

Cheshire West and Chester Council

Future of Adult Social Care Commission

Funding and Paying for Care

13 December 2021

Commissioners

Cllr Val Armstrong, Gary Cliffe, Cllr Gillian Edwards, Alison Lee, Cllr Gina Lewis, Cllr Keith Millar,

Apologies

Cllr Lynn Riley, Cllr Neil Sullivan

Attendees:

Lynne Turnbull, (Cheshire Disabled Peoples Panel)

Dale Maskell (Age UK Cheshire)

Richard Lewis (Expert witness)

Cllr Ben Coleman and Lisa Redfern (London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham)

Del Curtis, Charlotte Walton, Morgan Jones

Observers:

The names of those who attended the meeting to observe have not been recorded

Meeting Notes

The full recording of the meeting is available by [clicking here](#)

1. Welcome and notes of last meeting

Cllr Armstrong welcomed all to the meeting and invited reflections on the last meeting. The Chairs reflections included:

- Need to have time at the end of meetings for Commissioner reflections
- the poverty that can affect those with disabilities and concerns about the debt that care costs can lead to, and the importance of a reasonable Minimum Income Guarantee level
- Importance of housing in allowing people to live independently
- Human rights approach and the right to live independently
- Very strong messages about coproduction
- Very interesting learning from the Wigan Deal about our relationships with our communities and the voluntary sector

Alison Lee's reflections included:

- Real power in the presentations heard, particularly the Cheshire Disabled People's Panel and how much of what we call disability is down to society disabling people. We need people with lived experience with us on this Commission and we need leadership by and with those most affected by decisions
- Would be really useful to hear from other groups who are users of social care – a lobbying presentation from older people or those with LD
- Need a clear and simple mission for social care – the chair has already talked about the right to an independent life and the support to help people live a long and happy life. Need a clear and aligned common purpose
- Clear learning from Wigan – ambition to commission from organisations who share our values – concept of growing our own care sector with people who live and work locally

2. Public Speaking Time

There were no requests to speak.

3. Local Experiences of Adult Social Care

The Cheshire Disabled Peoples Panel delivered their presentation to the Commission ([available here](#)), followed by Age UK Cheshire who also shared a

[blog on strengths-based practice](#). Richard Lewis then outlined his experience of accessing care and support:

- Has lived independently for the last 12 years, supported by a team of people. In 2009 this support cost him £89.10 per week, it now costs £113.95 per week. He is fortunate to receive family contributions to enable him to pay for this support.
- Even with this support he is unable to do much of what he would like – afford to go to gigs, work, travel, see family in America and take holidays
- Not just about finance and practical support – but encouragement and confidence
- Richard was also clear that he is fortunate, and there are those more vulnerable who are unable to speak out

Discussion focussed on:

- What a good life would look like and how the organisations working together in this partnership could work together to help people achieve their own version of a good life
- The fact that a good life is not affordable without additional financial support from family
- Parents 'moving mountains' to ensure support
- The need to promote understanding of the role of a personal assistant (PA), something which may be factored into the Commissions workforce discussion

4. The Key Financial Issues for Adult Social Care

John Jackson from the Local Government Association (LGA) shared a presentation setting out key local and national financial issues ([available here](#))

Discussion focused on:

- The need for efficiencies and savings made in social care services to be reinvested in improving services
- Currently nearly all council spending on adult social care is raised locally through council tax and non-domestic rates. Covid related grants have been a recent exception
- The need for CVS organisations to ensure their services have a clear impact and that they can demonstrate that
- The need for Councils, health and CVS partners to have good relationships and recognise that they are not experts in every area
- The importance of regular review of care needs to ensure that they are understood and are being met appropriately

5. Comfort break

6. The Hammersmith and Fulham approach

Councillor Ben Coleman and Lisa Redfern gave a presentation on the approach taken in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBH&F) ([available here](#))

Discussion focused on:

