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## DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

FRIDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 2015

A MEETING of the OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on FRIDAY, 16TH OCTOBER, 2015 at 10.00 AM

#### PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor John Mounsey

Councillors John Cooke, Rachel Hodson, Richard A Jones and Jane Kidd

Invitee: - Paul O'Brien GMB Union

#### ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Karen Johnson, Assistant Director for Communities

Scot Fawcus, Head of Service Contracts, Property and Governance – Legal

Michaela Pinchard, Head of Service, Policy and Improvement, Adults and Communities

Alison Jordan, Senior Development Officer, Adults and Communities

#### APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Craig Sahman, Tony Revill, Kevin Rodgers and Jane Cox

Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Glyn Jones, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Equalities.

		<u>ACTION</u>
28	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
29	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>  There were no declarations of interest.	All to note
30	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	
	Mr Stark, a Doncaster resident, stated that he had noticed that for the last 3 years across social care that the social care support system was being abused by the Courts. He stated that equipment had been removed from service users. He continued by stating that the Courts and St Catherine's Hospital were abusing clients by retaining their estates and taking their money, keeping documents, signing them and	All to note

	<p>claiming grants from the Council for Social Care.</p> <p>He stressed he had been ringing to get help for people in the community but no one wished to know. He explained that he had put questions to Cabinet Members but they were not interested in the issue.</p> <p>He outlined that he had worked out the cost of looking after people in St Catherine's stating it would be more cost effective to have two or three people living in care in a house. He reminded Members that people in care were being paid for by taxpayers of Doncaster.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Stark for his statement and explained that Karen Johnson, Assistant Director of Communities would speak to him following the meeting about the points he had raised.</p>	
31	<p><u>IMPLEMENTATION OF REMOVAL OF SUBSIDIES FROM NON-RESIDENTIAL SOCIAL CARE CHARGES.</u></p>	
	<p>The Committee considered a report relating to the outcome of consultation on the proposal to implement the removal of subsidies from non-residential adult social care charges (Homecare, Day Care and Direct Payments), alongside the proposals in a separate report, to follow on the agenda, relating to transport provision.</p> <p>Members received a presentation outlining that the proposals were part of the overall modernisation policy to help people choose their adult social care in Doncaster aiming to address the inadequacies promoting choice and control and targeting resources to those most in need. The Committee was reminded that this proposal was agreed as part of the budget approval by Full Council and this paper was to provide information on consultation, impact and how implementation be put in to place. Changes for new service users would take effect in November 2015 with existing users in 2016.</p> <p>Members were of the opinion that there was a lot of unfairness with how service users were charged but noted that 614 people would be affected, with the majority seeing no change. It was stressed that peoples income would be assessed to ensure they are left with a minimum income guarantee for living costs in accordance with government guidelines. Support would be offered to anyone affected, for example, with Money management, support planning, benefit maximisations and ongoing care and support.</p> <p>The following points were raised during discussion:</p> <p>Direct Payments – when service users were offered heavily subsidised services, there was no incentive to accept a direct payment. It was noted that removing subsidy would provide people with increased choice.</p>	

Benefit Changes – are taken into account each April when the amount they have is updated whilst remaining on protected income. These people would still be within the group that are not affected by changes. It was confirmed that services users are not claimants of tax credits.

Follow up work being undertaken where questionnaires were not returned – because questionnaires were anonymous, no follow up work with individuals was being undertaken however it was confirmed that an analysis of groupings had been assessed to ensure tailored support could be made available. Additional work with existing users would be undertaken between now and April and specifically address with individuals if they unusually cancel a service.

Ability to pay for services – concern was expressed that the people classed as most in need may not have the ability to pay for services, and this number would probably increase due to an aging population, but it was stressed that some people have more income and are able to contribute more than they do now, balancing income that could be directed and tailored at those most in need. It was highlighted that vulnerable people would be provided, like all service users with a support package and officers to contact from a trained team in revenues and benefits. There is a national agreed minimum income and members were reassured that this would be considered and appropriate advice given. Members acknowledged there was a complex range of support for each service user.

Number of people in Doncaster that live independently – the number of people was unknown, but the Council currently supported over approximately 2,500 residents to continue with independent living providing individual choices. Members requested that an exact figure be provided following the meeting, split between elderly and those with disabilities.

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment – work was being undertaken for adult social care, including profiling the aging population and impact in future.

Budget – It was recognised that budget savings could not be included in the report at this point until each service user's needs had been assessed.

To conclude the Committee expressed regret that cuts were having to be made but it was stressed that services were not reducing but changes being made to ensure service users were able to make an informed choice of provision and that they could afford to continue to attend.

