



THE PHOENIX

Campaign for Independent Living in Lewisham

October 2008

BUDGET SPECIAL

A message from Denise Smith, Chair, CILL

Less than a year after Mayor Steve Bullock pledged that Adult Social Care was a core service that required proper funding, Lewisham Council is proposing savings of £2.692m. The proposals echo the proposals made last year yet despite major opposition to them, the biggest (and presumably most expensive) consultation carried out by the Council, the decision only to change charges and the commitment by the Mayor to properly fund services they are back on the table. The proposals have already been seen by the Mayor and Cabinet and approved for the scrutiny process.

The Proposals

- A1) Changes to the Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) criterion (removing lower substantial eligibility level) as per statutory consultation in 2007. The level of eligibility savings will depend on the speed of reassessments of clients and the level to which the Mayor would wish to reinvest in mitigating effects on users who lose services. Reduced number of service users following raising of eligibility criterion is likely to result in the closure of 1-day centre. This may need to be subject to further consultation. The estimated revenue saving for 2009/10 is **£1.886m**. The full year effect is estimated at £2.075m of savings across all client groups. (Note that this proposal includes the changes included in option A2 below).
- A2) The removal of moderate FACS criteria to existing clients allowing for the closure of 1-day centre and reduction in care packages. £250k day centre closure, and a further £100k reduction in care packages totalling **350k**. The level of savings will depend on the level to which the Mayor would wish to reinvest in mitigating effects on users who lose services. This would be subject to further consultation. (This option is part of A1 above).
- B) Establishing a single point of access for Adult Social Care enquiries from the public and service users. Improved service through CallPoint and AccessPoint, leading to a reduction of staff in the 4 current duty teams. Agency staff would be released, generating revenue savings of **£225k**. The full year effect will be £300k.

- C) Implementing fully electronic business system and mobile working reducing business support and care assessment staff. Revenue savings of **£52.5k** will be generated from electronic working through improved social worker productivity. The full year effect will be £210k.
- D) Fairer Charging for non-residential services. Assessing all eligible benefits consistently is expected to release savings of **£70k**.
- E) Fairer Charging income: Improvement in the collection rate through faster assessment and greater use of direct debits is expected to achieve savings of **£30k**.
- F) Housing 21: Extra Care Housing for older adults with care requirements - a reduction of additional care costs above contract level saving of **£10k**.
- G) Reconfiguration of the day service offer to older clients in order to develop and provide increased focus on users with higher support needs at In-House centres and transfer appropriate clients to Housing 21 where there are voids at Cinnamon Court and Cedar Court. There are 22 clients at Ladywell using 35 sessions per week who have been estimated by day service management as being suitable for Housing 21. The saving would be achieved by reducing day service officer posts by 1.1 full time equivalent, thereby achieving a saving of **£31k**.
- H) Lifestyles Housing 21: To better meet their needs, transfer appropriate older Learning Disabilities clients from Mulberry centre and Leemore to Housing 21 service, reduce staff support proportionately. Proposed deletion of 0.8 day service officer post across Leemore and Mulberry saving **£20k**.
- I) Day Opportunities and Housing 21 Rotary management: As a consequence of the proposals above, reduce the service co-ordinator provision by 0.5. Deliverability of this option is dependent on success of the two previous Housing 21 options - **£19k**.
- J) Extra Care Housing for older adults with care requirements. An expected reduction in voids on double rooms is expected to realise savings of **£20k**.
- K) Supporting People (SP) funding for Adult Placement Scheme (APS): Proposal is to commission administrative element of APS through SP funding saving of **£80k**.

- L) Home Care: Reconfiguration of service posts. Reduction in the number of supervisory posts. Service currently has a high ratio of supervisors to staff of **£70k**.
- M) Contracting of Adult Social Care Services - Reorganisation of contract monitoring posts saving **£39k**.
- N) Reshape Meals on Wheels service either by recommissioning or increasing charges. Options being developed currently - up to **£140k** savings estimated.

Where We Are Now

The proposals are now in the scrutiny process and have been to the Council's Stronger and Safer Community Select Committee and will go to the Healthier Communities Select Committee this week. From there they go to the Public Accounts Select Committee on 4 November and then to the Mayor and Cabinet on 19 November for decisions.

Following their meeting The Stronger and Safer Scrutiny Committee resolved that:

- The Public Accounts Select Committee be advised, when considering the savings proposals at its meeting on 4 November 2008 and formulating its response to the Mayor and Cabinet on the proposals, that the view of the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee is that the savings proposals relating to changing the Fair Access to Care Services criterion were not acceptable last year and they are still not acceptable this year; and
- Written responses (a) to Councillor Walton's questions; (b) on how much the consultation on last year's savings proposal to alter the FACS criterion had cost the Council and from which budget the cost had been met; and (c) on whether Income Support was reduced for those in receipt of Severe Disability Allowance, be provided to the committee.

The Public Accounts Select Committee will provide its views on the savings proposals (taking into account the views of the other select committees) to Mayor and Cabinet for consideration at the meeting scheduled for 19 November.

CILL is concerned about some of these proposals, particularly A1 – restricting eligibility criteria to 'critical' and 'higher substantial'. Other groups and individuals will be concerned at others.

The CILL Trustees believe that the most effective way of challenging these proposals will be through a campaign representing a consortium of groups and individuals and I am now contacting groups to see if they will join with us in a new 'Lewisham Crisis – All our Futures' campaign.

If we cannot get the support then CILL will still campaign alone but our focus will have to be on the proposal A1 to restrict eligibility criteria.

What you can do

If you want to join the campaign please let me know in the next few days. If you represent a group or know of a group that would like to join again please let me know. My email is denise.cill@btinternet.com

Our best chance of success may well be a mass lobby at the Town Hall at the meeting on 19 November so that the Mayor and Cabinet can see the opposition to the proposals. There will be other things you can do in the meantime so please check our website www.cill.org.uk

AND FINALLY

We were alerted to these proposals by Lewisham Green Party so I thank them and particularly Cllr Ute Michel, Cllr Dean Walton and Gavin McGregor Green Party Political Assistant.

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