

LIST OF THE TASK AND FINISH GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task and Finish Group have made a number of recommendations which could have budget implications. Members understand that not all are likely to be achieved in light of the Comprehensive Spending Review, but would make the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1

It would be beneficial if the OT provided the Council with an update on those adaptations under £500 to enable them to keep an audit of all applications.

Recommendation 2

That the Council considers placing a local land charge on properties which receive grants over £10,000 from April 2011, similar to the system in place that Lancashire County Council use for top up funding.

Recommendation 3

The Group recommend that the Council request a joint leaflet be produced to include information on the process of DFGs from a Council and OT perspective, which should include sources of financial help and advice to assist people struggling to fund their own contribution to the building work including credit unions.

Recommendation 4 – PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION

Members felt that there would be more merit to having a Home Improvement Agency based on a local footprint, rather than a County footprint.

Recommendation 5

It is important that there is a defined policy to allow for a specific amount of money to be spent on urgent/non urgent cases eg 25% of the available funding specifically for non urgent cases to help reduce this element of the waiting list.

Recommendation 6

Lancashire County Council needs to provide a clear statement about what they are going to do about the following:

- a) Provision for top-up funding for Registered Social Landlord properties
- b) Transition process for carer/family and the impact on them
- c) Clear intention about what they intend to do about recycling equipment, such as track hoist/stairlifts, in circumstances such as death or redundant equipment (no longer needed) so families, owners and carers are aware of the policy.

Recommendation 7

The Council need to ensure that local MPs are kept informed of waiting times for Disabled Facilities Grants, the total costs of those aids and adaptations on the waiting lists, the procedure for applying for these grants, to enable them to inform their constituents.

Recommendation: 8

That Cabinet/Lancashire County Council consider this report and its recommendations and respond to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, indicating what action is proposed within two months.

RESPONSE FROM LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

County Councillor Mike Calvert -Cabinet Member for ADULT & COMMUNITY SERVICES.

Recommendation 1...we are not sure what value this would be but would suggest that we agree a sharing of whole system information across all partners in this to identify areas of need, pinch points in processes etc.

Recommendation 2...We don't see this as a problem as it is within their powers, although RBC would have to be mindful of how this could affect their future grant support to Registered social landlords. (see 6a below)

Recommendation 3...This is good in principle and we would need to decide who is best placed in each organisation to facilitate this. It would be across all partners not just BC and PCT.

Recommendation 4...The commissioning of HIA services has been the subject of a county wide review in which Rossendale took part. After considerable debate of its recommendations, through the Supporting People commissioning board, it has been agreed that each locality will shape how HIA service are provided locally subject to an agreed county wide performance framework. Funding for the HIA service provided by St Vincent's Housing Association comes from:

Supporting people: £37,311 per annum for the core service, plus £27,341.60 for the Handy Person,

Rossendale Borough Council £24,000 and

Adult and Community Services £60k for the management of adaptations under £500.

Recommendation 5

We are comfortable with this as non urgent need addressing as they can become urgent with all the negative effects on the individual that that brings. This could only be a short term approach though as to allow it to become permanent would not address underlying issues.

Recommendation 6

- a) This has been raised by a number of District Councils in recent years . Linda Wilson who was working for Janet Allcock until her recent retirement did some work on this and Lancashire County Council legal advice was that we were unable to provide top up funding in RSL properties as we place a charge on the property when a top up is provided and that wouldn't be possible on rented property.
- b) This is in the hands of Brian Robinson from CYPS
- c) We already have in place processes and procedures for managing the recycling of hoists and stair-lifts. It would be beneficial to ensure that service users and carers/ families as well as other professionals were fully aware of these and suggest that this is addressed in the leaflet as in 3 above.

Generally the report doesn't differentiate well between the role of the Borough Council and the County Council. Also reference to OTs is about the PCT employed OTs.

Reference in 6.1 to the application process is not fully accurate:

Enquiries are dealt with by LCC Customer Service Centre screened and prioritised. The referral is passed for allocation to an appropriate assessor who may be a TI, RASO or OT.

In section 10 of the report reference is made to the equipment costing less than £100 not being collected at end of use. This isn't quite accurate as no equipment now provided under the Retail Model is collected.

The retail model of provision of prescriptions for both Health and Social Care simple aids to daily living, from an agreed catalogue, which are then redeemed at accredited retailers has been rolled out for over a year in East Lancashire and in late 2010 in North and Central Lancashire. It not being cost effective to recycle equipment was part of the DH guidance on this model.

Also in section 10 reference is made to loan stores provision. It is correct that Lancashire County Council is discussing the future of loan store provision across the county with PCTs partners especially in light of the reducing demand for their services as the retail model has more effect (i.e. simple equipment being provided through retailers rather than the loan stores).

However we are a little way off having a clear vision for future provision.

The **North West Collaborative Commercial Agency** has been jointly commissioned by the 5 PCTS (including BwD and Blackpool) BwD and Blackpool BCs and Lancashire County Council to carry out an options appraisal for the provision of loans store services in Lancashire that would provide a fit for purpose cost effective service. Its recommendations, due in draft late Jan 2011, **may** include a move to a single store but should cover a range of other options including outsourcing.

I think that the report also highlights that we need to be a bit closer to Rossendale BC and other districts around DFGs and the whole equipment/adaptation, housing and independence agenda to be able to guide and work them in their strategic thinking and activity. The work that I will be doing in my new role should do some of that and I would hope to be able to discuss more in coming months.

Regards

Paul

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