

Subject: Norfolk County Council Consultations – Information & Advice Services and Building Resilient Lives

Report to: Housing & Neighbourhoods Committee 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016

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#### **SUBJECT MATTER/RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report summarises the two consultations currently being undertaken by Norfolk County Council, discusses the potential impact on the Borough's residents, recommends that the Committee respond to the consultations and suggests a response for consideration.

### **1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

Norfolk County Council launched **two public consultations on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016, which close on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2016** they are:

- i. Information and Advice Services
- ii. Building resilient lives: Reshaping Housing Related Support

Both consultations state that Norfolk County Council (**NCC**) **currently spends £1m each day on adult social services** and that there are already plans to increase the amount in 2017/18. However with demand on social care continuing to change, savings will still be needed if NCC is to continue to meet peoples care needs. The consultations go on to say that they need to get the right balance between spending money on existing people's care needs and spending money that helps people live well and independently in their community.

### **2. CONSULTATION SUMMARIES**

#### **Information and Advice Services**

NCC currently spends **£1.7 m on information and Advice Services across Norfolk**, which they are seeking under these proposals to **reduce to £1.5 million**. NCC has a statutory responsibility to provide advocacy services therefore this element of the service is out of scope.

NCC consulted in 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014 and these consultations have shaped the current service provision.

The current provision is divided between **specialist information & advice, support for people with personal budgets and generalist advice.**

The specialist provision caters for people with disabilities, long-term conditions and support needs. The service is provided by a range of organisations that specialise in providing advice to particular client groups. The specialist provision covers older people, people suffering with dementia, people who are deaf, people with disabilities, people with mental health problems and people with learning disabilities. Some of this specialist provision also receives funding from the NHS.

The consultation sets out some proposals for consideration such as:

- Targeting services more effectively at preventing people needing care
- Using existing information services to promote independence such linking to NCC customer services more closely with providing information and advice.
- Providing information and advice at more locations such as GP surgeries and at other venues within the local community.
- Is specialist provision right, could a single point of access or hub approach be more effective
- Make more use of the internet
- Is the service being duplicated? Housing related support services offer information and advice.

### **Building Resilient Lives – Reshaping Housing Related Support.**

NCC currently spends **over £10m on Housing Related Support Services** across Norfolk, which they are seeking under these proposals to **reduce to £4.5 million**. This level of spend currently **supports approximately 11,000 people** to maintain independent living.

NCC does have a **statutory obligation under the Care Act 2014 to ensure prevention services are available** but they are at liberty to choose how they are provided.

This consultation highlights that the NCC consulted residents and stakeholders on similar proposals for housing related support last year as part of the **Re-imaging Norfolk consultation**. Although NCC Members decided not to take those proposals forward at that time the level of savings now required means that the proposals are now being revisited.

The current provision being considered within this consultation includes:

<b>Type of Provision</b>	<b>Annual Cost (Norfolk)</b>	<b>What it does</b>
Sheltered housing for older people	£1.8m	<p>Supports older people who are living as tenants in one of the 6,137 dwelling across Norfolk. The service provides a range of help such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular contact service</li> <li>• Wellbeing checks</li> <li>• Help to access other care and support</li> <li>• Provides information and advice</li> <li>• Practical support with completing forms, making health care appointments, coping with bereavement, coping with long-term conditions</li> <li>• Emergency response</li> </ul>
Floating Support (including older people's outreach service)	£3.6m	<p>Provides for 2,579 units of support. Includes the following services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generic floating support</li> <li>• Specialist floating support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older people</li> <li>• Gypsy and traveller families</li> <li>• People with mental health problems</li> <li>• Homelessness</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Homelessness Services	£2.6m	Offers 498 rooms across Norfolk and supported 694 people between April & June 2016.

