

BEST VALUE REVIEW OF PHYSICAL DISABILITY SERVICES - STAGE I REPORT

Report By: Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing

Wards Affected

Countywide

Purpose

1. To outline progress to date on the Best Value Review of Social Care Services for people who have a physical disability.

Financial Implications

2. None identified at present.

Background

3. The Best Value Review of physical disability services for people aged 18-64 commenced in December 2003, and has progressed to Stage 2. Stage 3 is scheduled for completion by end June 2004. The detail of how the Review is being undertaken is set out in the First Stage Report, enclosed separately for Members of the Committee and available to the public on request.
4. In summary the work to date has included all of the requirements of the stage one part of the review, namely, the compilation of a detailed service profile, the scoping exercise, consultation plan and an initial action plan.
5. A standard project management approach has been applied to ensure that milestones are met and that risk of any slippage in the work of the project is identified at an early stage so that appropriate remedial action is taken to minimise delays.
6. The work is coordinated by a project team, which is a representative group of all those who have an interest in services for people who have a physical disability. Membership of the team is balanced to ensure that service users are well represented and are therefore empowered to play a key role within the Best Value Review process. The project team is co-chaired by Barbara Millman, who is a service users who chairs Herefordshire Centre of Independent Living, and Caroline Byrt, an independent consultant.
7. A draft Stage I Report has already been discussed with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of this Committee.
8. Since the completion of the first stage report significant progress has been made in implementing the consultation plan:
 - The Government's annual Service User Experience Survey, which this year related to the target group in question, was sent out in January, along

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Sue Fiennes, Director of Social Care and Strategic Housing on 01432 260039

with additional questions formulated by the review team. It was distributed to approximately 300 existing service users. 163 returns were received. Additional comments were invited, and respondents were invited to indicate whether they wished to be involved in further consultation.

- Eight focus groups of service users of specific services have been held to facilitate qualitative discussions regarding current service provision.
- A questionnaire for staff in the local authority, health services and voluntary sector has been compiled and circulated.
- The outcome of the above consultation will be analysed to provide baseline information about satisfaction levels and identified areas for improvement.
- By the end of March, a benchmarking questionnaire will be compiled and circulated to the fifteen local authorities most similar to Herefordshire as defined by the Department of Health. The aim of the benchmarking exercise is to gather comparative data and to apply this in relation to Herefordshire's existing services in respect to strategic direction, cost of providing the service and the range of provision. This will be complemented by consideration of examples of innovative or good practice elsewhere.
- A stakeholder event is planned for April 29th to which all stakeholder groups will be invited to send representatives to consider the evidence from stage one and commence discussion regarding future options for change and development
- The work of the Best Value Review Team is on schedule. The formation of subgroups to address specific areas of activity will ensure a robust process is applied throughout all stages of the review and that team members have opportunities for active involvement.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT progress to date be noted subject to any comments which the Committee wishes to make.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- First stage report