

Social Services, Housing and Community Safety Scrutiny Committee
(Multi-Location Meeting - Council Chamber, Port Talbot & Microsoft Teams)

Members Present:

4 January 2024

Vice Chairperson: Councillor H.C.Clarke

Councillors: H.Davies, O.S.Davies, S.E.Freeguard,
A.Lodwig, S.Rahaman and D.Whitelock

Officers In Attendance J.Hodges, C.Howard, A.Jarrett, A.J.Thomas,
K.Warren, N.Blackmore, H.Jones, N.Jones,
S.Bradshaw, S.Waite, A.Bradshaw, S.Jones,
L.Morris and A.Thomas

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors S.Harris and A.Llewelyn

Observers Councillors S.Hunt, W.Griffiths, S.Knoyle.

1. **Chair's Announcements**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

3. **Budget Consultation 2024/25**

Members considered the Budget Consultation Report 2024/25 as presented.

The Chair outlined that comments from the meeting will form part of the formal consultation response to the budget. Members were reminded of their obligation as part of the budget consultation process to put forward any other proposals for budget savings which

are not included within the report so that officers can give them consideration as soon as possible.

Members were reminded that they should consider the elements of the budget which fall under the remit of this scrutiny committee.

Officers gave an overview of the savings identified which fell under the remit of the committee, working through each of the identified budget lines individually.

The Head of Adult Services outlined the saving proposals identified in SSHH 1 – SSHH 8. It was recognised that the proposals come with risk. Officers identified that the biggest risk for adult services would be not regaining control of the market. It was noted that there be resistance to some of the changes from families, people would not want to see their packages reduced. Officers advised that additional reports would be brought back before Cabinet Board outlining the risks associated with the changes proposed.

Member asked if the necessary risk assessments had been carried out with regards to the identified proposals. It was confirmed by officers that each proposal would be risk assessed as required and there would not be a move to lone working. The service delivery will only be changed if it is safe to do so.

Members noted that the main body of the report refers to not filling vacancies. Officers noted that this referred to work that had been carried out in year.

Members expressed their concerns around the complexities of bringing services back in house and noted Trem Y Glyn was to be brought back in house. Members sought reassurance that there would be no delay in doing this once it had been agreed.

The Head of Childrens Services outlined the savings proposal outlined in SSHH 9 – SSHH 13.

Members sought clarification with regards to the savings identified in relation to asylum seeking children. Officers confirmed that this is funded by the Home Office. Internal staff have now been trained up to carry out some of the roles whereas external consultants have previously had to be used.

In relation to Hillside Secure Unit, it was confirmed that officers can charge for their time that they use to support the unit. In the past this has not been recharged fully however the £92,000 is the additional amount of officer time that has been required to be put in to support Hillside. The Council is not allowed to make a profit from Hillside, however officers advised that the Council should not be subsidising the facility. Officers advised that more officer time is being utilised supporting the facility.

With regards to SSHH 15, this is in relation to the transformation project in Housing which has already been scrutinised at a previous meeting.

There were no additional budget proposals put forward by members at the meeting.

Following scrutiny, Members noted the report.

4. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

CHAIRPERSON