

North Yorkshire County Council

Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 27 September 2018 at 10.30am at County Hall, Northallerton.

Present:-

County Councillor John Ennis in the Chair

County Councillors: Philip Broadbank. Eric Broadbent. Mike Chambers MBE, Caroline Goodrick, Helen Grant, David Jeffels, Andrew Jenkinson, Stanley Lumley and John Mann.

Voluntary and Community Sector: Jill Quinn (Dementia Forward).

In attendance:

County Councillors Caroline Dickinson (Executive Member for Adult Social Care).

Officers: Ray Busby (Scrutiny Support Officer), Anton Hodge Assistant Director - Strategic Resources, Central Services

Apologies: Cllrs Stuart Martin MBE and Karin Sedgwick.

Independent Sector: Mike Padgham (Independent Care Group)

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

167. Minutes

Resolved –

That, the Minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2018 having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

168. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest to note.

169. Public Questions or Statements

The committee was advised that no notice had been received of any public questions or statements to be made at the meeting.

170. Client Contributions

Considered –

Presentation by Anton Hodge, Assistant Director - Strategic Resources, Central Services

Anton talked through the easy read presentation used during engagement sessions which outlined proposals for changes to the amount of money that people are asked to pay towards their social care support.

Anton explained that clients of adult social care services receive a means-tested financial assessment to determine the extent to which they are able to contribute to the cost of their care. In 2013/2014, Health and Adult Services undertook a wide-ranging review of charging policy, resulting in a number of changes to the policy being made.

Since that review, the Care Act 2014 now gives Councils the power to charge adults for care and support where an adult has been assessed as having eligible needs. The ability to charge therefore remains discretionary, although other regulations and statutory guidance stipulate that certain types of care and support must be provided free of charge. As part of the 4% savings challenge, Health and Adult Services have identified a range of proposals relating to charging for community-based services to be further explored. Anton addressed two such proposals:

1. proposed changes around contributing towards the cost for providing a second carer based on the true cost of providing the care; and
2. Charging a more realistic cost – in terms of what it costs the authority - for the use of subsidised transport, accompanied by clearer processes which enable all charges to be collected fairly and consistently.

Members acknowledged the financial pressures driving these proposals. They appreciated that, like all authorities, we are looking to charges to ease pressures on budgets and minimise service cuts. But during discussion, opinion on both proposals was mixed.

Anton explained that at the moment, if a person needs to have two care workers at the same time, they are only charged for one. The proposal is to revise the charging policy to ensure that the client makes a contribution to the whole package of care (including the second carer). Some members were unhappy with the suggestion that an individual, who requires “two-handed” care, would pay more because they have additional and/or complex needs.

Members acknowledged that this will bring our practice more into line with other councils. It was also recognised that assessment of ability to pay means that this change would mostly affect self-funders, not those who don't have enough money to pay for their care workers (although, as Anton explained, it is likely to deplete their capital quicker).

The notion of a fairer and more efficient collection of charges for transport was supported. Members came up with some suggestions to improve the commissioning and provision of the service. However, a number of members expressed disquiet about the size of the potential increase in the charge, how it would be applied (flat rate per journey, flat rate per day, what account would be taken of distance from the eventual location etc), and what effect it will have on service users' participation in activities.

Resolved –

The committee return to this, with the benefit of the full formal consultation document, in December.

171. Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework

Considered -

Presentation on the ASCOF 2016/17 Briefing

Resolved -

That the report be noted.

172. Work Programme

Considered -

The report of the Scrutiny Team Leader on the Work Programme.

Resolved -

That the following matters be added to the work programme

- a) A workshop type meeting be arranged to consider HAS Benefits, Assessments & Charging Service, including the Financial Assessment for community based services; Financial Assessments for Residential Services; Deferred Payment Agreements; Deprivation of Assets;
- b) Formal and public scrutiny of the HAS budgetary positions at the next committee.
- c) Respite be taken as a substantive item at the April 2019 meeting along the lines of the draft scope/outline attached to the report
- d) That the consultation proposals for Fair charges for the cost of adult social care be taken at the next meeting: