



REPORT OF Director of Adult Social Services

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE BOARD

DATE : September 2006

SUBJECT : Statutory Guidance on the role of the Director of Adult Social Services; implications for the Council

Electoral Wards Affected :

All Wards

Specific Implications For :

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Board Decision

Eligible for Call In

Not eligible for Call In
(details contained in the report)

1 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Guidance has been issued by the Department of Health, which has implications for decisions about the future arrangements for adult social services within the Council. The Commission for Social Care Inspection has also published its intention to focus on an outcomes framework for adults, upon which it will base future performance assessment of services. The report discusses the key points from the guidance and makes recommendations regarding a future policy framework for adult services, based on nine service outcomes.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In March 2005 the Department of Health issued draft guidance on the role of the Director of Adult Social Services. This guidance was necessary following the Children Act, which established a statutory requirement for each authority with a social service responsibility to establish a post of Director of Children's Services, which replaced the statutory role of Director of Social Services. A period of consultation followed the issuing of the draft guidance, during which the white paper, 'Our health, our care, our say' was published. In May 2006 final guidance was published, consisting of two documents, the first the statutory guidance detailing the legislative implications and secondly Best Practice guidelines, which illustrates with examples how the accountabilities and responsibilities for the role can be interpreted by Councils.

- 2.2 The role of the Director of Adult Social Services is to provide strategic responsibility and accountability for planning, commissioning and delivery of social care services to all adult client groups, whilst also taking a leading role for delivering the vision for the future of social care and tackling social exclusion. The vision for the future of social care has been well articulated in recent reports to the Executive Board, including those on the future of day service provision for adult groups and in the recent launch of the Leeds 'Older Better' strategy. This vision, which seeks to promote independent living, life opportunities and tackling barriers, which lead to social exclusion, has been widely consulted on and endorsed within the city.
- 2.3 In summary the scope of the role of Director of Adult Social Services includes responsibility for adults who are vulnerable or otherwise disadvantaged because of a physical, sensory or mental health condition, including people who have reduced physical and mental capacity because of ageing or long term health conditions. In addition are those adults who are vulnerable because of their social circumstances, for example, homelessness or as an asylum seeker. This definition does not embrace the whole adult population, unlike the responsibility for children, however many people will fall within the definition at some point in their lives, most probably through the onset of a long term health condition or as people live longer through physical or mental frailty.

3 The Role of the Director of Adult Social Services.

- 3.1 The responsibilities of the post as set out in the guidance are:
- Accountability for assessing local needs and ensuring availability and delivery of a full range of adult social services;
 - Professional leadership, including workforce planning;
 - Leading the implementation of standards;
 - Managing cultural change;
 - Promoting local access and ownership and driving partnership working;
 - Delivering an integrated whole systems approach to supporting communities; and
 - Promoting social inclusion and wellbeing;
- 3.2 The Guidance, which is attached as appendix 1, provides some detail for each of these responsibilities, which is also cross-referenced in some instances with the Best Practice Guidance, where more detail can be found.
- 3.3 In laying out the context for the post the guidance draws attention to both the green paper 'Independence, Wellbeing and Choice' and the subsequent white paper, 'Our health, our care, our say' which together describes the government's strategy for adult social care. The DASS will have a key leadership role in delivering the local authority contribution, including;
- Improving preventative services and delivering early interventions
 - Managing the necessary cultural change to give people greater choice and control over services,
 - Tackling inequalities and improving access to services, and;
 - Increasing support for people with the highest level of need.
- 3.4 The guidance emphasizes the leadership role that the post should play beyond the boundaries of the local authority, for example through accountability for professional

standards staff development and workforce planning across the whole social care workforce. This requires Directors of Adult Social Services who are leaders and champions with the ability to work across the traditional departmental boundaries of local authorities and embed partnership working with for example the health service the voluntary sector and independent sector providers. The guidance refers to a specific requirement of the DASS to undertake a strategic needs assessment in partnership with the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Public Health. The process will require widespread consultation and participation and the outcome must improve the Council's overall performance in strategic commissioning and market development.

