

**Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and
Health Committee**
Wednesday 3 October 2018
10.00 am Lutrell Room



SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA

To: The Members of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee

We are now able to enclose the following information which was unavailable when the agenda was published:

Item 3	Appendix A to the minutes – PQT list from 5 September 2018
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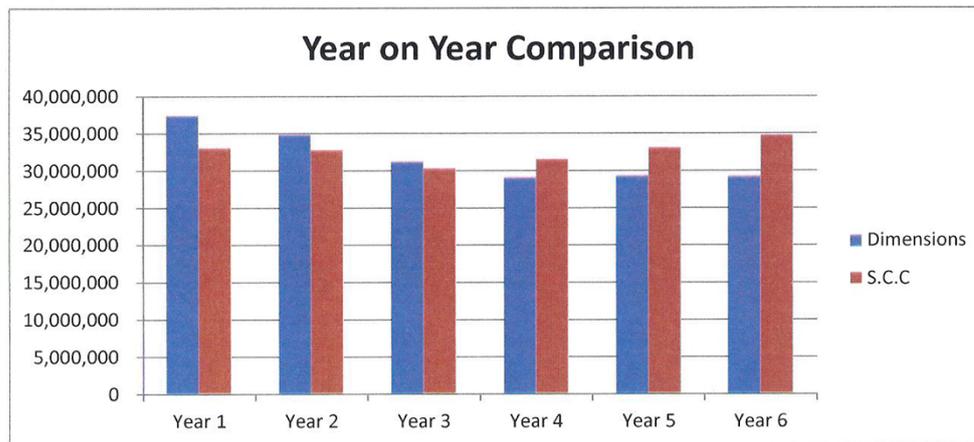
Public Questions

Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health – 05 September 2018

Item 10 – Discovery Performance Update

1. David Orr

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
SCC	33,018,937	32,745,903	30,264,483	31,483,791	33,060,985	34,723,929	195,298,026
Dimensions	37,433,644	34,874,805	31,271,010	29,133,360	29,367,386	29,304,667	191,384,872



On Monday evening on the 3rd Sep 2019, the Council announced new 2018/19 emergency in-year savings of £3.394m for the Learning Disabilities Service thus:

“The planned use of an element of the Better Care Fund in 2018/19 to support the Discovery Learning Disability Contract. This is in line with the year 2 contract profile.”

It is clear that these latest emergency in-year cuts to the Learning Disabilities must be new cuts or there would be no additional savings to count.

It is also clear from the cash and savings flow chart above that they are NOT in line with the original “year 2 contract profile”.

In commercial business terms the “year 2 contract profile” is also unusual as typically in the private sector the cost of staff reductions and restructuring takes 3 years before any ongoing savings feed into annual revenue cost reductions from year 4.

Q5. Please supply the latest version of the cash and savings flow chart (in the format as above) taking into account the latest cuts announced in-year for 2018/19?

2. Eleanor Jane Wilson, Support Assistant

I joined the LD service five and a half years ago. I work in dom care supporting people in their own homes.

During the first part of this period I was proud to work in a highly motivated team. I learned a huge amount from colleagues who had worked in the service all their lives. Their enthusiasm, practical experience and cheerful friendliness rubbed off on all of us. We were able to deliver a positive,

supportive service to our customers.

This year many of my most experienced colleagues have left or are leaving. Some are awaiting to be redeployed or made redundant by Discovery. My fellow support assistants and support workers have left because they do not wish to work without their team leaders.

This Summer Future 4 Street and Glastonbury had to cancel all support for service users' holidays due to staff shortages. It was heart breaking to work alongside customers over these Summer months knowing that they should be on holiday. Where is the quality of life in this?

I believe in supporting quality of life, in providing continuity of staff and continuity of care. Can you give any direction to your divested staff who believe in these aims? Or is the only direction out?

3. Mike Bruce

After Winterbourne View, the serious case review found that “professional standards and codes of practice had no bearing on patient care as Winterbourne View became largely “led” by its biggest staff group, unregulated support workers”

Discovery proposes removing managers from each care home completely, replacing them with locality managers – who will oversee several homes in their local area.

The Centre for the policy on ageing, in their document “Preventing abuse” (www.cpa.org.uk) stated...

“Abuse may result from the actions of individual members of staff because they lack training, experience and management support to cope with the stresses of caring for people who require a high level of assistance”...“more often, abuse occurs because the home, its managers or staff slip, often without realising it, into a set of attitudes which reflects low morale, defensiveness about their lack of concern and respect for residents”...“overwork, lack of appreciation, low pay and low self-esteem may all contribute to the development of an environment in which abuse becomes an accepted feature of daily life.”

This demonstrates the need for:

Careful staff selection procedures.

Training and management support for staff once in post.

Leadership from senior management.

The development of a working environment which values staff, does not demand too much of them and rewards them adequately.

Under SCC, these conditions were well met. Discovery’s proposals and methods of training, management structure and reduction of terms and conditions seem to go against all these recommendations.

