

S26. SOCIAL WORK ADULT SERVICES OVERSPEND 2014/2015

The committee considered a report by the Head of Social Work Adult Services providing information on the budget overspend in social work adult services during the financial year 2014/15. The report also provided contextual information and information on actions to monitor and manage expenditure. Deirdre Cilliers provided an overview of the report.

Members sought further information on eligibility criteria. Deirdre Cilliers stated that it was a complex area. She advised that the first priority was to ensure that everyone was being fully assessed for services and given the right services for their needs. She also stated that a review of assessment on lower level needs needed to be carried out to ensure that assistance was provided to these people as quickly as possible. Through focus on reablement and better practice the service would be able to improve the budget position.

The committee highlighted that the service needed to make improved use of its resources, a question was asked if home carers could help with medication. Deirdre Cilliers advised that medication was a significant issue and that home carers do not administer medication in Falkirk but do in some other areas. However, she advised that the home carers in Falkirk do prompt people to take their medication. She stated that the training of staff was a priority for the service. Through the use of Integrated Care Funds a pharmacist had been employed for six months to scope the work that was required and to do simple assessments.

Members commented on the increasing demand for home adaptations and that in some cases a person's condition could deteriorate while waiting for the work to be carried out. Deirdre Cilliers stated that the service would look at how to do things differently and get small adaptations in place quickly. She advised that Integrated Care Funding was also being used to get a trainer for home carers so that they worked in a more reabling way. This was particularly important so that older people at home do not lose confidence in their ability to carry out tasks themselves. In response to a question on the availability of suitable housing, Deirdre Cilliers stated that there was good work carried out in collaboration with Housing. An occupational therapist was employed in Housing. She stated that there was sheltered housing available locally and that the service could improve in demonstrating to people the benefits of moving there.

The committee asked what the most significant area of overspend was. Deirdre Cilliers stated that there was a particular pressure on care packages for people with learning disabilities. However, frail elderly as a demographic were the most significant area of demand. The members then discussed the use of group homes in place of individual 24 hour placements.

The committee requested a further report on mitigating factors and service redesign.

Decision

The committee agreed to request an update report on the implementation of actions identified in the report including service redesign and mitigating factors.