

SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING BUDGET SAVINGS 09/10

IMPLICATION OF MANAGEMENT ACTIONS TO DELIVER A BALANCED BUDGET IN 09/10

Agency Staff

All statutory and regulatory requirements for staffing will be met, e.g. if a care service or care home is required by the Care Commission to have a specific number of staff, these will be filled using agency staff. The impact of not employing agency staff on some occasions may mean that there is reduced administrative support, reduced activity within some of the day centres or care homes and reduced capacity in some services.

Overtime

Overtime will be paid where it is absolutely essential to cover statutory duties and where there is a potential for a risk to life or limb. There will be occasions where staff have to make judgements about working over their contracted hours in order to ensure the safety of a service for service users. This will be acceptable as long as the staff member is very clear about the reasons they have worked overtime and this is agreed by their Head of Service. We will also potentially look to be giving time of in lieu as opposed to payment for overtime where this is possible.

Essential Purchases

No purchases will be authorised until we are clear that all opportunities to recycle or seek alternative provision or purchase has been explored. Essential purchases to include such items as medical supplies, etc, will still be bought as required.

Admissions to Nursing and Care Homes

All admissions to nursing and care homes are agreed by a multi-agency panel on a weekly basis. The management action proposed is that any admissions agreed by the panel will be scrutinised by the Head of Service or Director to ensure the highest level of accountability for such decisions based on assessed need and to ensure that all alternative supports are being mobilised where possible and appropriate. Clearly the proposal is to target those most in need which could potentially have an impact on delayed discharge figures. Aberdeen has been, until very recently, one of only 6 authorities in the country to achieve the 0 target on delayed discharges. Recently the figure crept up to 4 which is still in the top performing quartile in the country. We will endeavour to keep this figure down but there is a risk of increase due to the proposed management action.

Increase in Care Packages

Where it is a critical or life and limb concern we will increase care packages. We will be looking to ensure that we have correct allocation of resources so if, for example, someone requires extra support we will check to see whether there is any reduction in other care packages to provide for that extra support. Overall, in the short term, any failure to provide sufficient support increases the risk of admission to care. This requires careful management and decision making.

Purchased Day Care

This action refers to day care outwith currently block purchased or Aberdeen City Council Services. We will therefore ensure those who need day care on an assessed and urgent basis will have that provision in house or from current purchased provision.

Respite Service

This refers to externally spot purchased respite care. Again, we will try to ensure that people who require respite for urgent reasons will have this from block purchased or in house service. We will also seek to provide alternatives to residential respite where possible, e.g. provision of other supports within the community. This has the potential to reduce the amount of respite available to children and young people and adults within the City. There are examples where we are providing term time care and support for children and young people particularly those with a disability and who also have respite through holiday periods. Any decisions to reduce respite will be risk assessed. We have our 20 bed respite facility within Rosewell House fully functional and this will be fully utilised for older people requiring respite.

Recommendations for External Placement for Children and Young People

We will ensure that social workers who are working with children and young people use all resources within the City to ensure that we do not need to place children without Aberdeen. We will work closely with the current service providers to ensure that we have services available through the Art team, Education, etc and ensure that we have the confidence and support of the Reporter to the Children's Hearing and panel members to manage this action. Clearly young people who require to be in secure accommodation for their own safety or the safety of others will be so placed according to clearly assessed risk.

Uncommitted Balances

We have identified the uncommitted balances within each of our budgets. However, where spend is necessary or critical for the safety of service users, Heads of Service can approve that expenditure. We have taken a proportion of the uncommitted balances as a saving but have left budget holders with an agreed amount to manage until the end of the financial year.

Travel Outwith the City

Travel outwith the City will be approved for essential business only. This may have the impact of reduced attendance and conference national events. We have agreed that visits to young people outwith the City can be reduced from fortnightly to monthly. Each case will be risk assessed and exceptions will be made if a higher level of visiting is required.

Conferences/ External Training

Once again no conferences, training, etc, will be authorised unless on an exceptional basis, to be approved by the Director. This will have the impact of reducing the training opportunities for staff and our attendance at national events in the very short term.

Savings Proposals to be Brought Forward

The Senior Management Team are currently working on the 10/11 Savings Plan and where possible we will bring those actions forward as quickly as we can.

Overall we are taking the short-term measures to target support to our most needy citizens and will ensure that everything possible is done to deliver a balanced budget in year, within the bounds of safe professional practice. We are also working on producing a longer term strategy for a sustainable future budget which will constrain the growth required for the demographics of an ageing population and increased need.