

## ASC SAVINGS CONSULTATION EVENT - 15 December 2014 – Vestry Hall

### Feedback from table discussions

Savings Proposals	Engagement and Consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were once savings or efficiencies have now become cuts</li> <li>• Service users are best equipped to identify &amp; design efficiencies and/or cost saving measures</li> <li>• Need to get more decisions about services right first time</li> <li>• More involvement in financial planning scenarios and options – 3 year plan</li> <li>• Reject the premise of £14M cuts over 4 years</li> <li>• Wrong definition of independence [currently using a medical model]</li> <li>• Cuts are having a major negative impact on people’s wellbeing, independence. They’re creating more anxiety and crises</li> <li>• Looking at the bigger picture cuts seem to make no economic sense</li> <li>• Council should not formally agree budgets 3 years in advance. Consultations are unlikely to change decisions already set in concrete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys are not very helpful – let people say what’s important to them where and when it works best for them</li> <li>• Provide people with the help and support required to make it easy to give feedback when asked for</li> <li>• People impacted by changes need more notice of impending change and how it’ll impact them</li> <li>• Ask people for their response to impacts of change, not just the financials</li> <li>• Don’t cloud information, make it clearer, more timely and more open</li> </ul>
<p>Process – hard for cabinet to adopt business plan without consultation on major impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about proposed savings found by accident – undermines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to know timeline</li> <li>• LD Partnership Board</li> </ul>