- 3.5 To deliver the accountability requirements of the post the guidance states that arrangements must be in place for the Director to have appropriate access to Members of the local authority with political leadership responsibility for adult social care and other services for adults, which promote well-being. However the primary focus of the post, as described by the guidance, is the responsibility for adult social care services. Further detail in the guidance makes clear that the Director should be directly responsible for key staff, specifically those with responsibility for planning and commissioning services and or service provision.
- 3.6 The responsibility for leading the implementation of standards including national standards in all aspects of adult social care. The Director must be the key point of contact for national organizations, for example the Commission for Social Care Inspection. Priority must be given to ensuring that there is a focus on the protection of vulnerable adults with the necessary resources and authority to ensure that there is a cultural vigilance against the possibility of adult abuse.
- 3.7 The emphasis given to leading cultural change is there to ensure that the Director has the vision and leadership so that priority is given to developing the well-being agenda for adults as well as balancing a focus on a range of preventative services alongside increasing support for those people in greatest need.
- 3.8 Whilst partnership working is a clear theme throughout the guidance a specific responsibility is placed on the Director to maintain clear and effective arrangements for joint planning, monitoring and delivering services in conjunction with the NHS, housing authorities, Supporting People and other relevant statutory agencies. There is clearly local discretion on how services for adults should come together within the arrangements for each local authority, the guidance seeks to emphasize the relationships which are important to delivering the well-being agenda for adults.
- 3.9 The guidance places a specific responsibility on local authorities to satisfy themselves that appropriate arrangements are in place that address the important inter-face between adult and children's services. The Directors of Adults and Children's services have a joint responsibility for ensuring that a 'whole system' approach to social care is taken. This extends to the partnership arrangements, which are in place, the contribution that all services can make to deliver well-being for vulnerable adults, and the arrangements which ensure a smooth transition between services for young people eligible to receive services through their transition to adults.
- 3.10 Finally, the guidance places a specific responsibility on the local authority to ensure that the Director of Adult Social Services has a specific responsibility for the promotion of social inclusion and well-being. The role should include the championing

of the needs of adults beyond the boundaries of adult social care as well as the organizational boundary of the local authority.

4 The Responsibilities of the Executive Lead Member for Adult Services.

- 4.1 In contrast to the draft guidance issued last year, the final guidance announces the intention to introduce legislation making it a requirement for authorities to appoint an Executive Lead Member for Adult services. This will ensure parity between adult and children's services and will enable 'strategic oversight' of the key issues facing communities. This political leadership will play a key role in cutting across boundaries between services and organizations, promoting well-being, the prevention of social exclusion and protection of vulnerable adults.
- 4.2 Prior to the introduction of legislation local authorities are asked to ensure that arrangements are in place for political accountability for adult social services, which also has responsibility for maintaining an overview of all relevant service provision for adults, alongside adult social services. Similarly they should provide political leadership and forge relationships with the wider community and other agencies, particularly the NHS and with service providers, including the voluntary and independent sectors. At a political level the Lead Member should also ensure that there is effective partnership working between the providers of adult and children's services and that the importance of safeguarding, particularly young people at risk of abuse in later life, is recognized and addressed effectively in both adult and children's services.

5 An Outcome Framework for Adult Services in Leeds.

- 5.1 In the green paper Independence, Well-being, Choice, a set of outcomes derived from a wide-ranging national consultation was proposed. These outcomes include;
- Improved health
 - Improved quality of life
 - Making a positive contribution,
 - exercise of choice and control
 - Freedom from discrimination and harassment
 - Economic well-being, and
 - Personal dignity.

Subsequently the White Paper, Our Health, our care, our say, confirmed that these outcomes would be adopted for adult social care services, as they had been widely endorsed through the consultation process.

- 5.2 The experience of Children's services has demonstrated that a straight-forward outcome based framework becomes the foundation upon which services can be planned, commissioned and delivered. This has also been the experience for adult services, as consultation has pointed to the importance that service users and carers attach to outcomes, for example those which improve their quality of life, (good transport facilities and feeling safe at home and in the local community) and personal dignity (independent living, privacy and respect). Recent policy developments within the Social Services Department, for example the commissioning frameworks for day services and home support, reflect the aspirations that service users and carers have.

