

Notes of HASC O&S Committee Task and Finish Group Meeting

Implications of Savings

10th July 2024, 2-4pm

Council Offices.

Present:

Members: Councillors Grindrod (Chair), Hartley, Moore, Pritchard, Scott and Tilsley

Attendees for first part of meeting:

Andy Cave, CEO, Healthwatch

Simon Fenton, CEO, Forward Carers

Council Officers attending the second part of the meeting:

Louise Collett, Strategic Director, ASC

Maria Gavin, Assistant Director, ASC

Temitope Ademosu, Assistant Director, ASC

Sam Bloomfield, Finance Partner, ASC

Justin Varney, Director, Public Health

Shazia Hanif, Head of Service, Ops and Partnerships ASC

Chris Jordan, AD Neighbourhoods, City Operations

Fazal Khan, Finance Business Partner

Ceri Saunders, Cabinet Support Officer

Apologies: Councillors Ahmed and Bano.

Key points from discussion with Healthwatch Birmingham and Forward Carers (Only relevant for Health and Adult Care OSC):

- Mixed messages around state of key services e.g. Day opportunities creating significant levels of anxiety among service users.
- There were barriers to effective engagement with third sector partners and representatives due to how much information the Council can publicly share.
- The role of Scrutiny and relationship with the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) would be more important than ever right now to identify areas of impact and implications in relation to service user and carer wellbeing.
- In relation to Day Opportunity services, this can be overwhelming for service users and the consultation process was lacking emotional support for service users involved.
- In relation to libraries there would be the need to consider the impact on access to health literacy which was a lifeline for deprived communities in the city. Health impact assessment would need to be built into scrutiny of the savings delivery plans (working with HWB)
- Healthwatch would be keen to have service user voice input in Equality Impact Assessments (EIA). There needs to be active engagement of service users with Healthwatch involved in evaluating and monitoring savings delivery plans in relation to wider impact.
- EIA should consider specific impact on carers as a group.
- Review of care packages: There is a need to undertake carers impact assessment, identifying impact and delivery of care packages and access to these.
- It is important that there is an efficient review of business case and data, and clarity on these in deciding on cuts to services.
- On the question about what role scrutiny can play in ensuring consistency around efficiency of service delivery in the context of savings / cuts; carers would need to be assured that there was a tangible alternative for the future and clarity on this in the event of cuts/savings proposals and impact on current services.
- Citizens and service users involved in consultation and engagement processes need to know that their feedback would be prioritised as part of considering the impact on people, and for the council to improve understanding of these in the context of cuts/savings proposals. Community feedback should be included in the council decision as a result of consulting and engaging with them.
- Scrutiny's role should consider how third-sector partners and advocates of health and social care would be meaningfully involved in how issues are worked through in mitigating the impact on individuals. Going forward, third sector should be involved in shaping and designing of transformational services for citizens.
- In relation to impact on carers, there needs to be availability of respite for carers who would need breaks from caring role. Going forward, it would be worth considering a brokerage service where families and carers can be involved in developing and working out personalised care plans and developing a more effective integrated care pathways in the context of cuts/savings proposals.

During the second part of the meeting with Council Officers the following issues were discussed and recommendations agreed.

Adult Social Care			
Savings Number	Saving Description	Key Issue / Comments on Implications of Savings	Recommendations
130	Review of Day Centre Model Savings Target: 2024/25: 1.950 2025/26: 3.350	Current services and support will continue for all citizens under the equality protected characteristics. Largest cohort of users are those with learning disability. Members request that all protected characteristics, along with carers should be covered by the EIA. Impact on carers should be assessed. The decision made by Cabinet should be informed by service users/carers voice. Their voice should also be engaged with at start of EIA and in developing mitigation actions in light of savings/cuts	See below
126	Review of Care Centre Model Savings Target: 2024/25: 0.346 2025/26:6.400	Service users have a wide range of disability needs with majority needing personal care support. Alternative provision of care being explored which may be delivered by an alternative provider. Health Impact Assessment to be developed, and should consider the context of 62% of users under this model being 70 years of age and over. Assessment of care centre model to involve carers and family members.	See below
125	Review of care packages Savings Target: 2024/25: 5.687	All care packages would be reviewed under the savings delivery plans/cuts.	See below