<p>trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes huge, cabinet meetings previously closed</li> <li>• Concessionary fare – not under right heading ‘prevention’</li> <li>• Council needs to review priority area for savings ASC- need – less priority for savings</li> <li>• Be more open about when discussing joined working processes with other boroughs</li> <li>• Process – scrutiny process</li> <li>• Review consultation not just rely on</li> </ul> <p><b>3 Replacement savings</b></p> <p><u>Access</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need both, but don’t duplicate</li> <li>• Pressure on voluntary sector</li> <li>• Yes review but streamline but don’t deny people access</li> <li>• Which voluntary sector organisation to go</li> <li>• Work with voluntary sector to have more effective triage</li> <li>• Be open about consultations already with Voluntary Sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider making it better, good model</li> <li>• Quarterly Service User Meetings/Workshops – has power, authority to problem solve</li> <li>• Co-production – fully informed</li> <li>• Feed in to carers support Merton Network</li> <li>• Use involve but change</li> <li>• Need time to think about how to do co-production</li> <li>• Inform all about challenge and ask for assistance</li> <li>• Get out to people</li> <li>• Give people ideas what co-production could look like and how it could work</li> <li>• Don’t change involve</li> <li>• User forums, ad hoc meetings</li> <li>• People need place to come together to have one transparent conversation together</li> <li>• Are groups duplicating each other – share resources</li> <li>• Have annual London Borough of Merton conferences</li> </ul>
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<p><b><u>Day Services</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older LD carer population who need more support as not enough now</li> <li>• Day opportunity re-provision and review of Merton Adult Education impact</li> <li>• Don't look at this in isolation impact of people's health and wellbeing which will cost more in the long run</li> <li>• More discussion needed on how to achieve savings – with users, carers and voluntary sector</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Reviews</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long term support 'life in constant crisis' - how will review impact on mental health of carers and users</li> <li>• Move reviews – target <u>reablement</u></li> <li>• “Cost effective” reviews phrase but not cut</li> <li>• Transitions monitor robustly</li> <li>• % of packages set up in crisis -v- % packages set for long term support – look at this review support</li> <li>• Process of reviewing more frequently → more frequent support and monitoring</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a cumulative effect on people from savings – (not just ASC, eg Welfare)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An improved understanding of Council processes would be helpful for customers and carers</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern that ASC should take so much of the savings, and great concern about what changes to care packages will look like.</li> <li>• Role of Day Centres/Clubs is vital in getting people out of home</li> <li>• Isolation will increase – adding to people’s health problems</li> <li>• Voluntary sector has not been involved as positively/creatively as they could</li> <li>• Questions about what ‘independence’ model would actually look like.</li> <li>• Worry that services become ‘bare bones’ and have no quality</li> <li>• Squeezes affect independence negatively – more reliance on family and carers</li> <li>• Cumulative effect on organisations as well as individuals</li> <li>• Transport costs should be looked at (Day Centres)</li> <li>• Why are cuts always made most heavily to poor, older and most vulnerable people</li> <li>• Councillors should be prepared to look at their principles and if necessary change views – particularly on unfreezing council tax</li> <li>• Reserves have grown while cuts have been made – can this be reviewed?</li> <li>• Example of cuts in mental health services causing huge pressures – new voluntary groups are trying to address this</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘E-mail Alerts’ warning of decisions, meeting dates etc</li> <li>• Need to reach people who don’t have a computer</li> <li>• Voluntary sector could do more to assist in communication – who is being addressed? How do we address them?</li> <li>• Notice must be given to plan properly</li> <li>• Forums exist already – build on these</li> <li>• Consultation needs to be not about being given a fait accompli (current situation is an example) this is too late</li> <li>• This is not the best way to approach dialogue and people becoming more defensive, less willing to co-operate</li> <li>• Clear messages – otherwise anxiety levels rise even further</li> <li>• Q&amp;As – face to face is vital</li> <li>• Need for both specific and across the board meetings</li> <li>• Voluntary sector – not set up to be campaigning groups, and there is the dilemma about being funded by Merton – need a route in to politicians</li> <li>• Carers forums should be given an official way in to cabinet.</li> <li>• Timing of meetings is important – people can feel excluded from the process if they cannot get to meetings due to other priorities</li> <li>• Groups are expected to have knowledge/information which isn’t always</li> </ul> |
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How real is the 'community'</li> <li>• Consultation must improve – use other's ideas</li> <li>• Some merit in reviewing people as people get stuck – interdependence is a better model</li> <li>• Reviews can be improved to be made more productive</li> <li>• Provision of equipment is carried out in an inefficient manner – example of wheelchair services. Equipment could be recycled more</li> </ul>	<p>there</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care plan reviews should be used to find out how people are communicated with</li> <li>• Feedback must be given to people who have participated (in all formats)</li> <li>• Role for people to be supported to use it – via libraries etc. Will help engagement</li> <li>• Timetable of council processes – who's who (leaflet)</li> <li>• Need an independent Community Centre – not run by the council – proper resource with it, staff etc</li> <li>• Accessibility of information is vital</li> <li>• Council must demonstrate that they listen – 'you said we did'</li> <li>• Should be a higher level consultation on council savings as a whole – rather than ASC customers discussing ASC savings</li> <li>• Healthwatch has been a useful channel to use</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for collaboration, focussing on service users, danger of organisations 'fighting their own corner'</li> <li>• Distorting effect of politics?</li> <li>• Need for corporate review</li> <li>• Nothing left to cut?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual residents survey – voluntary groups can support residents to give feedback</li> <li>• Is this done on a sample basis? Can we increase that?</li> <li>• Analysis to give more detail. Increase sample for hard to reach groups</li> <li>• Does survey reflect demographic profile of borough? – Both sides of borough</li> </ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole system enhanced, efficiency approach – holistic review of impact</li> <li>• Adult education cuts and negative impact on independence for vulnerable clients</li> <li>• Impact of new legislation – too expensive to meet requirements</li> <li>• Process for ensuring access to services must be clear – specifically younger adults with disabilities. Investment needed in social areas</li> <li>• Communication with electorate – is it time to introduce an inflationary increase for council tax. Time to introduce this?</li> <li>• Is proportionate financial reduction disproportionate effect – i.e.: straight % reductions, may not have equal % impact</li> <li>• Are there other ways of making/saving money</li> <li>• Transport still a problem and this has been going on for years</li> <li>• Quality of life issues – should be more than just existing</li> <li>• Choice issues? Individuals have very different views</li> <li>• Lowering expectations – pernicious effect</li> <li>• Collaborate with completely new partners – businesses? Is there more scope for this?</li> <li>• Are we too introspective</li> <li>• Process needs to look at overall size of cake, rather than looking at small</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposeful meeting with focus, encouraging contributions from everyone</li> <li>• Is Involve the best mechanism</li> <li>• Need to capture the user view</li> <li>• Civic forums – can we build on what exists</li> <li>• Drop in sessions – say quarterly informal sessions</li> <li>• Need various tools and approaches</li> <li>• Social media for young people, school/college setting</li> <li>• Intergenerational projects and approaches</li> <li>• Draft engagement strategy still needs more detail and resourcing</li> <li>• Bridging gaps</li> <li>• But can feel powerless – what is our ability to influence</li> <li>• Will info make a difference</li> <li>• Can we set up a working group of officers and voluntary sector and service users to develop solutions</li> <li>• Access to councillors as this is a corporate issue</li> <li>• More ‘bite size’ sessions?</li> <li>• Be ready to talk about future years sooner rather than later</li> </ul> |
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<p>service details</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does voluntary sector fit in with overall strategy of council?</li> <li>• Do not be too hard and fast about age cut offs – age values to be indicative</li> <li>• Are we maximising technology as part of an overall package for those who want it?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies on impact – for councillors</li> <li>• Greater member involvement – risk of separation between users/officers/members/voluntary sector</li> <li>• Bite size things – survey monkey</li> <li>• Telephone surveys – 3 simple questions?</li> <li>• Make use of existing groups and captive audiences – ten minutes at the beginning of the meetings e.g. Wimbledon Guild, Age UK, Residents Associations, Friends of St Helier</li> <li>• Use CCG user/patient forums</li> <li>• Instant feedback on tablets – e.g. while you queue at Merton link, Libraries, G.P's, Post Office</li> </ul>
<p><b>INITIAL ACCESS SERVICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear link to Social Services is crucial</li> <li>• Where do we get information from?</li> <li>• Voluntary organisations need to develop their experience and expertise with regard to providing a 1<sup>st</sup> point of contact service</li> <li>• Will the council still be meeting its statutory duties by passing this responsibility to the voluntary sector?</li> <li>• What will be put in place if voluntary organisations struggle with volume of customers?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videocasts/webcasts – good way of reaching people who can't attend meetings</li> <li>• Online forum – would need to be run by someone. Who?</li> <li>• Twitter/Facebook could be used to engage with people</li> <li>• Face/face contact – some people will want this</li> <li>• Council staff – need to get out to see people to discuss these issues</li> <li>• It's really important for everyone to be honest/ open</li> <li>• How do we make sure that all people have access to and can understand</li> </ul>