		Provides accommodation and support for adults who are homeless Includes 3 direct access hostels Provides accommodation and support to people for up to 2 years Provides move on accommodation
Young People's Services	£2m	Supported 367 people between April & June. Provides specialist housing related support to 18-24 year olds Provides hostel accommodation, supported lodgings and move on accommodation

The consultation sets out the following proposals for consideration:

- Not renewing contracts that are coming to an end but looking at those in isolation won't achieve the savings.
- Working with partners to take a fundamental look at services and explore innovative ways of working
- Ensure contracts offer good value for money and avoid duplication e.g. information and advice services
- Ensure that people who need support are not passed between services
- Ensure that money is spent on those most in need. The consultation specifically mentioned sheltered housing as a service that not everyone may need.
- Ensure services reflect new priorities such as the impact loneliness has on wellbeing
- How people move through services to achieve a level of independence
- Provide support in a different way such as peer to peer rather than 121 or via the telephone rather than a visit.
- Withdrawing some services like sheltered housing and offering the option to pay for the service for those who wish to

There is a general feeling among the district councils in Norfolk that this process is being rushed through with limited understanding of how these proposals will practically impact on the most vulnerable residents. NCC want to deliver the £5.5

million saving over two years and are suggesting that it's taken at the rate of £2.1 million in 2017/18 and £3.4 million in 2018/19.

There is genuine concern that the proposals will increase demand on districts and on the acute health and social care services at a time when the direction of travel nationally is to support more people at home and reduce demand on such services.

## **Sustainable Transformation Plan**

Over the last few weeks, the Norfolk and Waveney Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP) has been published. The Plan sets out the following vision of health and social care services:

**“Our vision is to provide high quality services that support more people to live independently at home, especially older people and those with long-term conditions, like heart disease, breathing problems, diabetes or dementia.”**

The plan sets out priorities across 4 key areas of health and social care: Acute Care; Primary, Community and Social Care; Prevention and Well-being; and Mental Health.

The services in scope clearly make a significant contribution to the vision and objectives set out in the STP. Whilst this does not in itself mean that services shouldn't be reviewed and whilst it is understandable that savings need to be made, the concern has been expressed by a number of health and social care partners that this review and related service cuts are being considered in isolation. It may not therefore take into account the longer term impact that such significant reductions in service would have on residents, other health and social care services and the aims and objectives set out in the STP.

## **Potential Impact on the Residents of the Borough**

### **Older People**

Council currently holds two contracts with NCC to provide housing related support services.

- i. **Sheltered Housing contract**, which helps provide 'warden' service to the 1175 older people living in 945 sheltered housing flats and bungalows
- ii. **Community Outreach Service**, which to date has helped in excess 1,000 older people who do not live in sheltered housing.

**The sheltered housing service** underwent remodelling in 2011 following a 33% reduction in funding provided by NCC. This led to a more targeted approach based

on need and what mattered most to the older person. As a result the service was able to continue to offer a range of support to older people from intensive daily intervention to only accessing support as and when needed. At the time of remodelling the service anticipated that in all likelihood further reductions in funding would follow and therefore developed a model that was flexible. However the scale of the reduction and the speed with which it is expected to be delivered is something that isn't achievable or potentially safe for the tenants receiving a service in sheltered housing.

The potential impact on older people and other services is likely to be:

- More older people will become socially isolated
- More older people will not seek help or get access to the services they need to keep well and remain independent
- Under reporting of adult safeguarding concerns as a layer of protection is removed
- Older people who do not have the support of family or friends could have no-one to seek information, guidance, advice and support from
- An increase in demand on a whole range of services for example
  - GP surgeries, older people are likely to seek help for a whole range of issues many of which will not be medical.
  - The police for wellbeing checks
  - The ambulance service for non-injury incidents and to reassure the worried well
  - Residential Care – sheltered housing keeps people living at home for a lot longer this would not be the case in the future.
  - Adult Social Care – increased need for care assessments as some older people and their families look to secure alternative services meet their care & support needs
  - Hospitals – delayed discharge for older people who previously would have been supported in the short-term by the sheltered housing service. Also there is the potential for increased re-admissions.
  - Borough Council services, such as tenancy services and the repairs service.