Recently, the National Autistic Society home “Mendip House” in Somerset (commissioned by SCC) was found to be guilty of horrific abuse of people with learning difficulties. It was described in a report by the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (in a Safe Guarding report looking into the handling and investigation of the abuse by SCC

https://ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/20180206_Mendip-House_SAR_FOR_PUBLICATION.pdf)

as “Winterbourne View without the cameras” (item 41,p 24)

It is noted in the report that “Accountability is a topic of interest to taxpayers and politicians. SCC’s council tax payers have funded an in-depth scrutiny of a failing service even though Somerset residents are not placed there. Since

commissioners are responsible and accountable, arguably it is only a matter of time before they are prosecuted”www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk said of the Safeguarding Adults Review of Mendip House...

“Five years after the Winterbourne View abuse was uncovered, striking common issues have been exposed at Mendip House.”

Winterbourne View happened in part due to having “no registered manager in place, substandard recruitment processes and limited staff training” (www.nhs.uk - summary of government response)

Discovery proposes to make Team Leader, Assistant Team Leader and Support Leader posts redundant. This will reduce management support available in each individual home. they have a massive recruitment deficit and the majority of staff training is now online only. How is reducing the supervision of staff working for Discovery an “improvement”?

Luke Joy Smith, Managing Director of Discovery, says the restructure that is being enacted will “empower support workers” but what this means is that underqualified, underexperienced and under supported care workers will be essentially running care homes with inadequate supervision or resources to fulfil their duties safely. We do not feel empowered, we feel unappreciated and pressured into taking on roles that are way beyond our job descriptions because, as soon as these proposed restructuring decisions become a reality, there will literally be no one else to do the job. Will this committee and Somerset County Council recognise the imminent social care crisis that will follow should Dimensions be allowed to enact their proposals (which they intend to do in the next few months) or will they act now to stop what can only diminish and reduce what was once a “Good” provider of care?

4. Eileen Mccawley, carer of sister and Secretary of the South Somerset Carers’ Group

I’d like to focus on the statements about reviews in Section 3.3 of the commissioners’ report to Scrutiny, which I find somewhat vague and confusing.

The statements on reviews in the report need to be taken in the context of Stephen Chandler’s commitment to have completed all social work reviews by the 30th September 2018.

From a personal point of view, I can say that my sister has not had a social review since ??? I understand that Somerset County Council have a statutory duty to review my sister’s needs on at least an annual basis.

As her single, elderly carer, I have never had a carer’s Assessment.

On a wider level, I have spoken to around 70 families in the South Somerset area. Only one reported that their daughter had received a social work review since Stephen Chandler made his commitment. This parent had not been informed about the review taking place, nor about the reasons for it.

Given the recent announcement to customers and carers from Discovery about the decision to close the Fiveways day centre, it should be of particular concern to councillors that new social assessments or reviews do not appear to have taken place.

I have a number of distinct but clearly linked questions which I hope the committee will permit me to ask.

Q1. Given the deadline of 30th September, I would like Mr. Chandler to tell us exactly how many social work reviews have been completed out of the approx. 900 customers supported, rather than just talking about a 'significant number'?

Q2. How many of the reviews/INAs completed to date have been independently checked to confirm they are Care Act Compliant?

Q3. Of those independently checked, how many have been assessed as Care Act Compliant and how many have been assessed as inadequate?

Q4. There was a separate commitment from Discovery to complete person-centred plans for all customers supported by the end of 2018. How many of these been completed thus far?

Q5. Of all reviews completed, how many personal budgets have been set up as a result?

5. Nigel Behan, Unite Branch Secretary

Q1 In Section 5.5 it is stated:

“A review of the original submission by Discovery to Somerset CC has been done to ensure that representatives are content that the content and specification is enacted in the contract, meaning that it still relevant and fit for purpose.”

Will the review report be brought to the Committee so Councillors and other interested parties can inspect, analyse and comment on the information in the report?

Q2 Luke Joy-Smith of Dimensions Discovery was interviewed on Monday morning on BBC Somerset radio.

While responding to current poor service user satisfaction surveys (1.3 years after transfer) he claimed that he had nothing to base the originals service user satisfaction on (when it was an inhouse SCC service) in the 24 months prior to transfer.

Is it correct that SCC did not do any service user satisfaction surveys before transfer to Dimension/Discovery?

If SCC did carry out service user satisfaction surveys in the 24 months before transfer to Dimensions/Discovery then please disclose them.

If SCC did not carry out service user satisfaction surveys in the 24 months before transfer to Dimensions/Discovery then how are the contract managers and commissioners measuring performance for improvement?

6. Ama Bolton

As a family member of a service-user I am concerned about the rate of staff-turnover, and I would like to ask the scrutiny committee about Discovery's use of agency staff.

1.Are the agency staff fully trained in all aspects of the work, including the administration of medications? How the council ensures that the sufficient high quality support in all the aspects of care is provided to the customers under Discovery?

2.Continuity is important to people with learning difficulties, who may be distressed by change and may have trouble relating to and co-operating with people they have not met before. How is Discovery preparing customers for major changes in their homes, for losing their familiar staff and managers, and seeing a new face every day?

3.What steps has Discovery taken to ensure that terms and conditions of employment are such that existing long-serving staff members will be persuaded to stay on rather than seeking other employment?

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