responsibility of the Council is to procure the best services at the right price and quality for its citizens and external business organisation such as providers will make decisions on their prices. The Cabinet Member added that she is regularly approached by people looking to get into the market so she considered the market to be healthy and positive.

- Members were pleased to hear that there was regular consultation with service users on the quality of the care received.
- With regards to the contract, Members noted that this would be for 4 years then extended on a year by year basis for up to a total of 6 years; Members considered that this should also then be reviewed on a year by year basis.

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

42 : SUPPORTING PEOPLE LOCAL DELIVERY PLAN

The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Lynda Thorne, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, Sarah McGill, Director Communities, Housing and Customer Services and Jane Thomas, Assistant Director Housing and Communities to the meeting.

The Chairperson invited the Cabinet Member to make a statement in which she thanked Officers for their work on supporting the most vulnerable people in the City. The Cabinet Member added that she was as certain as she could be that the budget for this would not be cut by Welsh Government, adding that the work that has gone into this has helped to be able to review services and reinvest into specialist services such as Street Homelessness.

Members were provided with a presentation on the Supporting People Local Delivery Plan, which included information on the Background; Supporting People Delivery and Spend – Main Changes for 2018/19; Recommissioning of Accommodation and Support Services; Recommissioning – Gender Specific Services (including domestic abuse); Recommissioning – Older Person Services and Accommodation and Support Services for Young People – Progress in Developing Services.

The Chairperson thanked Officers for the presentation and invited questions and comments from Members;

- Members asked if any mapping had been carried out for comparison to other Local Authorities with regards to services such as Prevention. Officers advised that there was no systematic mapping undertaken but best practice is always looked at and shared. It was noted that spend was very different across authorities with Cardiff's main spend being on homelessness.

- Members noted the reduction from 17 to 2 providers and considered it a dramatic reduction. Officers advised that there would also be sub contracts.
- Members were pleased to hear that the funding was unlikely to be reduced by Welsh Government this year.
- Members expressed concerns around the service for Male victims of domestic abuse, noting that no real progress had been made on this since 2016. Officers explained that the existing service would still remain; it was a complex matter that takes time and best practice needs to be considered. A statutory needs assessment had been carried out and this had shown that there was more need than had been anticipated. Officers want to get the service right and are working on a regional approach with a hope of bringing the service forward in the next year.
- Members sought clarification on which services would not be completed by 31 March and therefore extended for a further 12 months. Members were advised that these were services such as Single Person Homelessness, Single Person Gateway, and Specialist Accommodation etc. These were being considered in conjunction with Mental Health Services and a joined approach with Adult Services.
- Members made reference to Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Officers advised that Bed and Breakfast accommodation had not been used for homelessness for around 10 years, but it had been used for young person's accommodation before the gateway had been started.
- Members asked if the Homelessness Prevention Projects would address the issue of Street Homelessness in Cardiff. Officers advised that rough sleeping was unfortunately on an upward trend and whilst the highest numbers of rough sleepers ever were being brought into hostels etc., it's not bringing the numbers down. Officers further advised that there was capacity in the hostels currently so accommodation was not an issue. Intensive Support Services were needed and the effectiveness of these would be monitored, but it should be noted that new people are coming onto the streets every day.
- Members asked if the Youth Mentoring Service was advertised and were advised that this was a small, niche service that will be a part of the whole Employability Service, which will be advertised from April.
- Members noted the regional approach to Male victims of domestic abuse and asked if this approach would be considered for Female victims as victims could flee into or out of the City. Officers advised that no matter how much investment there is in prevention services, if other Local Authorities aren't investing in prevention then people will flock to Cardiff and its services, which can be difficult to manage. It was stressed that anything that could be done to support citizens of Cardiff would be. People were able to move around refuges and there does have to be a number of places proportionate for Cardiff service users.
- With reference to the One Stop Shop, Members asked why there were 2 buildings. Officers stated that this was a Capital Programme issue and would

be brought forward shortly. If the bid was successful then there would be just one building.

- Members wished to commend the work being done on Homelessness, especially the Compass Project and asked if there was any scope to include specific support on substance misuse. Officers advised that intensive support would include support for substance misuse. Members considered that this could be made clearer.
- Members requested that briefings are brought back to Committee as projects progress.

AGREED – That the Chairperson on behalf of the Committee writes to the Cabinet Member conveying the observations of the Committee when discussing the way forward.

43 : WAY FORWARD

Members discussed the information received and identified a number of issues which the Chairperson agreed would be included in the letters that would be sent, on behalf of the Committee, to the relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.

44 : DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were advised that the next meeting was scheduled for 12 February 2018 at 10.00am. This meeting would scrutinise the draft Corporate Plan and Budgetary Proposals.

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