



Report of the Director of Adult Social Services

Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care)

Date: 24th November 2008

Subject: INCOME REVIEW FOR COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES – CONSULTATION

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

At the Scrutiny Board meeting on 23rd July a report was presented on the detailed consultation plan for the Income Review. The consultation process ended on 31st October. This report provides an update on the consultation events and activities undertaken, as well as the initial outcomes from the consultation survey.

The consultation process undertaken since Executive Board in June has been extensive and comprehensive in terms of providing stakeholders with relevant information, giving them the opportunity to comment and providing help and support for them to do so. 11,250 consultation survey forms were distributed, 10 media adverts and press releases were issued and 20 consultation events and briefings were held. 202 calls were received on the freephone helpline and 47 service users received a home visit to help them to complete the survey form. In total 8,102 people or organisations received a survey form to complete and as at 10th November 1,045 survey forms had been returned, a 13% response rate. Of the 6,831 users of adult social care services, 858 (13%) returned a survey form. A survey was undertaken through the Citizens Panel to ascertain the views of the wider population in the city, which will include potential users of adult social care services in the future.

This report includes the initial analysis of the consultation survey responses. Further analysis is being undertaken and will be reviewed by the Service Users and Carers Reference Group. The Reference Group will prepare a report on the consultation outcomes that will form part of the final Income Review report to Executive Board. The comments made in the consultation events and the written comments received on the consultation survey forms are being collated and will be included in the final Income Review report to Executive Board.

Scrutiny Board is invited to make comments on the consultation process for submission to Executive Board as part of the final Income Review report.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 This report provides members of Scrutiny Board with an update on the consultation process regarding the Income Review for non-residential community care services and the initial outcomes from the consultation process.
- 1.2 Based on this information, Scrutiny Board is invited to make comments on the consultation process for submission to Executive Board as part of the final Income Review report.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 At the Scrutiny Board meeting on 23rd July a report was presented that included the report to Executive Board on 11th June and the detailed consultation plan for the Income Review. This information was discussed during the meeting and the report was noted.
- 2.2 The consultation process ended on 31st October. This report provides an update on the consultation events and activities undertaken, as well as the initial outcomes from the consultation survey.

3.0 Income Review Context

- 3.1 The report to Executive Board in June set out in some detail the national and local context for the income review and the reasons for undertaking it. The three main drivers for the review in Leeds are:
- To improve our ability to invest in adult social care services
 - To improve fairness, equity and consistency for service users within Leeds
 - To provide a framework for service user contributions to help prepare for future service changes, particularly personalisation and new service options
- 3.2 Adult social care services nationally and in Leeds are experiencing funding pressures. As people live longer and their expectations change, the Government has identified a potential funding gap of £6 billion for social care in 20 years time. Alongside these demographic changes in Leeds is the need to invest to deliver service improvement. The Executive Board report highlighted three investment priorities for Adult Social Care: safeguarding services; carers support; and assessment and care management.
- 3.3 National data indicates that the financial circumstances of service users are also changing, with increased home ownership and inherited wealth. This means that in the future service users will on average have greater financial resources with which to contribute towards the cost of their care, but the current service user contribution arrangements in Leeds will not translate this into increased income. Benchmarking data shows that income from service users in Leeds is currently significantly lower than for comparator authorities. This is mainly because savings are not taken into account and a lower percentage of disposable income is assessed as being available to contribute towards the cost of services. This review is considering the discretionary elements within the government's "Fairer Charging" guidance, which are applied more generously in Leeds than in most authorities, within the context of the financial pressures being faced by adult social care services.

3.4 As well as improving our ability to invest in services, the income review aims to improve the equity and fairness of service user contributions. Currently in Leeds, middle-income service users without savings pay a higher percentage of their weekly income in contributions than those with higher incomes. One of the main contributory factors is the maximum weekly payment of £88 per week, which is low compared to most authorities. There is also an imbalance between the maximum payment of £88 per week for a very intensive home care package and the contribution for residential care as an alternative to support at home that costs up to £420 per week. Supporting people in their own homes is the ideal model of care, but the higher council subsidy for this compared with residential care will increase the costs to the council and add to the financial pressures being faced.