RESOLVED: that

Director

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Executive agree with the proposals in principle;</li> <li>2. The Executive be asked to consider that the most vulnerable residents and service users affected by the changes receive ongoing care and support with financial management, be reviewed annually;</li> <li>3. An update be provided on the wider modernisation agenda at a future Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee meeting; and</li> <li>4. The Executive be asked to recognised that subsidies be equitable and that those with a lower income should contribute less whilst acknowledging that developing alternatives was difficult but an issue that needed to be addressed.</li> </ol>	<p>Adults, Health and Well-being</p>
<p>32</p>	<p><u>DAY SERVICES MODERNISATION: TRANSPORT PROVISION.</u></p>	
	<p>A report was presented to the Panel relating to consultation on proposals to increase the charge for transport to council run day centres and a draft transport/travel policy. Again this report was considered in conjunction with the proposal to remove subsidies from Day Care, Home Care and Direct Payments in that an increase in the flat rate charge for transport is consistent with the removal of subsidies.</p> <p>Transport providers – it was confirmed that a piece of work was being undertaken which would feed into who would be providing transport, whether it be through the tendering process or Doncaster Council transport services. It was dependent upon options for and the numbers of service users. The Committee was reminded that there will be exiting transport contracts that are undertaken through European contract procedures and value tested. Arrangements, routes, needs and costs will need to be reassessed as part of any contract renewal.</p> <p>Members stressed that the policy needs to state that every option be explore, including the use of bus passes and car sharing with friends.</p> <p>Budget – In response to a number of statements with regard to reducing services and costs, Members were reminded that the Council approved the budget and the Executive make proposals and decisions to meet savings but need to ensure that residents most in need would continue to receive transport provision.</p> <p>Impact on service users – a comparison of 115 service users that could be affected by both this proposal and those in the previous report, had been undertaken to ensure their income would be protected.</p> <p>Consultation – it was confirmed that a questionnaire was circulated for both this and the previous report, with a small amount of time in</p>	

between the two, giving notice to those who would be affected by both issues. Concern was expressed that the options could have been leading but it was recognised that scenarios could be difficult to follow and in some cases confusing, but that it was meaningful. The following was noted:

September, 2014 Focus groups in five locations c200 people  
October, 2014 521 Questionnaires – 272 completed (52%)

There were concerns but there was a willingness to be flexible, altering arrangements and paying an increased charge.

Further consultation August 2015 582 questionnaires – 152 responses (23%)

- 67% transport to continue with increased charge
- 99 of 127 would pay £3
- 20 of 96 would pay £5
- Support for Policy

It was noted that collectively there had been a good response to consultation but concern was expressed that those that could not afford the changes did not respond and would stop using services. Again follow up work would be undertaken with service user groupings by assessing demographic take up.

It was stressed that this proposal and policy was not to cut services, as a the Local Authority has a legal duty to provide people with support, but ensuring service delivery is as effective and efficient as possible.

Strengthening Communities – to ensure transport for people with high needs that don't wish to attend a day centre would require strong communities to provide alternative options including the possibility of voluntary bus services.

Home care – It was stressed that the Local Authority was aware of services users that required home care and when using the transport service. When care assessments are undertaken it gives consideration to whether a person would wish to attend a centre and whether they required a personal assistant. It was noted that in these cases it incurs additional transport costs and is taken into account.

Consultants – a general discussion was held relating to the Council's use of consultants, particularly the annual cost to the Council.

Risks – concern was expressed that the income from the transport fee may not be generated but it was a risk that required qualifying once individual assessment with services users were complete. The committee addressed the risks detailed in the report and issues to mitigate against but noted it was difficult to predict what service users

	<p>behaviour would be.</p> <p>Use of Community Centres by the BME community – concern was expressed that day centres may be being underused by the BME community and Members requested that this be investigated.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the Executive is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Note, that the Committee agree with the proposals in principle;</li><li>2. Consider the Draft Travel Policy stating that every transport option be explored;</li><li>3. Consider that service users ability to pay fees and charges be reviewed annually;</li><li>4. Consider that further work be undertaken to understand the effect on the small number of services users who would be caught by changes to both Day Care Changes and Transport Costs;</li><li>5. Ensure that consultation be strengthened particularly with communities to investigate alternative transport options that could be made available, to ensure the implications of proposed changes are understood; and</li><li>6. Request that investigations be undertaken on whether day centres are underused by BME groups and if so, why.</li></ol>	<p>Director Adults, Health and Well-being</p>
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