

Report to: Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health

Date of meeting: 24 September 2019

By: Director of Adult Social Care and Health

Title: Changes in approach to supporting Working Age Adults

Purpose: To consider proposed changes in how Working Age Adults are supported to meet eligible care needs and achieve proposed savings

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) **Agree the proposed changes in practice outlined in this report that will meet eligible care needs and ensure appropriate support is offered to Working Age Adults;**
 - 2) **Agree the phased approach to implementing the proposals through carrying out individual reviews of all current care plans; and**
 - 3) **Delegate to the Director of Adult Social Care and Health authority to take all necessary actions to give effect to the implementation of the above recommendations.**
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1. Background

1.1 On 5th February 2019, the County Council agreed its budget for 2019/20. This included a savings proposal for a reduction in spend on Working Age Adult Nursing, Residential and Community based services. The Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health agreed at their meeting on 24th May arrangements for a consultation on the proposal to take place between 4th June and 13th August 2019.

1.2 The budgeted spend on this area of care was nearly £50m in 2018/19. Proposals in this paper would reduce this spend by a total of £495,000 by 2020/21. It is proposed to save £247,000 from the budget this year and a similar amount next year. Overall this represents approximately a 1% reduction in total budget.

2. Supporting information

2.1 The Council currently supports over 2,500 working age adults receiving long-term support. In East Sussex, the proportion of working age adults who receive this support is greater, and the spend is higher, than comparative local authorities. We also have a relatively high number of working age adults, as a proportion of our population, who are receiving their support in a residential or nursing care setting.

2.2 In January 2019, Adult Social Care undertook an audit of 50 current working age adult clients. This work focussed on key assessment documents, reviews and support plans, alongside other case information, as required. It identified a number of practice areas where improvements can be made to achieve better outcomes for people. These changes will

focus on existing practice and improving the quality and consistency of our assessment and support plans.

2.3 The audit found that there was an opportunity to more effectively build on people's strengths and maximise their independence whilst focusing our support on their Care Act eligible needs. This includes considering whether residential and nursing care is the best and most cost-effective way of supporting people. Within wider care practice there has been a move towards a strength-based approach that takes account of wider support networks and community, as well as working with people to find solutions to their challenges.

2.4 In reviewing packages of care there is also an opportunity to more effectively consider people's changing needs when their future support arrangements are being considered.

3. Consultation Responses

3.1 Consultation on the proposed changes ran from 4th June to 13th August. The responses received during the public consultation are in the Members and Cabinet Rooms for Members consideration. The summary of the consultation and responses is attached as Appendix 1 and Members must have regard to this.

3.2 Over 70 responses to the consultation were received from organisations, groups and individuals, with nearly two fifths coming from people who receive support and their families and carers.

3.3 Themes that emerged from the consultation include:

- There are particular concerns that the proposals come from an expectation that savings are made, as people feel it should be about what is needed and not about making cuts;
- People are generally supportive of the proposed approach and feel that in principle it is a reasonable step to take;
- People and their families are worried that their support will be changed in a way that will mean their needs aren't met, which would have a negative impact on their daily life;
- Respondents feel strongly that the focus must be on the individual and any reviews should be about people's needs and the best way of meeting these;
- The main challenge in supporting people in new ways is likely to be whether the right sort of support and services for this age group are available to meet demand; and
- It could be particularly challenging in rural areas, as services may be more limited.

4. Equalities Impact Assessment

4.1 In considering the proposals in this report, the Lead Member is required to have 'due regard' to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty). Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) are carried out to identify any adverse impacts that may arise as a result of the proposals for those with protected characteristics and to identify appropriate mitigations. The full EqIA is attached at Appendix 2. The Lead Member must read the full version of the EqIA and take its findings into consideration when determining these proposals.

4.2 In summary, it highlights that the proposals affect working age adults and disabled people disproportionately. It is anticipated that the proposal to implement strength-based practice and to review cases will have a positive impact overall as working age adults receiving Adult Social Care support will have a review, which looks at their circumstances and ensures that their support is the best and most cost effective way of meeting their eligible needs.

4.3 The Action Plan attached to the EqIA sets out how the proposal will be implemented.

5. Proposal

5.1 We propose to review the services available in the community that support people to stay at home or in supported accommodation. This will help us to understand the effectiveness of the options and whether more work is needed to develop the market. This will be important if we are to avoid an overreliance on residential and nursing care. As part of this work we will also work with providers to understand why residential and nursing costs are higher in East Sussex, including looking at what their service offers to see if this is different to lower cost placements in other areas.

5.2 We would carry out a programme of reviews of the support we provide to individual working age adults. This will be achieved through prioritising groups based on their main support need, the cost of their care package, the area of the county they live in or the type of support they get.

5.3 The aim of the reviews would be to ensure that:

- funded support is focused on meeting Care Act eligible needs,
- people's needs and the outcomes that their support will help to achieve are clearly set out,
- people's strengths are considered and opportunities for improving their independence are fully explored, and
- people's support is the best and most cost effective way of meeting their eligible needs.

As with any review, this might mean people's support plan would need to change and the level of support they get might change.

6. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

6.1 This report has set out the rationale for changing the approach to how services are delivered to Working Age Adults. The report has also highlighted comparatively higher spend of ESCC than similar authorities and a need to change practice to be more responsive to individual strengths and needs.

6.2 There is a strong rationale for the changes proposed based upon the initial audit of cases and comparative analysis undertaken, along with the consultation and EQIA.

6.3 These changes will see the budget reduced by £495,000 by 2020/21, which will be achieved by changes to people's care packages. All changes to services will be based on an individual's strengths and needs and will be implemented after review of individual cases.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Consultation Report

Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment