

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD, AT 10.00AM ON 15 DECEMBER 2015**

Present:

<b>Councillors</b>	<b>Cabinet Member responsibility</b>
D M Finch	Leader of the Council (Chairman)
K Bentley	Deputy Leader and Economic Growth, Waste and Recycling
R Bass	Infrastructure
A Brown	Communities and Healthy Living
R Gooding	Education and Lifelong Learning
R Hirst	Transport, Planning and Environment
E Johnson	Highways Delivery
D Louis	Corporate Services
D Madden	Adults and Children
J Spence	Finance

Councillors J Young, M Mackrory, N Le Gresley, I Henderson, M Danvers, K Bobbin, M Maddocks and R Howard also attended.

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies.

### **2. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

### **4. Public Questions**

No members of the public had registered an interest in asking a question or making a statement on any of the items to be considered at the meeting.

### **5. Decision on Modifying Charges for Non-Residential Social Care Services for Adults**

The Cabinet received report FP/266/10/15 by the Cabinet Member for Adults and Children which sought approval to implement five changes to financial assessments and raising charges from those adults who receive non-residential

social care services from Essex County Council and to request a drawdown from the Transformation Reserve of £443,000.

The following information was provided in response to questions from Councillors Young, Mackrory and LeGresley.

- The fairer charging policy for home care has been superseded by the Care Act. Councillor Madden stated he would respond to the written questions from Cllr LeGresley in writing following the meeting.
- All individuals involved in the process will be financially assessed. Additional social workers and financial assessors have been recruited to undertake the assessments ensuring people only pay what is affordable.
- The proposed changes are designed to be fairer to residents of Essex and there are only 19 users affected by the increase in the cap.
- Of the 9000+ users of social care there will only be 52% paying any charges with the bulk of the income coming from a significant number of users paying a small amount.
- The majority of responders to the consultation exercise acknowledged those who could afford the service should be expected to make a contribution.

**Resolved:**

1. To agree to implement the following changes to the financial assessments and the charging of adults who receive non-residential social care services from Essex County Council with effect from 11 April 2016:
  - Increasing the proportion of income taken into account in assessment calculations from 90% to 100%
  - Increase the cap on the maximum payment made by a Service User towards their care, currently set at £484.33/week, with the new cap for 2016/7 being £784 per week, 2017/8 being £1,085 per week, 2018/9 being £1,386 per week and 2019/2020 being £1,687 per week;
  - Use the higher rates of: Attendance Allowance (AA), the care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA); and the daily living component of the Personal Independence Payments (PIP), as part of the Service User's income taken into account in assessment calculations;
  - Reduce the maximum amount of capital disregarded in financial assessment from £30,000 to £27,000; and
  - Undertake a financial re-assessment of those service users whose current assessment takes account of their partner's financial status.
2. To agree to the provision of the following short-term initiatives to minimise any potential hardship that may arise for some service users from the above changes:
  - Additional social worker capacity to ensure that people affected by the changes are receiving a care package which is appropriate to their needs;

- Additional financial assessment capacity to meet the increased enquiries from service users and to undertake financial reassessments of service users;
  - A temporary increase in capacity by providing additional resource to the Council's contracted supplier to undertake benefits reviews to ensure that service users have the opportunity to claim their full entitlement to benefits; and
  - Development of a proposal for the provision of a carers' crisis service to identify and support carers at point of crisis, build resilience and enable them to plan and deliver their caring role, to reduce the risk to service users.
3. To agree to draw down £443,000 from the Transformation Reserve to fund the implementation of these recommendations.

## **6. Reprocurement of the Professional services Framework Agreement**

The Cabinet received report FP/257/10/15 by the Cabinet Member for Finance which sought approval to Essex County Council's purchase of professional services to support construction activities.

The following information was provided in response to questions from Councillors Young and Danvers.

- The Council is very satisfied with the value for money received from the existing external suppliers over the last period as the rate of capital expenditure has increased.
- Such are the range of competencies required and level of work going on across the County it is considered the need to create a specialist in house team is not appropriate.
- The option of having more than one contract across the County remains open.

### **Resolved:**

1. To agree to use the restricted procedure to procure a four year Professional Services Framework Agreement (PFSA) with a single provider for the provision of specialist technical services required to support and manage the delivery of construction projects.
2. To agree that the Director for Capital Delivery may finalise the award criteria.
3. To agree that the Cabinet Member for Finance may award the contract to the successful bidder.

## **7. Cabinet Decisions Report**

The Cabinet received report FP/290/11/15 by the Secretary to the Cabinet setting out the decisions taken by or in consultation with Cabinet Members since the last meeting.

## **8. Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business

## **9. Date of Next Meeting**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Cabinet would take place on Tuesday 19 January 2016 at 10.00am.

The meeting closed at 10.17am.