4.0 Consultation Process

4.1 The report to Executive Board in June outlined two phases to the consultation process. The first phase involved working with a Service User and Carer Reference Group to discuss options in some detail and develop a preferred approach, before approaching all service users and stakeholders in the second phase of consultation. The following organisations were invited to nominate representatives for the Reference Group and the names of those nominated are included:

Alzheimer's Disease Society
Alliance of Service Users and Carers – *Orla O'Connor*
Black and Minority Ethnic People's Consultation Group
Mental Health Service User and Carer Reference Group
Older People's Reference Group - *Myrtle Oke*
Disability Reference Group
LINK Preparatory Group – *Joy Fisher*
Independent Disability Council (Leeds) - *Tim McSharry*
Learning Disability Service User Reference Group – *Christine Barker*
Learning Disability Carers Reference Group – *Jeanette Lewis*
Touchstone

4.2 There are four main ways in which service user contributions could change: the contribution for each service; the maximum weekly payment; the disposable income percentage; and taking savings into account. These in turn can be combined in many ways, potentially resulting in a large number of options that could be overwhelming and confusing for service users. The approach using the Reference Group was taken so that the large number of potential options and their implications could be explored in some detail with a small group of service users. The work of the Reference Group was essential in narrowing down the options to a small and manageable number so that the consultation with all service users could be more meaningful.

4.3 The consultation process included providing briefings and information to stakeholder groups as well as the consultation survey that was sent to all service users. The consultation plan is attached at Appendix 1, including a progress update.

4.4 Appendix 2 sets out the 20 consultation events and briefings that have taken place over the last few months. Many of these events involved explaining the background to the income review and question and answer sessions to help people to complete the consultation survey forms. Some events, for example the focus groups for voluntary organisations, were more general discussions of the key issues where the participants expressed their views at the meeting. The comments made at these

events are being collated and will be included in the final Income Review report to Executive Board.

- 4.5 A survey was undertaken through the Citizens Panel to ascertain the views of the wider population in the city, which will include potential users of adult social care services in the future. A copy of the Citizens Panel survey is attached at Appendix 3. The responses are in the process of being analysed and will be included in the final report to Executive Board.
- 4.6 A series of press releases, media adverts and the Council's Internet site have been used to alert members of the public to the consultation survey. The media activity over the consultation period has been as follows:
- 1 press release immediately following the June Executive Board to inform people of the forthcoming consultation process
 - 6 media adverts about the consultation survey and the four drop-in sessions across the city
 - 3 press releases after the consultation survey was issued to encourage responses
 - 14 articles in the Yorkshire Evening Post about the consultation process.
- 4.7 One of the main elements of the consultation process has been the consultation survey form. A copy of the consultation survey form for service users and the notes to help them to complete it is attached for information at Appendix 4. Service users were also provided with background information on the Income Review and how it might affect them. There are four main ways in which service user contributions could change that the survey form asked for people's views on:
- i) an increase in the payment for each service (3 options)
 - ii) an increase in the maximum weekly payment to £140 per week
 - iii) an increase in the percentage of disposable income taken into account (3 options)
 - iv) taking savings and investments over £13,500 into account (in a way that is more generous than most authorities)
- 4.8 The Reference Group advised on the format and wording of the consultation questionnaire and supporting information to help to ensure that it was appropriate for the intended audience. To encourage people to take part, a prize draw was included with the opportunity for 13 people to win shopping vouchers with a total value of £190 (1st prize £50 in vouchers). With the assistance of the Service User and Carer Reference Group the consultation documents was in an "easy read" style and large print was used. A pictorial version was also available on request and was sent in place of the main version to those known to have a learning disability. The questionnaire was also available in alternative languages and formats on request.
- 4.9 Separate survey forms were produced for carers, members of the public, organisations and service users in receipt of Supporting People services. These forms were essentially the same as those for service users, but with the wording tailored to the audience. The Supporting People survey was designed for those people who only receive Supporting People services, typically those receiving

sheltered housing warden services. Most of these people receive Housing Benefit, which guarantees them free Supporting People services, but for those who pay for their support the Adult Social Care financial assessment process applies. The Supporting People survey form was adapted to include only those aspects relating to the financial assessment.

- 4.10 In total 11,250 consultation survey forms were made available in a variety of ways. Most service users received them by post, but those only attending day services received their copies from day service staff. Sufficient survey forms were made available at day centres to enable staff to assist service users to complete them, so significantly more forms were made available than the number of service users attending who had not already received one at home. Relevant voluntary organisations were sent copies and they were made available on request to members of the public. The survey forms were made available as follows:

6,754 to adult social care service users by post

2,780 made available at day services (862 for service users not in receipt of other services who would not have received one at home)

1,245 by post to people who only receive Supporting People services

300 distributed to Supporting People providers to make available to people not affected by the proposals but who may be in the future if their financial circumstances change

138 to voluntary organisations

33 to members of the public

- 4.11 In total 11,250 survey forms were distributed, but this included stocks sent to day centres where many people will already have received one at home as they receive other services. Service user lists from a variety of sources were used to ensure as far as possible that no-one was missed, but some people received duplicate documentation as they appeared on more than one list and were not identified as duplicates on the original data-matching. The overall number of people to whom consultation documents were sent totals 7,964, with a further 138 going to organisations.