- LBH&Fs decision to provide expert negotiation training to council officers and the council's subsequent record of receiving higher funds from developers than elsewhere
- There is no statutory requirement for authorities to charge for care
- Potential to fund hyper-local services from smaller organisations – example given of LBH&Fs 'meals and a chat on wheels' service
- LBH&Fs development of a procurement pipeline to help suppliers get competition ready and be in a place to bid for work at the right time
- Challenge that CVS organisations should not begin conversations with authorities by asking for more money but make the case for they can do
- The increase in demand for care within LBH&F that was created by abolishing charges – revealing the level of unmet need
- Importance of investment in relationships with care providers
- Need for investment in training to support the culture change required to move the workforce to a social model understanding of disability
- The ratio of direct payments (around a third) and homecare (two-thirds) within LBH&F and work to increase the proportion of direct payments

7. Commissioners Discussion

- Desire for a different way of working can be clearly demonstrated by leaders and individuals but organisational behaviour does not necessarily change
- Need to consider how we consider housing and planning and how we influence future developments to be more adaptable and sustainable for peoples changing lives and needs
- The support that individuals and families need to navigate a system that can be a real surprise and challenge for people
- Difficulty of complex forms that are not user friendly and that do not fully recognise cognitive disabilities such as dementia

8. Proposed focus of next meeting

Next meeting will be 14 February 2-4 pm and focus on engagement with those who draw on social care. An evening meeting on 22 February 6.30-8pm will focus on the role of communities.

Discussion Themes

Cheshire Disabled Peoples Panel Proposals

- A commitment from the Council Leader, Labour Group, the Commissioners, and opposition councillors to support the disabled people's rights' movement call for universal, uncharged provision of social care
- When considering the future funding of care in the CWAC authority for 2022/23, the Commission must commit to the following safeguards:
- Non-residential care charges to be frozen at current levels.
- The Personal Expenses Allowance for residential home residences must be raised above the Bank of England predicted 2022 annual rate of inflation - 5%
- The Minimum Income Guarantee to be increased at the discretionary level for 2022/23 across all rates, in addition to the statutory increase set out in the White Paper, to compensate for year-on-year inflation-rise impacts since 2014
- CDPP seeks a commitment from the Commission and Cabinet that an adequately funded, co-produced Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) guidance resource is created for distribution from April 2022 to every person in CWAC with care and support needs charged for care and support
- To comply with GDPR regulations, the distribution of the resource will be undertaken by the local authority
- The authority to agree to a convenient, low-cost procedure for submitting DRE expense receipts / evidence—for example, photographing of receipts / GP letters with a phone camera, for emailing to the local authority financial assessment team.

Age UK Cheshire challenges

- Older people are often disabled as well, and Age UK Cheshire supports the points made by the CDPP

- Commonly deal with local complaints around waiting for assessments, disjointed or unresponsive services, fundamental lack of capacity in services, some poor quality services and help for families providing care being withdrawn
- Key challenges for people are around accessing care, finding appropriate care providers and sourcing funding
- Key role of AgeUK Cheshire is helping people navigate an incredibly complex system that many people disengage from due to either cost or complexity

John Jackson (LGA)

- your spending on each long term care package for younger people is relatively high (£28,356 compared with the England average £26,548). Do you know why?
- The proportion of older people getting long term care is relatively high at 5.20% - just below the national average (5.30%) which is surprising given your relative lack of deprivation.
- overall spending on older adults is because you spent much less on each older person's long term care than the England average - £10,405 compared with £15,134. This is one of the lowest in England. This is probably positive but do you understand why?
- The need for CVS organisations to ensure their services have a clear impact and that they can demonstrate it

Potential areas of recommendation raised

- Promote understanding of the role of a personal assistant (PA), something which may be factored into the Commissions workforce discussion
- Consider investing in high quality negotiation training for council staff to improve the gains that can be made from developers
- Focus on how to develop and sustain a diverse local care market that reflects the values of the partners on the Commission
- Consider the viability of abolishing local charges for disabled people living in the community
- Consider how we consider housing and planning and how we influence future developments to be more adaptable and sustainable for peoples changing lives and needs
- Consider the support that individuals and families need to navigate a system that can be a real surprise and challenge for people
- Review complex forms that are not user friendly and that do not fully recognise cognitive disabilities such as dementia
- Review the Minimum Income Guarantee and consider all CDPP proposals (listed under the discussion themes)

- Review communications around social care reviews
- Undertake analysis of the ASC expenditure and resource allocation queries raised by John Jackson
- Consideration of the 'Rurality penalty' and the additional difficulty of accessing services for people living in rural areas
- Consider whole Council training on the social model of disability