

SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, ADULTS AND HEALTH COMMITTEE (VIRTUAL MEETINGS FROM MAY 2020 DUE TO CORONAVIRUS)

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee (virtual meetings from May 2020 due to Coronavirus) held in the Microsoft Teams Meeting, on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 10.00 am

Present: Cllr H Prior-Sankey (Chair), Cllr P Clayton, Cllr A Govier, Cllr J Lock and Cllr G Verdon

Other Members present: Cllr M Chilcott, Cllr G Frascini, Cllr D Huxtable, Cllr C Lawrence, Cllr T Munt, Cllr C Paul, Cllr L Redman and Cllr L Vjeh

Apologies for absence: Cllr M Healey, Cllr A Bown and Cllr M Caswell

33 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

34 **Minutes from the previous meeting held on 12 November 2020** - Agenda Item 3

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

35 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

There were no public questions.

36 **Medium Term Financial Plans (MTFP)** - Agenda Item 5

The Committee had a presentation and report covering the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The report summarised the key areas of specific interest within the Medium-Term Financial Plan to the Scrutiny Committee for Adults and Health. It outlined the key points that were included within the report made to Cabinet on the 20th January 2021. It included an overall narrative from the Directors of Adults Services and Public Health Services to provide assurances around the changes made to funding and spend. A review of this detail through Scrutiny will be presented as part of the overall challenge and assurance process to Cabinet on the 8th February and Council on the 17th February in setting the final budget for 2021/22.

Preparations for the 2021/22 budget were reported to Cabinet in December 2020 and highlighted the unique difficulty with producing the 2021/22 budget against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic and the significant uncertainty that it brings. Uncertainty around Government funding and the review of Fairer Funding and Business Rates has been delayed. In addition to this the

Comprehensive Spending Review was delayed and only one year of funding was announced which continues the uncertainty for funding in future years. The Committee were presented with a proposed and indicative budget for adult services as set out below: -

	Proposed 2021/22	Indicative 2022/23	Indicative 2023/24
Adult Social Care Operations	£75.583m	£76.643m	£77.745m
Mental Health	£19.709m	£20.902m	£22.094m
Learning Disabilities	£87.330m	£90.037m	£92.258m
Commissioning	-£42.030m	-£37.010m	-£32.791m

The draft proposals recognise the importance of the Adult Services and the budget adds further investment of c£10.2m dependent on fee negotiation which is a 7.74% increase into this key frontline service. This recognises additional demand pressures especially within mental health which is showing as an overspend within the latest budget monitoring report. Predicting future years' demand is always difficult and Covid-19 has further increased this difficulty. One of the key challenges around this is identifying what is on-going demand and what is temporary demand. The budget proposals have therefore tried to strike the balance between the two and to ensure the budget proposals are robust. In addition to the £6m Contingency budget it is proposed that £10.8m of the Tranche 5 Covid-19 funding, announced as part of provisional Finance Settlement, is put into a specific Covid-19 Reserve to deal with any one-off costs in 2021/22.

The capital proposal has been developed in partnership between Adults Social Care and Corporate Property to support the developing strategy for Adults residential accommodation. Under the Corporate Landlord Model, Corporate Property are leading on the infrastructure element to support the Service's strategy. This proposal comprises several different components to ensure adequate and appropriate adults' residential provision in Somerset. The investment will help to deliver:

- An extra Care housing scheme,
- A specialist supported living scheme,
- 2 x 4 bed homes to support people with complex needs and
- Bringing back into use a number of existing residential units at the Six Acres site in Taunton.

This investment is the first Capital investment for some time and is needed and welcomed. It is difficult to predict the cost of what will no doubt be an increase in demand following the pandemic. It is known that older people being confined to their homes for such a long time may well have more complex needs as both their physical and mental health will have deteriorated by

prolonged isolation. The underlying principle of supporting people to stay in their own homes remains as the proposed budgets support a move from residential care to intermediate care.

There will also be a move away from large centralised day care provision to more local or at home support thus saving travel times and associated costs. The Committee welcomed the proposed increase in spending, in particular the proposed Capital expenditure. There was a question in relation to the proposed increase in payment to Discovery and the Committee was assured this was part of the original contract but that there had been a reduction in payments for Employment Support.

The Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee:

- **Considered the proposed budget for 2021/22 and indicative budgets for 2022/23 and 2023/24 for Adults and Public Health Services.**
- **Reviewed specific proposals for changes from previous years and offered assurance to Cabinet.**

37 Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee Work Programme - Agenda Item 6

The Committee considered the Work Programme and welcomed the change of the 03 March 2021 meeting from an informal one to a formal one (reflecting the reduced agenda of the meeting on 27 January 2021). Agreed the April Workshop should look at Recruitment and Retention in the Care Sector and acknowledged that Performance needed to be added to the meeting in June. There was a suggestion that consideration should be given to having a further joint workshop with Scrutiny Committee for Children and that oral health for both adults and children should be included in a future agenda.

38 Any other urgent items of business - Agenda Item 7

There were no other items of business.

(The meeting ended at 10.40 am)

CHAIR