

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee **Adult & Community Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

Date of Committee **5 April 2006**

Report Title **Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) - A Well-Being Threshold**

Summary The paper builds on earlier work considered through the scrutiny process and proposes that the eligibility threshold for Adult Social Services, as set out in the FACS Framework, should be modernised to embrace the well-being agenda being pursued by Government. The implementation would be project managed in line with available resources determined through the Council's corporate budget process.

For further information please contact:

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Would the recommendation decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? [please identify relevant plan/budget provision]

No

Background papers Local Authority Circular (LAC) 2002 13. Reports to Cabinet 13 March 2003, 20 November 2003 and 24 June 2004, 8 December 2005, 12 February 2006.

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s)
- Other Elected Members
- Cabinet Member Cllr Colin Hayfield, Adult and Community Services
- Chief Executive
- Legal Jane Pollard, Assistant County Solicitor

- Finance David Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police
- Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION No

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 – 5 April 2006**

**Fair Access To Care Services (FACS) Well-being Threshold
Report of the Strategic Director Adult, Health & Community
Services**

Recommendations

That the Committee consider this report and to:

1. Note the proposed changes to Fair Access criteria, which is designed to enable the Council to develop, in partnership where appropriate, a co-ordinated low intensity support service with special reference to older people; and,
2. Consider how it may wish to monitor the development and implementation of new arrangements for low intensity support and advise Cabinet on progress as appropriate; and,
3. Note the financial implications of change and the ability to meet them within relevant approved budgets for 2006/07.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) introduced in April 2003 a new national framework for eligibility for adult social care services which was made up of four bands of eligibility: Critical (High), Substantial, Moderate and Low. The Cabinet decision in March 2003 was that the eligibility threshold in Warwickshire should be below the Substantial and above the Moderate bands. Cabinet decided in October 2004 to retain the eligibility threshold at that same level. A recent survey of local authorities in the West Midlands revealed that eight out of nine authorities have the same eligibility threshold as Warwickshire. There is one authority that has its threshold set to include the moderate band, but is considering whether to raise it to substantial. Two of the authorities with thresholds at the substantial band raised their thresholds from moderate this year.
- 1.2 As part of the process of public service reform, the Government outlined a series of ideas for the modernisation of adult social care in its Green Paper, Independence, Well-Being and Choice. A Member seminar on this issue was held in July 2004 and in October scrutiny considered options around current thresholds for care services. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also promoted the use of low intensity support services to help tackle social exclusion amongst older people.
- 1.3 This suggests a more innovative approach is needed to low intensity support.

At least one authority in the West Midlands has moved strongly in this direction over the last two years and in doing so has received appropriate recognition of its performance by CSCI.

1.4 The most recent Council performance assessment, previously reported to the Committee, confirms the need for a new approach that will:

- ✓ enhance the ability to deliver a broader welfare and well-being agenda locally within the resources available,
- ✓ use the synergy offered by the structure of the Adult, Health and Community Services directorate
- ✓ receive recognition within the social care performance assessment framework on the relevant indicators.

1.5 It is now evident that a new approach to Fair Access criteria is needed. This should enable the Council to embrace both the “welfare” and “well-being” dimensions of Fair Access. In doing so it needs to introduce change in a way that secures appropriate recognition within the performance assessment framework [PAF] used to assess Council performance.

2. Promoting Independence and Well-Being

2.1 There has been a growing emphasis in Government policy and consultation documents on the importance of shifting the emphasis from meeting the most serious and immediate needs to also meeting needs at an earlier stage with a view to preventing deterioration and enabling people to remain in their own homes for as long as possible.

2.2 The report “All Our Tomorrows: Inverting the Triangle of Care” was published by the ADSS and Local Government Association in October 2003. The report suggests that there needs to be a rebalancing of service provision from a model which focuses most resources on those with the most severe needs, to one which gives a higher priority to preventative services and which encompasses a broad community strategy involving partnerships with a wide range of agencies.

2.3 The Green Paper “Independence, Well-Being and Choice” (March 2005) suggested a greater focus on preventative services to allow for early, targeted interventions and to ensure greater social inclusion and improved quality of life. The paper draws on the “All Our Tomorrows” report and endorses that model. The Green Paper also recognised that many Council had not been able to move forward strongly on well-being issues allied to social care and that such services were sometimes seen as relatively low levels of priority for additional resources.