<p><b>LD DAY SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People need access to day services otherwise they will become stuck at home</li> <li>• Volunteers shouldn't be used to replace paid staff – volunteers also need supervision and training etc</li> <li>• Where do the volunteers come from?</li> <li>• They don't come at £0 cost</li> </ul> <p><b>REVIEWS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happens if things change/ needs increase following a review which reduces a package?</li> <li>• Packages have been reduced for several years already</li> <li>• Reviews haven't happened often enough</li> <li>• Reviews could lead to increases in cost</li> </ul>	<p>info?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People don't always feel able to contribute – could be having a bad day</li> <li>• What happens after today's and other meetings? The example of the 'You said, We did' information posters as used previously by the Council was cited as an effective way of demonstrating that we have heard and acted upon concerns. Evidence such as this is an effective way of keeping people involved/ motivated</li> <li>• Timings of meetings is key – both in terms of where the decision making process is at (otherwise meetings can appear just to be for appearance's sake) and in terms of when people are best able to attend</li> <li>• Consistency of staff in the process is important– otherwise you lose all momentum/knowledge</li> </ul>
<p><b>Six Box Model</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalisation – discussion group interested in presentation by Simon [Williams] particularly around council using DP as the choice – how much does this save Would like some worked up models of LA who only use DP and savings It offers (National picture what works best)</li> </ul> <p><b>Cuts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about the impact on safeguarding very vulnerable people more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detail in a document with the timeline and process of how the council decision making process works about key decisions. Frustrated that people invest time in process BUT information about key decisions not shared should not be lip service. Not enough time between now and February to unpick the cuts and influence decisions</li> <li>• Council should commit to growth such as LPPB if they support it and want to use it as a forum to consult with uses of services</li> </ul>



so that children such as LD and those with dementia. The impact of cuts means that the risks will increase and the quality of services will fall. Members of the group said they had no faith in the CQC regime to keep their loved ones safe, would lead to deaths

