

Committee: **Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care**

Date: **22 September 2005**

By: **Director of Adult Social Care**

Title: **Direct Payments Update Report**

Purpose: **To provide Scrutiny Committee with a progress report on the implementation of the recommendations made in the Direct Payments Scrutiny Review of November 2004**

RECOMMENDATIONS -

- (1) To note and welcome the updated response of the Director of Adult Social Care to the recommendations approved by Scrutiny Committee and submitted to Cabinet on 1 February 2005; and**
 - (2) To review the progress made to date in implementing the Action Plan prepared by the Director of Adult Social Care to promote and develop Direct Payments in East Sussex**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising as a result of the progress made in implementing the original Action Plan which have not already been included in the approved Social Care budget for 2005/2006

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The Adult Social Care Department has welcomed the opportunities afforded by the Direct Payments Scrutiny Review report to focus attention on building the infrastructure, policies and information base needed to deliver Direct Payments (DP) as a matter of choice to all eligible users assessed as needing community care services.

2.2 Specifically, good progress has been made to implement the recommendations contained in the Scrutiny of Direct Payments – Action Plan (see Annex 1 of Update Report). Where development has been slower than anticipated, this has been due, in part, to the capacity of Adult Social Care and the current contracted Independent Living Support Service to be able to respond to the number and range of users now eligible to receive Direct Payments.

2.3 It is pleasing to note that since the Scrutiny Committee began its review of Direct Payments in June 2004, the number of people in East Sussex receiving Direct Payments has increased from 152 to 208 in August 2005 which represents a 37% rise. The total figure includes 29 disabled children or the parents of disabled children. In terms of adults in particular, the number of DP users who have a learning disability, mental health problem or are an older person (over 65) is now 8, 5, and 27 respectively. In all three categories the increase in the take up of Direct Payments has increased by more than 50%, which provides an encouraging base from which to build over the next year.

2.4 Nevertheless, it is recognised that development of DP for some eligible groups still requires more work, in order to build the necessary systems, processes and awareness amongst staff and users to ensure that DP can be sustained in the longer term. Examples include older people, independent living equipment and mental health system users.

2.5 The Direct Payments Strategic Development Group is now the lead body with responsibility to coordinate the implementation of DP across the county. To achieve this, the group will prepare for approval the strategy and work programme needed to ensure that East Sussex meets its own and national targets for developing DP, and also monitor progress in delivering the Scrutiny Review Action Plan successfully.

3. Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 Since the Scrutiny Committee undertook the review of Direct Payments in 2004, the Government has published its Green Paper "Independence, Wellbeing and Choice", which sets out the likely future options growing out of the success of initiatives like Direct Payments". These include the introduction of individual budgets which will incorporate the use of Direct Payments so that users can manage their own personal support needs.

3.2 In light of the supporting information set out above, the Scrutiny Committee is recommended to endorse the Action Plan and update contained in Annex 1.

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Director of Adult Social Care

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Local Members: All

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Scrutiny of Direct Payments – updated Action Plan - Annex 1