2.4 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has also encouraged councils to support “that bit of help” to enable people to remain independently and safely within their own homes [November 2005]. [Speech available on request]

2.5 In January 2006, the CSCI report to Parliament on the State of Social Care in

England [2006] emphasised the contribution low intensity support can make both to promotion of independence and well being and in the management of need for more intensive social care support in the future.

- 2.6 More recently, the Government published “Sure Start to Later Life – ending inequalities for older people” [2006]. This is about increasing quality of life for all and is equally supportive of the development of low intensity support services and their contribution to independence and well-being.

3. Fair Access to Care Criteria [FACS]

- 3.1 The Council's FACS eligibility criteria are set out in the matrix in Appendix 1. They are fully consistent with the guidance of the Department of Health framework and the wording to be used to ensure national consistency in definitions. The eligibility criteria have to be applied to all adult social care user groups involving the provision of publicly funded care and support. The application of the eligibility criteria involves an assessment of the risk to the person's independence and well being posed by their needs.
- 3.2 The different bandings reflect the extent and urgency of those needs. The top two bands include higher risk factors which are not present in the lower two bands including health and other life threatening conditions (Critical band only), choice/control over environment and abuse. The Moderate and Low bands are focus on personal care, support systems and involvement in work/education, and social roles and responsibilities. As such, they link closely to the concept of “well-being”.
- 3.3 The current situation is that generally speaking the resources available to Social Services are only sufficient to meet the needs at a Critical or Substantial level. Some resources are available for well-being services which are, in the main, commissioned through the Community and Voluntary Sector. For services to count for performance purposes there needs to be an assessment, plan and review mechanism in place.
- 3.4 For low intensity needs assessment, planning and review can be much simpler and include use of needs requiring high intensity support. Developing a well being approach also requires a more innovative and integrated approach to care and support. This may involve more traditional care and practical help along with supporting people style activity that links across different dimensions of quality of life. Promotion of well being suggests a need to focus on aspects of daily living that are of a less immediate risk to independence and where lower level interventions could prevent or delay that risk increasing and make it easier to get in touch should needs increase.

4. Proposed Social Care and Well Being Thresholds

4.1 Cabinet has accepted the proposal that, as from 1 June 2006, the Council applies two thresholds for access They are:

- ✓ High Intensity [Social Care] Threshold
- ✓ Low Intensity [Well Being] Threshold

The threshold for High Intensity Services will remain as it is. Access to high intensity social care services will continue to prioritise people with critical and substantial social care needs as set out in Appendix One. The maintenance of this threshold will ensure that those most in need of social care continue to receive it and that supply and demand for care is kept in broad balanced. To reinforce best practice within adult social care and assure consistency in decision making quality audit mechanisms will reviewed.

4.2 The new “well-being” threshold would apply to the moderate and low categories of needs as set out in the Fair Access criteria. Entitlement to low intensity support does not carry with it automatic entitlement to high intensity support where the current threshold will continue to apply. What it does mean is that should such needs arise people would be known to the Council and the ability to respond to changed circumstances would be enhanced.

4.3 People would be eligible for support where an assessment has identified that:

- ✓ Their needs for support to remain independent are likely to continue or to become greater within the foreseeable future
- ✓ Without support of some kind there would be an increased risk for high intensity community care services which the provision of support would ameliorate.
- ✓ The needs identified risk generating unsustainable pressure on principal carers and any weakening or breakdown in such support could result in a requirement for high intensity services.

4.4 In the period in the run up to 1 June 2006 work will continue on the co-ordination of existing separate services to bring them into a “pick and mix” scheme whereby following a simple assessment people can sign up to a range of low intensity social care and supporting people services, summarised in a brief care plan, that will help them to remain independent. This project work will be underpinned by appropriate staff briefing, development of appropriate documentation and engagement with stakeholders. The provision of assistance would be subject to monitoring and annual review. As such, the three key elements [assessment, plan and review] essential to qualify within the adult social care performance framework would be met.

