



Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee
4 December 2013

Family, Friends & Community Support – Social Capital in Surrey

At the request of the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee, this report provides an overview of the role Friends, Family & Community Support in the budget of Adult Social Care.

INTRODUCTION

- Following feedback, including that of the Adult Select Committee, the term 'Social Capital' has been replaced by 'Family, Friends and Community Support'.
- The essence of the agenda for making better use of Family, Friends and Community Support is quite simple:
 - We know from listening to people who need care and support that they prefer to access help and resources from within their local community;
 - This has the added potential advantage of reducing the amount of support which the council needs to purchase.
- Further clarity on what constitutes an asset or strength based approach (looking at peoples strengths, their own resources and those of the community around them) will be given by the passage of the Care Bill through Parliament. It is anticipated that this will become law in April 2015. This will also make clear that Family, Friends & Community Support, as it is known in Surrey, is an expected part of any assessment of need.

IN MORE DETAIL

- This approach is gaining considerable national acceptance, as indicated by the research paper attached to this report (see Annex 3 for an executive summary of this paper, and Annex 4 for the full research paper). However, Surrey County Council was in the vanguard of attempting to turn this approach into cashable savings, essentially because there was no alternative in order to reach the savings targets required by the 2013-14 cash limit. For that reason, the original savings target of £15.5 million was flagged as a red risk and it has remained that way.
- Future savings targets (which have been slightly adjusted since the attached Adult Select Committee report, Annex 2, was written, and now stand at £10m - £10m - £10m - £5m in the four remaining years of the MTFP) are similarly uncertain.

- There are two aspects of uncertainty. First, are such savings achievable at all? The eventual target of £50m is equivalent to 15% of the £340m gross spend directly on providing care. In practice, opportunities will vary between care types and client groups, and practical assessments of what is achievable at a finer level of detail are under way. However, the principles and commitment behind this approach are considered sound.
- Second, with what speed can the savings be expected to come through? There is a natural phasing based on the rate of turnover (new care users are expected to be the easiest to support with new approaches) and the rate of review of existing clients. The budget planning was based on phasing primarily for that factor. In practice, it has become clearer that four conditions need to be in place before the approach can be expected to work fully:
 - Formal training and the informal cultural acceptance
 - Sufficient available time for practitioners to have the 'difficult conversations' with current and future service users which will enable direct spend be reduced. It was identified that the time taken to put cases on the system was standing in the way of this, and therefore an initiative is under way with a target of reducing that time by 50%. Initial results in the model office at Woking suggest that this will be achieved, but not until next year across County the whole
 - Appropriate access to relevant information in order to identify and put forward the most suitable approaches. The increasing usefulness of Surrey Information Point helps with this, but the creation of a Procurement Portal covering all sectors is an additional important step and is not expected until next year
 - Where the emphasis is on the community rather than family and friends, then there need to actually be the right networks to call on. That position varies across the County, and although the Council's actions in maintaining voluntary sector support and using the partnership programme with district councils is helpful, there is action being taken to ensure there is a network of easily accessible local support, Surrey-wide.
- Case studies of how Family, Friends & Community Support works in practice in Surrey are in Annex 1.

RECOMMENDATION

- That the Committee considers the report and makes recommendations as appropriate.

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