

Dear Chairman,

Please find a series of questions for the Cabinet about the paper “**Future of Somerset County Council’s Learning Disability Service for Adults**”

1 What makes the Council think it can get a potential (split?) contract right this time?

2 What will the Council be doing differently during any possible procurement process from ISiS/SW1?

3 Will any potential tendering process be let on quality as well as cost criteria? If so, then how will the service baseline be established? Lack of a baseline for service provision has been an issue for the SW1 contract and remains unresolved in some services e.g. IT.

4 Has the Council learnt the lessons on contract management and the light touch & small client model used for SW1?

5 If the LD service has a backlog of under-investment, then how will the new supplier make a profit, pay back the capital and interest on loans and maintain the service quality?

6 Will we end up with another loss making venture like SW1?

7 Why was there no In-house Service Improvement Plan in the Options Appraisal Phase? Why was the current service marked as “no change”?

8 The “Soft Market Test Analysis” resulted in only 5 respondents out of the 13 invited. Do you agree that overall the in-house service (without improvements!) was best quality and cost?

9 If there is a tendering exercise will an In-house bid be submitted and will the staff and services users be involved in the process? Why were service users, staff and UNISON not fully and meaningfully consulted on Market Testing, Legal report and Baseline Report etc (Appendix A-G)?

10 When will a robust and compliant Equality Impact Assessment on the current and alternative options be undertaken? Will it be prior to any decision to proceed?

11 We were only supplied with some financial figures of the various options at the end of September. Do you think it is reasonable to expect a robust analysis by the 5th October (the deadline given)?

12 Do you agree that the best way forward is to defer the decision until further work is undertaken in conjunction with service users and their families, staff and trade unions?