

SCRUTINY BOARD (ADULT SOCIAL CARE)

MONDAY, 24TH NOVEMBER, 2008

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors S Andrew, P Ewens,
Mrs R Feldman, C Fox, T Hanley,
A Hussain, T Murray and E Taylor

CO-OPTEEs: Joy Fisher – Alliance Service Users and Carers
Sally Morgan – Equality Issues

45 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting especially those members of the public present.

The Chair introduced Sandra Newbould the new Principal Scrutiny Advisor to the meeting and asked everyone around the table to introduce themselves.

46 Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared on Agenda Item 6 – Income Review for Community Care Services - Consultation:-

The Chair, Councillor J Chapman, declared a personal interest in the above item as she has a relative who works in private industry as a homecare worker (Minute 48 refers).

Councillor P Ewens declared a personal interest in the above item in her capacity as a Member of Older Active People (through Cardigan Centre Board).

Joy Fisher declared a personal interest as a service user in receipt of social care and as a member of the reference group referred to in the report.

47 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Armitage, D Coupar and A Taylor.

48 Income Review for Community Care Services - Consultation

The Director of Adult Social Services submitted a report to provide Members with an update on the consultation process regarding the Income Review for non-residential community care services and the initial outcomes from the consultation process.

Based on the information provided, Members of Scrutiny Board Adult Social Care were invited to make comments on the consultation process for submission to the Executive Board as part of the final Income Review report.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Income Review Communication and Consultation Plan 2008 (Appendix 1 refers)
- Income Review – Consultation Events and Briefings (Appendix 2 refers)
- Adult Social Care – Review of Contributions for Care – Leeds Citizens' Panel - Survey Form (Appendix 3 refers)
- Service User Income Review – Survey Form (Appendix 4 refers)
- Income Review Survey Responses (Appendix 5 refers)
- Service users income review survey responses (Appendix 6 refers)
- Services User scenarios – Illustrating the potential impact on service users as a result of changes to the current charging regime (Appendix 7 refers)

The Chair welcomed Councillor P Harrand, Executive Member for Adult Health and Social Care, who gave a brief introduction to the report and highlighted the following points:

- A charging regime had been in place since the Department for Social Services had been established in the 1970s: This contrasted with the NHS, which provided services free at the point of delivery.
- Currently there were serious funding pressures in Adult Social Services – both nationally and locally.
- The national average for generating income through charges for non-residential community care services was around 13%. Currently Leeds generated around 6%.
- Issue around the income review for non-residential community care services needed to be considered in the context of:
 - Funding services for some of the City's most vulnerable people;
 - Equity issues associated with the current charging regime;
 - Rising expectations of service users and their families;
 - Reducing income;
- Any decision regarding changes to the current charging regime for non-residential community care services was still to be made. As such, any proposals from the Board in this regard would be welcomed and considered.

The Chair also welcomed the following Officers to the meeting who provided some additional detail on the report and responded to Members' questions and comments:-

- Sandie Keane – Director, Adult Social Services
- Ann Hill – Finance Manager, Adult Social Services
- Janet Somers – Business Change Manager, Adult Social Services
- Matt Lund – Corporate Consultation Manager, Planning Policy and

Improvement.

The Director of Adult Social Services provided the following additional points for the Board's consideration:

- The current charging regime placed a disproportionate pressure on middle income service users.
- Over recent years, there had been an increasing number of service users supported at home, including an increase in the number of service users that, traditionally, may have moved into residential care.
- The increase in service users, alongside Leeds being a low charging local authority, continued to place a significant pressure on the Council.
- Current proposals would still see Leeds below the national average for generating income through charges for non-residential community care services.
- There were areas within Adult Social Care that required further investment, including
 - Social work and care management
 - Carers support
- The consultation process had been hugely complicated.
- The Council had attempted to be transparent with all interested parties regarding current thinking/ options.
- The consultation had not focused on 'charging' but on 'options for charging'.

Additional points were made by other officers present, including:

- There were a significant number of potential variables to be taken account of when considering charging – leading to 30/40 'possible' options.
- The reference group had helped to ensure a manageable range of options were presented for consultation with a wider range of stakeholders.

A full and lengthy discussion ensued. In summary, the main areas raised and discussed were as follows:-

Consultation process

The Board sought assurance that the consultation had adequately included the wider population of Leeds and not solely current service users. Members noted that the Citizens Panel had formed part of the consultation process and the responses were currently being analysed. This would be included in the final report to the Executive Board. Members queried the rationale and methodology for using the Citizen's Panel and requested a report in this regard.

Members discussed the 13% response rate and the consultation process as a whole. The Board was advised that the consultation process was currently being reviewed and a report would be available in the coming months.

Members requested that this report be presented to the Board at its meeting in February 2009.

Income generation

Members noted that the proposals aimed to generate additional income in the region of £2M- £2.5M per annum. Members queried the current level of administration costs within Adult Social Care and requested that the Director provide this information to the Board.

Service User Impact

The Board considered the scenarios presented as part of the report (Appendix 7) and queried the impact of the proposals based on the examples provided. Members queried the safeguards in place to ensure service users would be charged appropriately – particularly when taking into account an individual's level of capital/ savings. The Board was advised that service users would receive regular reviews. There would also be the facility for service users to advise officers of any changes to their individual circumstances, as and when they arose.

Members were advised that, based on the currently knowledge of service user circumstances (i.e. the level of income and the level of services received), 11 services users were likely to be charged up to the proposed maximum weekly contribution of £140. Based on the level of service received, a further 289 service users may be subject to a weekly charge, however the extent of this could only be determined once the level of savings had been fully determined as part of the means testing process.

Some concern was expressed on the impact of means testing on service users, in terms of intrusion. The Board was advised that additional training around means testing would be provided to all officers involved.

Members queried the level of detail provided to existing service users in terms of how the proposed changes may impact on them individually. The Board were advised that the Council had made every attempt to provide sufficient information to service users during the consultation period. Information had been included in the consultation packs issued to service users. Members requested that they be provided with the fuller version of consultation pack that had been distributed to service users.

The Chair thanked the Executive Board Member and the Officers present for their attendance.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That the Director of Adult Social Services supply Board Members with the information regarding administration costs.
- (c) That the Corporate Consultation Manager, Planning Policy and Improvement submit a report on the Citizens Panel, including details of the methodology behind the sampling process.

- (d) That a further report on the review of the Consultation process be presented to the Board meeting in February 2009.
- (e) That any outstanding issues referred to above be dealt with by those officers now identified within the minutes and reported back to Board Members.

(*Note: On an unrelated issue Councillor Ewens requested information on the support given to the relatives of those people in prison who have died whilst in custody. The Director informed the meeting that she would investigate this issue and provide an update to Board Members).

49 Dignity In Care - Draft Statement

This item was withdrawn and rescheduled to be considered at the next meeting.

50 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 10th December 2008 at 10.00 a.m. (Pre-meeting scheduled for 9.30 a.m.)

(The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and the meeting concluded at 11.40 a.m.)