- Cuts should be done on the less effective areas and less cost effective areas not areas that are easy; such as bin collection and recycling. Shouldn't prioritise graffiti removal over lives
- MAAT – worried that wider access points don't have the knowledge – (General consensus is that this is a positive move) group agree that there are more opportunities for savings by looking at streamlining all the access points and this will be a positive move for users

#### Reviews

- The group understood the need for looking at reviews but felt “meat on the bone” was thin. This has been the focus for years before
- The group felt that Crisis packages should be reviewed more regularly for example those coming out of hospital as it is likely they will get better. This needs to be monitored more closely
- The group raised concerns about reviews leading to cuts for people with LD and long term conditions as their needs progress services are cut and they become more at risk of harm or safeguarding. This places more stress on carers
- Focus of reviews should be about making sure the package is fit for purpose rather than focusing on cuts. Packages need to be more creative and people need to think outside the box. Use voluntary sector

- Knowledge hub – council use it to put up their thoughts and thinking and people can leave their views or can share info
- Needs a range of ways to consult not just meetings – using vol sector connect/network to consult on specific ideas thinking
- Need to communicate better about what is going on. We have Merton-i. Add consultation on this so its in one area so you don't need to be an expert on IT to find out what's going on or the proposals council is considering. Provide update in time in My Merton. Need a large scale meeting like today in April for next years cuts.
- Going forward for new cuts the 5.4 million – info needed now for 15/16 on what the council is looking at
- Need to link process timescales properly to allow time to consult with service users groups properly
- Need smaller focus group – cross cutting of users so can discuss in more detail
- Communication is key – freedom passes cost £8m per year but people don't see it as a service – so make sure they know
- Councillor lead for ASC should be at the event as the community voted so should be there for users to ask questions
- All candidates for elections should hold consultation events on proposals for cuts
- Hold regular calendar events through the year which are well planned in

<p>more to meet the needs of short term users</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maybe savings around the process of reviews if other agencies such as voluntary sector or day centre do reviews as they will be quicker and know the person better, however will need some investment to train them properly but group felt this would lead to better outcomes for users</li> </ul> <p><b>Day Service Cuts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about impact these cuts will have on quality and safety of service users. CQC not fit for purpose</li> <li>• Learn lesson from cuts on respite for LD</li> <li>• Stop other boroughs from using our services or charge more</li> <li>• Wandsworth council cut day centres for savings now had to re implement them costing more than the saving</li> </ul>	<p>advance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use survey monkey to get a view on the best time of day to consult a weekend session may also be helpful for those who work</li> <li>• Identify the various routes and meeting available so people know how to get involved, put it in my Merton. Assumption in the talk by Simon [Williams] that people know what ASC does but group felt they didn't all know</li> </ul>
<p><b>General Issues/Concerns/Queries</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The event was welcomed by the group and they all felt it was a positive first step</li> <li>• The group felt that ASC needed to sell itself more and raise the profile of what ASC does. The group felt that most people didn't know what it covered and therefore were unaware of the importance of the work. They felt that a communication plan and better uses of My Merton with real cases studies and more awareness raising on Merton-i will help future users understand the importance of ASC and the impact it has on peoples lives. The group felt that ASC should be higher profile than cleaning dog faeces from streets and felt its because people don't realise that ASC is not just about older people in care homes</li> <li>• The group felt that the Council needed to be more robust in its approach and say how important ASC is so it ranks highly. Areas where there are additional savings are two weekly bin collections, recycling more and the council should enforce these changes as it is good for the planet and means that</li> </ul>	

ASC will have to save less. It shouldn't be a political decision when peoples lives are at risk

- Recognition that Merton is one of the lowest spenders in ASC which means that they are doing a good job so cuts should be from areas that are not so effective
- People in the group felt that political decisions for votes outweigh the importance of care for people. The group felt that the community would be willing for council tax to be increased by 1% if they realised how ASC impacts on those it helps
- People in the group felt that there should be more shared services between councils. Some members of the group wanted more information on savings where others boroughs had done this such as tri-borough
- Cuts are a Curb to independence
- Concern re: future generations – what services will they get?
- Why is council tax not being raised to cover the deficit?

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