

HEREFORDSHIRE OLDER PEOPLE'S STRATEGY

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: SOCIAL CARE, ADULTS AND HEALTH COMMUNITY SERVICES

CABINET

15TH SEPTEMBER, 2005

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To approve the production of a County-wide strategy for older people in Herefordshire through engagement with the Local Strategic Partnership and key stakeholder organisations.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

- THAT (a) the decision to progress with the production of an Older People's Strategy in association with the Local Strategic Partnership be approved;**
- (b) the Strategy be produced in accordance with the inspection criteria as identified by the Audit Commission in its publication 'Older People – Building a Strategic Approach (Independence and Well-being)';**
- and**
- (c) the Strategy be formulated using PRINCE 2 project management principles and be completed (subject to resources being identified) within a 12 month timeframe.**

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Mr G Hughes, Director of Adult & Community Services on (01432) 260609

Reasons

1. Herefordshire's older population is significantly higher than the national or regional average. A discrepancy that is set to become more marked.
2. Herefordshire has some plans relating to Older People but their value is limited through a lack of corporate and inter-agency linkage. It is probable this reduces the opportunity to develop and deliver services that meet the wider needs and aspirations of the target group.
3. New direction set by central government in for example 'Opportunity Age' and 'Independence, Well-being and Choice' requires that these wider needs are addressed, with more emphasis being placed on prevention, inclusion and partnership working.
4. Older residents themselves have different expectations to previous generations including the right to participate fully in life and the communities that surround them.
5. Like other local authorities Herefordshire Council needs to lead the way in taking forward government direction and residents expectations. It now also needs to do so in the context of the Local Area Agreement (LAA), which includes a "Healthier Community and Older Peoples" theme. The negotiations regarding the LAA to be concluded by the end of March 2006 will need to take into account the identified needs within the Older People's Strategy in order that the resources required for delivery can be secured as part of the agreement.

Considerations

1. Central Government is clear in terms of its priorities for an Older People's Agenda. A high level of consistency can be observed across Government Departments in their key policy statements. The following themes appear to dominate the Older People's Agenda:
 - The promotion of positive views of aging
 - The building of partnerships
 - Independence
 - Well-being
 - Choice
 - Citizenship
2. The promotion of positive views of aging - It is no longer acceptable to see aging as a 'problem'; instead we need to celebrate the fact that we are living longer and promote the inclusion of older people, recognising them as citizens with rights and responsibilities. It is generally accepted that what is needed is a whole new approach, one which acknowledges that discrimination based on age is as debilitating as discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation or disability. Age discrimination is now seen as not just wrong morally, but also wasteful, inefficient and economically inept.
3. A key part of an Older People's Strategy will be the need to modernise public services. Modern Public Services should be responsive to the needs and aspirations of individual older people, who should be involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of the services which affect them. Only by adopting this principle can we move towards a position in which we promote well-being and independence among older people.
4. There is a shared understanding within Central Government Departments that

'Older people or people seeking advice on behalf of an older person will have easy access in their local area to information about the full range of services available – either through a single access point, or several access points which can offer advice across a range of issues' – An Integrated Network of Services for Older People (Link Age; Building Partnerships – Department of Work and Pensions).

An example of this kind of initiative is the work currently being undertaken locally in support of the Joint Teams project under the LPSA 2 programme. There is significant potential for the extension of this project within the context of a wider Older People's Strategy.

5. The Audit Commission in its 2005 publication 'Older People – Building a Strategic Approach (Independence and Well-being)' identifies seven key indicators of 'Good Performance' in its study of approaches to the planning services for older people. These are:

- Involving older people
- A clear picture of the local population of older people
- A strategic approach (linked to the Community Plan)
- Commitment and leadership
- Partnership and whole system working (across agencies)
- Communication and information
- Evaluation and impact (processes, outputs and outcomes)

Any inspection will also take into account performance against a number of National Policy Initiatives such as National Service Framework (NSF) Standard 8 (Older People).

6. Finally, in order that the values of independence, well-being and choice be realised, commissioning of services will need to create a range of conditions and opportunities within which older people can live life to the full, as independently as possible, and for as long as possible.

7. How will the Strategy be developed?

The Strategy will be developed by a Partnership based project team incorporating a membership which represents the key delivery agencies. The process will be heavily dependent on the following activity: -

- Research to establish the current picture of the local population of older people
- Consultation with older people and the organisations that supply services to them as to their needs. It is envisaged that this activity will be co-ordinated through the Community Involvement Co-ordinator Officer and will involve both the Council's Community Forum Network and the emerging Age Concern Local Forums
- The production of a draft Older People's Strategy based upon the needs analysis which identified priorities for action
- A final consultation stage leading to a formal adoption by the Herefordshire Council and Local Strategic Partnership
(A draft Project Plan and Framework is provided as Appendix 1)
- Links with existing strategies such as Health and Social Care Commissioning Strategy

Alternative Option

Not to proceed.

Risk Management

1. Resources - To produce a Strategy which will meet Audit Commission standards of 'Good performance', it will need to be properly resourced from across all Council Directorates and secure 'buy in' from other members of the Local Strategic Partnership. The misconception that responsibility for older people is limited to the Council (Directorate of Adult & Community Services) and the Primary Care Trust must be corrected at the outset.
2. Engagement - An 'Older People's Champion' is advocated by the Audit Commission as a key success factor in all of the case study pilots (Shropshire, Camden and Nottinghamshire).
3. Change in priority and resources marginalising project - This mitigated by PRINCE 2 Project Management.
4. A whole systems approach - The formulation of this strategy should be key to both modernisation and service improvement agendas. Failure to deliver on integrated services will severely undermine the impact of the strategy.

Consultees

Herefordshire Primary Care Trust

Key Officers across Herefordshire Council Directorates

Background Papers

None identified.