

ADULT SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: SOCIAL CARE ADULTS AND HEALTH

CABINET

7TH SEPTEMBER, 2006

Wards Affected

Countywide

Purpose

To receive a report on progress to date with the adult social care improvement plan.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation

THAT the position be noted and regular reports on progress and developments in delivering the adult social care improvement plan be submitted to Cabinet.

Reasons

Since the star ratings announcement in December 2005, the Council, with the support and agreement of the Commission of Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and the Department of Health (DH) has taken a number of proactive steps to improve its service delivery and capacity within Adults Services.

A service managers workshop in March 2006 identified a number of improvement areas. An improvement proposal for adults services, outlining improvement themes emerged and was approved by CSCI and the Department of Health in April 2006. The proposal sets out the pillars of improvement; describes how they are being tackled; and identifies the aspects in respect of which external support is requested.

Some elements of the proposal, such as the systematic assessment of future needs and the patterns and levels of services needed to meet them, are already well in hand and being managed within the Council. The Adult Social Care Service Plan will be the main vehicle for driving service improvement and will include the external and internal actions which will secure improvement. We have also independently reviewed the actions taken in response to the Older People's Inspection in 2004. The majority of the actions proposed have been implemented. Those which remain have been incorporated into the Service Plan. The other activities are being managed as a project, with external support.

Considerations

1. There are five workstreams that will form the basis of the external support:

- a) Performance data

External support is required to undertake the independent analysis of existing practices and to recommend improvements. Information sharing and dialogue with suitable comparator authorities is also envisaged.

- b) Workforce strategy for adult social care

A joint workforce strategy is required that will support and enable the development of future services. The external support will establish a framework and process for working with partner agencies across Herefordshire to develop a multi-agency approach to workforce development.

- c) Market management activities with local service providers

Central to the achievement of the Council's vision for future services is the need for more open and on-going communications with local service providers. The Council wishes to see providers more actively involved in discussions and work to develop future service models. Building on the areas of good practice that already exist external support will be required to help develop and establish models for engaging with current providers.

- d) Fair Access to Care

The Council is keen to learn from other local authorities about how they apply and manage their FACS thresholds. External assistance will undertake the benchmarking and comparisons with other local authorities. The work will produce the analysis and make recommendations for consideration.

- e) Charging Policy

External support will provide an independent review of current practices and make recommendations for improvement.

2. Governance arrangements have been set up, managed through the Project Board, chaired by the CSCI business relationship manager and including representatives from the Council, including the Cabinet Member, Department of Health and the Primary Care Trust. There have been two Project Board meetings to date. The project initiation document was signed off at the most recent Board meeting on 24th July 2006.
3. In addition to the Project Board, an internal senior management group monitors overall activity. The group meets shortly after every Project Board. It includes operational managers, workstream leads and the Head of Communications for the Council.
4. Internal workstream leads have been appointed for the five themes, and scope of work documents have been worked up, in conjunction with these officers. A tender timetable and process has been agreed and the Department of Health will be inviting bids to tender for the external support in August 2006. Contracts will be awarded in September 2006, with the support to start working with the Council in October 2006.

5. Further Project Board meetings are scheduled for October 2006, January 2007 and March 2007.

Risk Management

The ability to deliver adult social care improvement plan will impact on the social care star rating and ultimately the Council's overall assessment.

The external support is for a fixed term only – all activities must be transferred into mainstream Council business.

Alternative Options

Not applicable.

Consultees

Adult Social Care managers, Primary Care Trust Managers.

Background Papers

None identified.