

**Minute extract arising from the  
Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee meeting  
Held on  
6 October 2011**

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**228. Budget Update**

A budget monitoring report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting held on 13 September. Within the report were details of the current position in relation to delivery of savings and significant cost pressures faced by Community Services due, in part, to the additional demand in adult social care provision.

To address the cost pressures, Cabinet agreed to use an additional grant which would in part reduce the cost pressures faced. However the Organisation & Resources Select Committee, at its meeting held on 15 September, also considered the budget monitoring report and the implications in relation to Community Services and requested that the HASC Committee give further consideration to the actions needed in order to harmonise budgets by year end.

The Chief Finance Officer, Cabinet Member for Community Services and Service Director Strategy and Commissioning, DCS were in attendance to present the Budget Monitoring report and to answer questions arising.

Clarification was provided that Cabinet were due to consider the next monitoring report at its meeting to be held on Tuesday 18 October where it was expected that the report would provide evidence that the actions being undertaken to address the cost pressures were likely to result in a balanced budget by 31 March 2012. It was also reported that the budget monitoring report for October would show an improved position in relation to the DCS budget and the budget was also being reviewed on a weekly basis to ensure continued monitoring.

Upon questioning the Chief Finance Officer reiterated that the Community Services budget would always remain volatile, taking into consideration the pressures faced by the department in relation to the fluidity of the services provided. The forecasting tools used to set the budget had been improved since budget setting last year and would continue to improve with the use of better developed information management to ensure a more accurate forecasting of funds required. This included regular discussion with PCT and other partners.

The Cabinet Member also confirmed that due to the nature of the service and the need for a reactive approach to service provision, the costs associated could not be guaranteed but that the weekly review of the budget would

ensure that trends taking place could be reflected accurately and would enable a more reliable forecasting in the future.

The Chairman of the Procurement and Commissioning Task Group and member of the Committee, confirmed that an update had also been received at the Groups last meeting held on 3 October and, recognising the importance of the subject, confirmed that Community Services would remain an area of interest for the Group who would provide regular updates to the Committee.

To enable to Committee to better understand the contributing factors behind the cost pressures faced by the department the Cabinet Member proposed that training, to include case scenarios, would be of benefit to members.

With the reassurances provided that the budget was likely to be balanced by 31 March 2012 and that further details would be provided in the next budget monitoring report to Cabinet, the Committee resolved as follows.

**Resolved:**

- 1) To thank the Cabinet Member and officers for responding to the questions raised.**
- 2) That the Committee would review the latest budget monitoring report at its next meeting to be held on 10 November 2011 and, upon consideration, decide on any further action to be taken.**

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