This list is not exhaustive and there are likely to be impacts that have not been considered because historically sheltered housing 'warden service' has always been provided.

**The Community Outreach Service** was established in 2011 and is funded by the savings made to sheltered housing services. The contract with NCC to deliver this service expires at the end 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017. This service has provided **significant outcomes for health and the social care sector by supporting people to regain**

**and maintain their confidence to live independently.** The service provides support ranging from information and advice to intensive support to address complex housing, care and health issues.

This service receives many referrals from health and social care teams to support older people who are in need but who do not meet their criteria for help. The outreach service attend multi-disciplinary team meetings with health and social care colleagues providing a layer of information and support around meeting both acute and long-term needs of the patients and clients they are discussing. The service also supports the families and carers of older people who struggle to understand and navigate through the complex systems.

Strategically the Council works closely with the statutory and voluntary sector to ensure services are meeting key national outcomes for older people such as preventing hospital admission, preventing admission to care and combating social isolation to name but a few. In addition the Council is a key player in both supporting the development delivery services that enable people to be healthy and well at home.

Since the service was set up, over 1000 older people within the Borough have been supported and several case studies are available to demonstrate the long term value to residents, communities and the vision and objectives of the STP.

### **Single Homelessness**

Within the borough this funding is used to support the single homeless who have a range of housing issues from finding and accessing suitable accommodation to maintaining a tenancy and preventing homelessness. The money funds direct access hostels such as Beulah House plus move on accommodation services such as half-way houses and smart move. As well as providing accommodation the services provide a range of support to provide people with the skills to live independently in the future. This will include advice and support to access benefits, finding employment and finding housing. These services support the council's statutory duty under the homelessness legislation by providing intensive support to clients with multiple and complex needs.

### **Young People**

The funding supports specialist housing related support provision for young people aged 18-24. Within the borough this funding contributes towards specialist hostel accommodation provided at ASPRE and by the YMCA. It also provides for specialist housing advice and practical support.

## **Floating Support Services**

Floating support services help keep people independent and safe within their homes by providing a range of support to help manage finances, set up home, maintain a home and offer emotional support. Floating support provision within the borough is provided generically by Stonham and is open to all adults. In addition there is specialist provision for gypsy and traveller families and people with mental health problems.

The potential impact on the single homeless, young people and those receiving floating support is:

- The loss of direct access hostels would lead to higher incidences of rough sleeping and associated ASB plus higher level of presentation to GYBC statutory service.
- The loss of supported accommodation for young people would increase homeless referrals for this age group with higher operational costs for GYBC, safeguarding issues and potential use of unregulated alternatives.
- Probable higher dependency on Council officers if floating support services are cut as tenants and residents would seek advice where it was accessible.
- Higher demand for existing voluntary sector advice services e.g. DIAL, CAB.
- Higher use of primary care services e.g. GP surgeries, A&E.
- Tenants & residents reaching crisis point due to lack of prevention services creating higher demand on high level services.

The proposals contained in Building Resilient Lives – Reshaping Housing Related Support will have a significant impact on the residents of the Borough. There is an acceptance that services should be reviewed and that some could be remodelled to achieve efficiencies but that this takes time.

There is significant evidence to suggest that homelessness and rough sleeping have been increasing significantly over the last few years and will continue to present a challenge to housing, health and social care services. The sheer scale of savings being proposed together with the pace at which the savings are to be realised has the potential to be disastrous for vulnerable people who rely on the support these services provide.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are direct and indirect financial implications for the district if these proposals and savings are taken forward.



## Direct Financial Implications

The outreach service is currently funded until 31<sup>st</sup> August 2017. This contract is worth £133,000. If NCC decides to cease funding this service there will be redundancy costs for the council unless the staff can be redeployed into other roles.

The sheltered housing service is operated under a Public Cooperation Agreement with NCC. NCC provides funding of £313,000 per annum for the provision of housing related support in sheltered housing. This funding makes up 55% of the overall funding into sheltered housing with the remainder coming from tenants who are not on housing benefit and from a housing management charge. Losing this funding would lead to a greatly reduced service for older people living in sheltered housing, which would need less staff resource to deliver it. Therefore there would be a redundancy cost for the council unless staff could be redeployed.

