

ADULT AND PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD 17 OCTOBER 2011

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Gerard Hall, Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder

Officers: Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care
Neil Harrison, Head of Service
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

13. Framework Agreement: Specialist Care and Support for Adults and Children with Complex Needs and / or Learning Disabilities *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

Non Key.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services of the approvals to undertake the procurement of a Framework Agreement for the Provision of Specialist Care and Support for Adults and Children with Complex Needs and / or Learning Disabilities.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Head of Service reported that a large proportion of packages of care for adults with learning disabilities were adequately delivered under the contracts for domiciliary care, however there were people who had more profound and complex needs which required the workforce to have a wider and more developed skill set. There were currently thirty-six adults who were in receipt of care and support from the five specialist providers. The hourly rate paid for the provision of service ranges from £11.93 to £13.87.

There were currently no identified need for domiciliary care and support for children aged under 14 years as traditionally this type of provision had been met by 'Family Worker' services. Parent and carer reference groups had identified consistency for young people when moving between children and adult services as a priority for planning an individual's care.

It was proposed that a tender exercise was completed to establish a

framework of qualified and skilled providers, ensure that high quality care and support was available for adults and children who had complex needs and / or profound learning disabilities. Contracts would be awarded to provider(s) who could demonstrate the required competencies. There would also be a requirement that provider(s) supporting children must also provide services to adults in order that individuals had consistency in provision through the transition between child and adult services.

The Portfolio asked what sort of services would be affected by these new contracts and what was changing. The Head of Service commented that currently there were five main independent sources of provision for people with learning disabilities mainly retained by individuals through personal budget payments. This process would bring some minimum standards to the providers of these services, particularly in the case of services to those with complex needs. These standards would be developed through the QCF (Quality Care Framework). This would ensure that the people providing services to this group were adequately trained and qualified.

The Assistant Director commented that these new arrangements would assure that the services targeted at those users with complex needs were appropriate. They may cost more but would have the assurance of the level of skills and qualifications within the organisations providing the service. There was no specific preference on which providers came forward. One overall provider may present a lower price but would remove choice for users.

Decision

That the approvals and proposals regarding the Framework Agreement for Adults and Children with Complex Needs and / or Learning Disabilities be noted.

14. Caring for our Future: Shared Ambitions for Care and Support – Consultation *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

None – the report was for the Portfolio Holder's information only.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of:

1. The 'Caring for our Future' engagement exercise being conducted by the Department of Health to inform the White Paper on social care reform in spring 2012.
2. The process being put in place to collect the views of local people and stakeholders, which will then be collated as part of Hartlepool Borough Council's response to the consultation.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The assistant Director, Adult Social Care, reported that between November 2010 and July 2011, the Government published its Vision for Adult Social Care, the Law Commission published recommendations for simplifying social care law, and the Dilnott Commission on Funding of Care and Support published recommendations for reforming the way people pay for their care and support.

These reports set out various proposals for reform. The Government now wanted a wider discussion on social care reform prior to publishing the social care reform White Paper in spring 2012. Over the next two months, a range of mechanisms would be put in place to capture and collate views of local people and stakeholders on how adult social care and the funding of services should be developed over the next few years.

In November, a report would be taken to Cabinet with the proposed response from Hartlepool Borough Council to the 'Caring for our Future' engagement exercise. Once agreed, the response would be lodged with the Department of Health before the 2 December 2011 deadline for responses.

The Portfolio Holder considered that any response to the consultation needed to highlight the major issues faced in Hartlepool; demographics, high levels of deprivation, and major health inequalities all needed to preface the authority's comments. There had under the previous government been some cross party discussions on the way forward for dealing with social care costs but these had not been carried through.

The Assistant Director commented that there were currently many different layers of law relating to adult social care, some of which was contradictory, that would benefit from being simplified into one consistent document. This would also help front line social care staff giving them only one point of reference. The Assistant Director stated that she was optimistic that this consultation could lead to that happening.

The Portfolio Holder had some concerns in relation to the portable assessment that service users would be given. This could benefit them in not having to go through repeated assessments and delays should they move area but there could be issues with the level of service availability between different councils. People could find themselves entitled to a certain level of support in one area and then not in another. There was also the issue that certain services could be more expensive in regions like the southeast than elsewhere in the country. Assessments would also be subject the individual staff undertaking them. The Assistant Director commented that assessments were subjective but there were processes within this authority to ensure that there were no significant discrepancies.

The Assistant Director also highlighted that one of the main issues was the increasing number of people with complex needs. Each case could cost

significant amounts of money and while most were jointly funded with health services one new case with significant complex needs could have major repercussions for a small authority like Hartlepool. The Portfolio Holder considered that these comments needed to be reflected in the final submission to government.

Decision

That the report and the Portfolio Holder's comments be noted.

15. Coping with the Cuts – Demos Scoping Report on Council Cuts *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of decision

None – the report was for the Portfolio Holder's information only.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder for Adult and Public Health Services of the research published by think tank Demos identifying the impact that local budget cuts are having on disabled people.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Head of Service reported that since the Government first revealed its deficit reduction strategy, the charity Scope had been speaking, through the 'Destination Unknown Series' to disabled people and their families about the impact of cuts made at a national level. As a result Scope commissioned Demos to undertake research in an attempt to explore the local impact of disability-related cuts on disabled families.

The local analysis Demos undertook for this project attempted to address this gap, by quantifying and mapping the impact of local cuts, to establish a national picture of a highly local process

Demos suggested that until now no one had been able to capture in a robust statistical fashion the impact on disabled people of the cuts made to local authority budgets across the country. The project attempted to map the impact of the cuts, using a new measure combining the level of budgetary cuts with elements of service delivery, such as increases in user charges and changes to eligibility criteria.

Demos applied the new measure to the 152 local authorities (those with responsibility for social care) in England. The report attempted to rank local authorities against the new measure and found that the top and bottom 10 local authorities were geographically widely spread across regions. There were fairly small differences between the average scores of the different regions in England. Using the classification given by the Office for National Statistics for rural and urban local authority areas, there was also a mixed picture when it came to rural and urban areas.

Hartlepool was in the ten areas where cuts were having the least impact on

the front line services. The Demos report gives credit to Hartlepool for its innovative strategies to protect and improve outcomes for disabled people in the face of financial pressures. There was particular reference to the Think Local Act Personal, 'Case Study: Hartlepool Connected Care pilot', and the Self-Directed Support report in Hartlepool 2006–09.

The Portfolio Holder welcomed the report and indicated that he had already been involved in some positive press coverage of the report. The Portfolio Holder considered that the emphasis on providing services where they were needed would continue to see Hartlepool providing services to those that needed them. Supporting services like the rollout of Connected Care was bringing excellent feedback and groups and organisations coming forward to be involved.

Decision

That the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10.50 a.m.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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