

## AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<b>Name of Committee</b>	<b>Adult &amp; Community Services Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of Committee</b>	<b>10 January 2006</b>
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES)</b>
<b>Summary</b>	The ICES service began operating on 1 February 2005. The launch has gone very successfully with an average performance of over 93% of items of equipment being delivered within seven days. Detailed work is continuing to ensure the effective management of the service and its future development.
<b>For further information please contact:</b>	Steve J Smith Service Manager, Disabilities North Tel: 02476 746426
<b>Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]</b>	No
<b>Background papers</b>	
<b>CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-</b>	
Other Committees	<input type="checkbox"/> Details to be specified
Local Member(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Elected Members	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cabinet Member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cllr Hayfield, Adult & Community Services Portfolio Holder
Other Cabinet Member consulted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Executive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jane Pollard, Legal Services
Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martin Jones, Head of Resources Management

Other Chief Officers

Police

Other Bodies/Individuals

**FINAL DECISION** **Yes**

**SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:** Details to be specified

Further consideration by  
this Committee

To Council

To Cabinet

To an O & S Committee

To an Area Committee

Further Consultation

## Adult & Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 10 January 2005

### Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES)

#### Report of the Interim Director of Social Care (Adult Services)

##### Recommendations

Members note the progress made and the issues raised in the development of the Integrated Community Equipment Service.

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In October 2003, Cabinet authorised the Director of Social Care and Health to enter into a Health Act **Section 31 Partnership arrangement** to establish a pooled budget with the three Warwickshire Primary Care Trusts for the provision of integrated community equipment services (ICES) on terms and conditions acceptable to the County Treasurer, the County Solicitor and the Assistant Chief Executive.
- 1.2 In light of the Government's vision for more strategic commissioning and integrated provision, at the local level, joint commissioning is a key vehicle for shaping services around needs and choices. It is a key means of ensuring a balance of provision across the continuum from low-level prevention to high-level support and specialist treatment. Therefore a key priority of the modernisation and service improvement programme is to develop a protocol for pooled budgets and Section 31 Agreements with the potential for also developing an overall Warwickshire Partnership Agreement, drawing on good practice and lessons learnt from initiatives such as ICES.
- 1.3 Following a tendering process, Nottingham Rehab. Services (NRS) were awarded the contract to provide the ICES on behalf of the above partners and began operating on 1 February 2005.
- 1.4 Under the partnership arrangement with PCTs, the Council acts as the Lead Commissioner for the service. However, to ensure that the interests of all partners are reflected in commissioning decisions, a Management Board has been created to oversee issues of development and performance under contract.

## 2. The Service

- 2.1 NRS have now appointed a Contract Manager; he is based at their depot on the Tachbrook Park Business Estate in Leamington Spa. The depot functions as a warehouse and distribution centre, but additionally it provides a meeting room and demonstration centre. A training programme for staff using the service is being developed; additionally it is planned to demonstrate equipment to prescribers and users from there. A dedicated Warwickshire team located at NRS's Call Centre in Nottingham handles equipment requisitions and customer service queries.
- 2.2 Between 1 February and 31 October 2005, over 20,000 items have been delivered, with over 93% having been delivered within seven days. This is a Department of Health performance indicator. Prior to the service operating, the Social Services Department were achieving 83.0% against our target of 78.2%.
- 2.3 The equipment in the ten stores previously used by Social Services Department and PCT's has now been transferred to the NRS depot, enabling the stores to be closed. Several smaller stores not included in the original tender have since come to light and are in the process of being cleared.
- 2.4 A site visit to the Leamington Store was arranged for Council Members and was completed on 23 September 2005.

## 3. Financial Performance

- 3.1 The total value of the budget identified by partners at the outset of the contract for the current financial year is £1.2m as follows:

	<u>£m</u>
County Council	0.8
South Warks PCT	0.3
North Warks PCT	0.3
Rugby PCT	<u>0.2</u>
	<u>1.6</u>

- 3.2 Based on the first seven months activity of the contract, the total value of equipment issues in a full year is estimated at £2.8m. The anticipated savings from recycling credits, accruing to the partnership upon collection of equipment, are estimated as £0.5m in a full year. Notwithstanding this, there is still major overspending in the current year based on initial partner contributions.
- 3.3 Following a recent audit of the contract and the underpinning Section 31 Agreement, agreement has been reached that the PCTs review their contributions to the pooled budget so as to reflect the true cost of issues, net of recycling credits that are initiated by staff working in their organisations. Following this reassessment of pooled budget contributions, to be effected formally as a variation to the Section 31 Agreement, no material financial implications are arising for the Council.

## **4. Issues and Concerns**

### **4.1 Nottingham Call Centre**

An internal review of the service revealed an assortment of communication problems encountered by prescribers, although not affecting the core service NRS have accepted that if these are not addressed the perception of the service will ultimately suffer. Most problems come down to resource and training. NRS have committed to resolve these issues by fully resourcing the Warwickshire Team and implementing a dedicated training plan for all staff.

### **4.2 Leamington Store**

The quality of the service provided by front line staff delivering the equipment also needs to improve. Only one member of staff was transferred across from the partnership when the store was set up, the remainder were newly appointed. NRS acknowledge the fact that further improvement both technically and from a customer service perspective is still needed. They have introduced a comprehensive training initiative for all staff and have shown further commitment to excellent service by proposing they would like our store to be their “flagship store” nationally.

### **4.3 Contract Management**

Concerns have been raised over the limited amount of management time allocated to the Warwickshire contract at this crucial stage in its development. Unacceptable delays have been encountered in addressing some urgent issues, including accuracy of financial information and complaint resolution. After escalation to NRS Directors, we now have agreement in writing of further management resource to our contract. We have an additional commitment from NRS’s Managing Director to personally steer the action plan to resolve these issues.

## **5. Future Developments**

5.1 Now the core operation of ICES is bedding in and the remaining operational issues are addressed, there are a number of developments planned, including bringing in more partners, such as deaf services and the education service. On-line ordering is also planned in coming months and the benefits of extending the service to include telecare are to be explored. We are currently working with managers from the new children’s structure to ensure they are fully engaged.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The launch of the service has been successfully achieved with targets for delivery being exceeded. The ICES Management Board and Advisory Forum are now firmly established and meeting on a regular basis. Our focus now, is on improving operational efficiency and ensuring that the financial management information is accurate and robust. NRS has been made aware of the need to strengthen their resourcing and management of our contract, and an action plan plotting continual improvement has now been agreed with them. They have demonstrated their commitment to this by the Managing Director's personal involvement in driving through its implementation.

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January 2006