The proposals could also impact on Right to Buy. Currently sheltered housing is exempt under paragraph 11 schedule 5 of the Housing Act 1985 because it is deemed as housing that is '*particularly suitable for occupation by elderly persons, which takes into account the location, size, design, heating system and other features*' which could include the provision of a supported housing service. If the Right to Buy exemptions no longer apply the Council will lose rental income.

## Indirect Financial Implications

Other council provided services are likely to experience increased demand and also increased operational costs through dealing with issues that are currently dealt with or managed through housing related support services. Examples include increased ASB, greater demand on services such as repair and increased dependency on tenancy management services.

## 4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

The **financial risks** would be significant both in terms of losing direct funding and also increased operational costs as highlighted earlier in the report

There are **reputational risks** as many people will not differentiate between what the borough council funds and what county funds. For example an increase in the incidence of rough sleeping will be viewed as a borough council issue as will a reduction in services such as sheltered housing which are traditionally seen as being

provided by the borough council.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

The impact of these proposals is going to be significant both for service users and organisations delivering service to vulnerable people within the borough.

The consultation has been given a relatively low profile by NCC. The consultation is online, which excludes many of the client groups affected by these proposals. There has not been sufficient time for direct engagement with services users as there was with the Re-imaging Norfolk consultation. Instead NCC relied on providers to highlight the consultation to their service users and encourage them to respond.

Significant concern has been expressed by both Council Officers and health and social care partners -at the scale of the cuts and the time frame within which they are expected to be delivered, which will place extremely vulnerable people at risk and result in them finding other means through which they can be supported, placing increased demand on other parts of the health & social care system.

It is quite right that all parts of the health and social care system are reviewed and it is understandable that significant savings will need to be made. However, these proposals are being looked at in isolation, when it is clear that the success of the STP will rely on a systems wide approach which galvanises the efforts of all partners. A full review cannot be undertaken without reference to or consideration of the impact it could have on other organisations. The Council is willing to work with NCC to improve the outcomes for the vulnerable residents of Great Yarmouth and has been suggesting a locality based approach to reviewing services.

Further concern has been raised that NCC is expecting providers to make suggestions about how their services can be remodelled and achieve efficiencies and yet there is no guarantee that the service wouldn't be retendered using the models worked up by existing providers.

There has little data or evidence to back up the premise that services which support older people are not needed. In fact experience is the opposite. The contribution that sheltered housing and more recently the outreach services has made to enable older people to live safe and well at home cannot be underestimated. There are many practical examples of where a timely housing related support intervention has prevented the need for other less appropriate services and has saved the public purse. People living in sheltered housing are less likely to enter residential care. People supported by the outreach service are less likely to place demand on acute services.

The review required cannot be achieved within the timescale being suggested in this consultation as it requires an appraisal of the whole system if it is to be effective and sustainable. The danger of not taking a system-wide approach is that services, which may survive this time, will inevitably be considered in the future as the pressure from demand continues to increase on acute and statutory services.

## 6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing and Neighbourhoods Committee respond to the consultation documents to

- Express their concern in terms of both the level of savings proposed and the timeframe within which they are expected to be delivered.
- Highlight that the proposals do not take account of the impact on the wider system and do not address the issue of increasing demand on acute services therefore these proposals are unlikely to deliver any real savings.
- Recommend a thorough, systems wide review, as part of the development of the Sustainable Transformation Plan.

## 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Norfolk County Council Consultation Document – Information and Advice Services
- Norfolk County Council Consultation Document – Building Resilient Lives: Reshaping Housing Related Support.

*Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?*

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation:	None
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	
Existing Council Policies:	Homelessness
Financial Implications:	Covered in the report
Legal Implications (including human rights):	
Risk Implications:	Covered in the report
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	Covered in the report
Crime & Disorder:	Covered in the report

Every Child Matters:	Covered in the report
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