

## REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

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The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee met on 4 March 2010. Attendances:-

Councillor Waite(Chairman)  
Councillors Belsey, Healy, Scott, Taylor and Mrs Tidy  
Janet Colvert LINK Representative

### 1 Scrutiny review of Social Care and Financial Assessment processes

1.1 The Committee has completed its Scrutiny Review of Social Care and Financial Assessments. A copy of the Committee's full report has previously been circulated to all Members and is available on request from Andy Cottell telephone 01273 481955.

1.2 The Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee established a Scrutiny Review Board, comprising Councillor Belsey (Chairman) and Councillor Healy to undertake a review of Social Care and Financial Assessment process with the following scope:

1.3 The September 2009 meeting of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny committee was informed that complaints being received by Adult Social Care revealed a lack of alignment between social care service assessments and financial assessments. The aim of the review was to identify any necessary system and process improvements needed within the current social care and financial assessment processes to ensure that there was better alignment.

1.4 To achieve this, the Review Board considered:

- The current assessment and financial assessment processes, as well as the interface between the operations team and the finance team in Adult Social Care;
- How the Funding Panel determines the allocation of funds to support a care package for service users;
- The level and type of complaints received by the department;
- The new Self Directed Support Pathway and how the financial assessment system should operate in the future within the Putting People First agenda; and
- Current initiatives/planned activity aimed at addressing any issues raised through the course of the review.

1.5 The main **recommendations** are:

- ☆ That Adult Social Care investigates the feasibility of expanding the provision of financial support to more vulnerable service users, who do not have family or friends to support dealing with their finances when they lose capacity, so that a greater number can receive help to manage their finances in the remit of Appointeeship or Deputyship

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- ☆ That Adult Social Care monitors the development of the following service improvements to ensure that they are successful in addressing the particular issues raised by the Review Board:
  - a) A 'buddy system' within the financial assessment team so that staff are able to manage cases on behalf of colleagues when they are on leave or off sick
  - b) Electronic 'triggers' within the Carefirst database to provide an earlier alert to the Financial Assessment Team that a financial assessment is required
  - c) Final assessments for service users leaving the Living at Home programme to be carried out by that team to speed up their discharge from the programme.
  - d) Financial questions within the social care assessment so that officers can provide a more accurate indication to service users as to what their level of personal contribution is likely to be
  - e) A new process to manage appeals against the outcome of financial assessments so that there is consistency in the way these complaints are handled.
  - f) Use of two types of assessments during the social care assessment process. With initial assessment being used for the provision of low level services so that the process for providing these can be speeded up
  - g) A more user-friendly style of letters sent to service users who make a personal contribution towards the cost of their service to reduce the number of complaints in this area
  - h) A computer based prompt system used to alert social workers in hospitals as to who needs a care package put in place before they are discharged
  
- ☆ That Adult Social Care:
  - a) provides advice and guidance to service users so that they are able to make informed decisions on who they employ to support them;
  - b) develops a robust mechanism for carrying out service user reviews. This will identify whether service users are accessing the right level of support to meet their needs and, where necessary, flag up any risks which can be quickly addressed; and
  - c) closely monitors the number and complexity of financial abuse cases handled by the Financial Assessment Team. This will ensure that the Team has sufficient resources to manage any additional workload and minimise delays in carrying out assessments.