	2025/26: 10.187	<p>The protected characteristics most impacted would be disability due to nature of services provided.</p> <p>Assessment of care packages should involve carers.</p> <p>EIA to include all protected characteristics including neurodiversity.</p> <p>Health Impact Assessment to be explored</p>	
131	<p>Review of enablement services</p> <p>Savings Target:</p> <p>2024/25: 1.755</p> <p>2025/26: 5.229</p>	<p>There is a lack of data in relation to transgender citizens within the service. Also limited data on sexuality, religious beliefs and ethnicity of service users</p> <p>Members noted that sexuality protected characteristic was not included in Council EIA for Adult & Social Care savings as a whole. This needs to be included.</p>	See below
139	<p>Review of shared lives care packages</p> <p>Savings Target:</p> <p>2024/25: 0.500</p> <p>2025/26: 1.900</p>	<p>Issues around lack of data in relation to gender reassignment, however, Trans people have higher rates of self-reported disability and poor health than LGB people. ASC will work to improve recording of data across all protected characteristics through co-production with diverse communities to help better understanding of under-representation of groups such as Black and Ethnic Minorities.</p> <p>Clarity on transformation of services and what these would look like for service users going forward.</p>	See below
140	<p>Review of Third Sector inflationary uplifts</p> <p>Savings Target:</p> <p>2024/25: 4.464</p>	<p>EIA to include service user and carer voice.</p> <p>Continuing to engage with BVSC as a strategic third-sector partner.</p>	See below

	2025/26: 4.464		
Leisure Services			
52	Increase in Leisure Fees by 5% Savings Target: 2024/25:0.050 2025/26:0.050		No Recommendations
56	Reduction in grant to the Active Wellbeing Society Savings Target: 2024/25: 0 2025/26: 0.900		No Recommendations
141	Review and Recommission of third sector grants. Savings Target: 2024/25: 1.600 2025/26: 3.870		No Recommendations

Recommendations

The Task and Finish Group agreed the recommendations below that responded to the themes and issues discussed regarding adult social care. The recommendations are not specific to individual savings.

- The Health and Adult Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes the expertise of partner organisations, and specifically Healthwatch and Forward Carers, to inform their understanding of any potential impact and implications of the Council budget 2024-26. Further to this, they would like to formally request to the City Solicitor that these organisations are invited to all future Health and Adult Social Care Committee considerations of this budget including any sessions in private, unless there is a clear conflict of interest.
- Seeks assurances that the consultation model for savings related to the Adult Social Care directorate provides more information and support to service users and their carers in future to help them engage effectively with any consultation. Specifically, this consultation model should introduce clear conceptualisation of future service options and information on alternative provision, as well as clarify the role of advocacy and emotional support available.

- Requests that Equality Impact Assessments for all savings, and specifically Adult Social Care, include information from relevant partner organisations to enable more robust assessments.
- Requests that Health Impact Assessments are developed for all agreed savings, subject to the outcome of the current pilot. Further, the Committee requests that health implications should be included in all future committee reports, both decision making and non-decision making.
- Requests that a family centred approach, where appropriate, is adopted for all Adult Social Care cases. As a minimum, Social Work Assessment of Needs and the Carers Assessment should be undertaken at the same time.
- Seeks urgent assurances that all protected characteristics have been considered in Equality Impact Assessments. The Committee also requests clarification specifically on how implications on neurodiverse citizens have been captured as well as the impact on women, given that 70% of carers are female.
- Seeks assurances that these spending reductions can be delivered in line with the Council delivering its statutory duties and do not open the Council to the risk of losing a Judicial Review.
- Requests the Council reviews the new Government's proposed policies outlined in their manifesto and understand any potential impact on the delivery of these spending reductions.