- 5.3 As Appendix 2 demonstrates the City has already developed a series of policies, service objectives and performance targets which make a significant contribution to the delivery of outcomes for vulnerable adults, within this outcome framework. Significantly the Local Area Agreement, The Council Plan and strategies agreed within the Local Strategic Partnership are all contributing towards achieving these outcomes.
- 5.4 The Commission for Social Care Inspection has published a consultation document proposing new performance assessment arrangements for adult social services based on the outcome framework which brings adult services in line with the approach already adopted for Children's services. The document presents a revised methodology for the annual performance assessment, which balances progress in service delivery for different user groups, in arriving at the overall service judgment. This will involve separate consideration being given to for example mental health services, rather than the more generic assessment across all adult care groups applied at present.
- 5.5 An outcomes framework is not simply a tool for performance assessment. It must inform the whole process of service planning, commissioning and service delivery on the same way that it has done for Children's services. Furthermore it must be capable of flexibility and local discretion to add further local outcomes as appropriate or define those set at a national level to reflect local priority and need. Comments along these lines will be made as part of the national consultation process. As there is similarity between outcomes for children and those for adults the opportunity should not be lost to develop a coherent and integrated approach to improving well-being and tackling social inclusion in communities.
- 5.5 The proposed outcome framework can assist in interpreting and implementing the guidance on the role of the Director of Adult Social Services and the Executive Lead Member role. Whilst the assessment of performance for the seven main outcomes along with the two additional outcomes added by CSCI is mainly measured through achievement in the adult social services function, excellent status will require a more strategic and holistic approach in addressing the factors that contribute to well-being for vulnerable adults.
- 5.6 There is an important agenda for social services that must not be overlooked in shaping the future for adult services. The Government has set out four main goals for health and social care working together to improve community services. The White paper, Our health, our care, our say, published in January 2006, describes an extensive agenda for the improvement of community health and social care built around the achievement of four main goals. These goals are:
- Better prevention services with earlier intervention – PCT's working closely with local government services to ensure that there is early support to prevent people needing long term support and whilst improving mental and emotional well-being
 - More choice and a louder voice, - patients having choice, better information on which to base decisions, direct payments and individual budgets (direct payments which pool individuals benefits and grants)

- Tackling health inequalities and improving access to community services – addressing inequality for excluded or disadvantaged groups, and targeting resources to those localities or population groups where need is greatest.
- More support for people with long-term need, - improved service delivery through integrated teams with a greater emphasis on treatment options and self-management of care.

5.7 Undoubtedly the white paper presents many challenges for health and social care, which include the re-organisation of PCT's, of particular significance for Leeds, and a greater focus on commissioning. Services will become more integrated, through joint teams and aligned budgets and national priorities for health care will continue to have an impact for social care, for example the reduction in hospital beds, shortened lengths of stay and more care delivered in the patients home.

5.8 Whilst it will be a requirement to demonstrate performance through the nationally prescribed outcome framework their explicit adoption as a basis for local service planning and commissioning sends a strong message of the Council's commitment and leadership for adult social care. It will also provide an opportunity for wider local consultation and involvement with the aim of developing a stronger Leeds dimension to the framework and securing outcomes that have a real meaning for local people.

6 Conclusion:

6.1 The guidance produced by the Department of Health on the role of the Director of Adult Social Services represents a challenge to local authorities at a time of significant change for children's services and the health and social care inter-face. These challenges include:

- Achieving results through leadership and influence, recognizing that all services have the potential to contribute to the achievement of outcomes for people
- Ensuring that those people who are most vulnerable have their needs met, whilst mobilizing resources across all agencies and the community to prevent the loss of people's independence and to promote their well-being.
- Establishing a clear strategic and long-term direction for services, based on the involvement of vulnerable adults and a sound knowledge of need within the community.
- Ensuring that services for children and adults are working together to safeguard all those who are at risk of abuse and that services are designed to assist people with major life events, for example leaving school, or finding the first job.

6.2 To assist the Council in taking forward an agenda for change in adult services, which goes beyond the organizational boundaries, formal adoption of the national framework of outcomes for vulnerable adults is proposed, to provide strategic direction. As a statement of purpose this will enhance the authorities influence in future consultation with our partners, and provide a basis for accountability both within the organization and to service users and the wider community.

7 Recommendation.

The Executive Board is asked:

(a) to note the requirements of guidance regarding the role of the Director of Adult Social Services.

(b) To agree the adoption of the seven outcomes for adults, as described in paragraph 5.1, to provide strategic direction for the future of adult services and as a basis for ongoing consultation with service users and the wider community.