- 4.5 The scheme would develop close links with Supporting People services and with district and borough council sheltered housing and support schemes. The focus will be on a real working together to meet low intensity needs in a way that matches individual needs and circumstances. The scheme would embrace use of assistive technology.
- 4.6 The low intensity support scheme would also cover carers. As such it has the potential to offer greater recognition of and support for their role. In particular it would offer the ability to link into more help through a known contact point should that arise.
- 4.7 The proposed way forward offers a real opportunity to make early and rapid progress with the well-being agenda within defined resource parameters and with appropriate use of information and communication technologies. Without progress in this area there is little prospect of:
- Meeting expectations on low intensity support
 - Improving the contribution of preventative services to helping to manage the need for more intensive help in the longer term
 - Improving the performance assessment of adult social care of only serving some people well; and,
 - Progressing with the wider agenda on promotion of independence and well being envisaged by Government in both the recent White Paper and its publication of "A sure start to later life".

5. Resourcing the Fair Access Thresholds

- 5.1 The introduction of the new well being threshold is expected to be resourced by five principal means:
- ✓ Co-ordination of existing resources into the new low intensity support package.
 - ✓ Government grant funding for the development of assistive technology services.
 - ✓ Linking into Supporting People funding for "floating support" and practical help.
 - ✓ Limited additional investment from within the approved budget for Adults, Health and Community Services for 2006/07 consistent with the anticipated increase in numbers of older people.
 - ✓ Investment by partner agencies in direct services agreed to be included within the "pick & mix" approach.

The precise funding mechanisms will be finalised consistent with the launch date of the new arrangements and approved policies and budgets of the Council for 2006/07. Some additional staffing will be required to take the scheme forward and will be phased in as the new services develop.

- 5.2. The Committee will recall that social services had previously identified a budget bid, considered as part of the Council's corporate budget process, which was based on lowering existing eligibility criteria from 'substantial' to 'moderate' (see Appendix 1).

- 5.3 The estimated ultimate cost of this of this would have been £8.5 million. This has not proved affordable within the Council's available resources. This approach also carried with it the potential risk of extending traditional models of care and support at a time when the Government agenda is shifting towards a greater emphasis on independence, prevention and well being.
- 5.4 The Council has instead approved additional resources of £0.5M to take forward the well being approach during the current year as outlined in this report. The proposed way forward that has been outlined in this report will project managed and delivered within the approved resource parameters for the directorate. Milestones will be established and monitored.

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Feb 2006

Appendix 1: Adult Services Eligibility Criteria Framework

Assessment of risk is based on maintaining an individual's independence over time. A person is only eligible for services where needs are identified above the threshold, that is critical or substantial, and they need help to meet those needs. This eligibility criteria framework also applies to carers.

Key Factors Central to an Individual's Independence	Critical Risk to Independence	Substantial Risk to Independence	THRESHOLD OF ELIGIBILITY FOR SERVICES	Moderate Risk to Independence	Low Risk to Independence	
Health & Safety including freedom from harm, abuse and neglect.	Life is, or will be threatened; and/or significant health problems have developed or will develop; and/or <u>serious</u> abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur.	Abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur.				
Autonomy and freedom to make choices.	There is, or will be, little or no choice and control over <u>vital</u> aspects of the immediate environment.	There is, or will be, only <u>partial</u> choice and control over the immediate environment.				
Ability to manage personal and other daily routines	There is, or will be, an inability to carry out <u>vital</u> personal care or domestic routines.	There is, or will be, an inability to carry out the <u>majority</u> of personal care or domestic routines.			There is, or will be, an inability to carry out <u>several</u> personal care or domestic routines.	There is, or will be, an inability to carry out <u>one or two</u> personal care or domestic routines.
Involvement in family and wider community life including paid and unpaid work, learning, volunteering, leisure and hobbies.	<u>Vital</u> involvement in work, education or learning cannot or will not be sustained. ----- <u>Vital</u> social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained. ----- <u>Vital</u> family and other social roles and responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken.	Involvement in <u>many</u> aspects of work, education or learning cannot or will not be sustained. ----- The <u>majority</u> of social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained. ----- The <u>majority</u> of family and other social roles & responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken.			Involvement in several aspects of work, education or learning cannot or will not be sustained. ----- <u>Several</u> social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained. ----- <u>Several</u> family and other social roles & responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken.	Involvement in <u>one or two</u> aspects of work, education or learning cannot or will not be sustained. ----- <u>One or two</u> social support systems and relationships cannot or will not be sustained. ----- <u>One or two</u> family and other social roles & responsibilities cannot or will not be undertaken.