- 4.12 A range of support was available during the consultation period to help people to complete the survey forms. A freephone telephone helpline was available throughout the consultation process and took 202 calls. Of these, 47 people needed further help to complete the survey form and so a member of staff from the financial assessments team visited them at home. Day service staff were available to support service users to complete the survey, with members of the project team available to support staff in this. Members of the project team attended two sessions at resource centres to provide further information and support to staff, service users and carers.

5.0 Consultation Survey Form Outcomes

- 5.1 The consultation documentation served two purposes. The first was to ensure that everyone who might be affected by any changes in service user contributions was informed about the options being considered. The second was to give them the opportunity to comment on these options if they wished to do so. This universal approach is different to that used when service user contributions were last reviewed in Leeds in 2002 when a sample survey was used.

- 5.2 The responses from the consultation survey will provide information in two ways. The answers to the individual questions have been collated and will be further analysed over the coming weeks. In addition, where people have made comments on the survey form these are being collated and analysed.
- 5.3 As at 10th November, 1,045 survey forms had been returned, a 13% response rate. The majority came from service users, but some were from organisations and members of the public. Appendix 5 summarises the responses to each question.
- 5.4 More detailed breakdowns are being produced, for example for those service users only in receipt of Supporting People services and meals. Responses from organisations and the general public will also be analysed to identify if they are significantly different to those from service users. All this information is being prepared and will be reviewed by the Service Users and Carers Reference Group. The Reference Group will prepare a report on the consultation outcomes that will form part of the final Income Review report to Executive Board.
- 5.5 The first sub-analysis of the overall consultation responses has been produced. This is for adult social care service users only and so it excludes people who only receive Supporting People services. 858 responses have been received from the 6,831 service users, a response rate of 13%. Appendix 6 summarises the responses to each question.
- 5.6 Response rates are influenced by a variety of factors, including the extent to which people receiving the survey form perceive that the options may affect them. Leeds has a significantly higher proportion of people receiving free services than the national average. The consultation documentation made it clear that people on low incomes who have savings of less than £13,500 will continue to receive free services (except for any meals and respite care) and so they are less likely to complete the survey form than people who would be affected by any changes.
- 5.7 The Final Executive Board report will also include an analysis of the implications of the options for service users, outlining how many service users are likely to pay more and by how much each week. This analysis is underway based on the latest data available. Appendix 7 illustrates the impact of options A, B and C in the consultation survey on a range of income, savings and service level scenarios. The final scenario illustrates the highest possible increase in the weekly charge of £140. This is for someone with a weekly income of £200 per week and £60,000 in savings. They currently receive a free service due to their relatively low income, but would pay the maximum weekly payment of £140 if savings are taken into account. In this case, the service user has a very intensive care package with 40 hours home care each week, without which residential care would almost certainly have been required. If they entered residential care, their financial circumstances would enable them to pay the full cost. This would typically be around £420 per week, three times the £140 maximum weekly payment option.
- 5.8 In making decisions on any changes to service user contributions Executive Board will need to consider the data from the questions and written comments in the consultation survey alongside the need to invest in adult social care services and to improve the equity and fairness of the current service user contributions.

6.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 6.1 There are no specific implications for council policy and governance within this report. These will be included within the final Income Review report to Executive Board.

7.0 Legal And Resource Implications

- 7.1 The options included within the consultation survey are projected to generate an additional £2m to £2.5m in a full year based on the data available at that time. This is being reviewed based on the very latest data available to ensure that the figures presented to Executive Board are as up to date and reliable as possible.

8.0 Specific Implications for Equality and Diversity

- 8.1 An equality impact assessment has been undertaken in consultation with the Service User and Carer Reference Group. This is being written up and will be included with the final recommendations report to Executive Board.
- 8.2 The consultation survey questionnaire included questions on age, gender and ethnicity. This will facilitate an analysis of whether the responses differ significantly between the various groups.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The consultation process undertaken since Executive Board in June has been extensive and comprehensive in terms of providing stakeholders with relevant information, giving them the opportunity to comment and providing help and support for them to do so.

10.0 Recommendations

- 10.1 Scrutiny Board is recommended to consider the contents of this report and make comments on the consultation process for submission to Executive Board as part of the final Income Review report.

Background Documents referred to in this report

1. Executive Board Report 11th June 2008 : Income for Community Care Services – Proposals for Consultation
2. Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care) Report and Minutes 23rd July 2008 : Income Generation for Community Care Services