
Meeting: Executive
Date: 8 December 2009
Subject: Annual Performance Report for Adult Social Care 2008 - 2009
Report of: Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley , Portfolio Holder for Social Care & Health
Summary: Performance in adult social care services is subject to an annual assessment by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The CQC require that the outcome of the performance assessment is reported to the Executive.

Advising Officer: Julie Ogle, Director of Social Care, Health & Housing
Contact Officer: Althea Mitcham, Head of Business Infrastructure
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision No
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) The Care Quality Commission report is embargoed from public publication until 2 December 2009, when the Care Quality Commission will publish the national results for Councils with social care responsibilities.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The delivery of services that are high in standard and of good value, contribute to improving the quality of social care and health services for local citizens, by providing better life chances for adults, older people and their carers and enables more vulnerable or chronically sick people to be appropriately cared for in their own or a community home.

The delivery of responsive services meets with the Council's vision to 'improve the quality of life of all in Central Bedfordshire' and its priority of 'supporting and caring for an ageing population'.

Financial:

The ongoing remedial work to improve critical areas of weakness will be financed from within existing resources. External funding sources such as the Joint Investment Programme are being pursued.

There is no earmarked revenue budget provision for the costs associated with the Recovery Programme for Adult Social Care, however, the Directorate has identified uncommitted revenue budget which will be used to meet these short term costs. Additional ongoing revenue budget to support the delivery and maintenance of service improvements has been identified as a growth bid for 2010/11.

Legal:

There are no inherent legal considerations resulting from the report.

Risk Management:

There are no risks inherent in this report as the Council are already engaged in a recovery and improvement programme which is regularly monitored by the Care Quality Commission, but it will be important to address the areas that are considered weak or for development.

Equalities/Human Rights:

All Local Authorities are required to implement a range of equality legislation which requires the Council to:

- Understand issues relating to disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, age, and sexual orientation.
- Engage with service users, local communities, staff, stakeholders and contractors to identify and implement improvements
- Tackle barriers which restrict access to services or lead to poorer outcomes when using services, (e.g. inaccessible buildings, poorly publicised services and lack of employee understanding about the needs of particular groups).
- Address abuse of vulnerable adults which can include discriminatory abuse, including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

Central Bedfordshire Council has recently launched specialist equality training for Adult Services staff to help raise awareness of these issues.

The recovery and improvement programme will deliver improved services to those who are amongst the most disadvantaged in the community and reliant on care services to prevent them from going into a residential establishment or in order to undertake daily living tasks.

Improvements to services judged to be weak and under-performing will ensure that service users and their carers receive the most appropriate support and experience services which are appropriate, timely and of high quality. Services will consider the service users and carers' cultural needs as well as specific individual needs as a result of a learning disability or difficulty, poor mental health, visual impairment, hearing impairment, mobility issues or physical health needs.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

An update on the Recovery and Improvement of Adult Care Services was reported to the Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 September 2009.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Executive note the content of the report.

Reason for Recommendation(s): There is a requirement from the government regulators of social care services, (Care Quality Commission) that the outcome of the annual assessment is reported to the Executive.

The Health and Social Care Act 2003, sections 79 and 81 require CQC to report to the Minister of State for care services on underperforming councils.

Executive Summary

The report fulfils the national requirement of reporting to a public meeting of the Council's Executive the outcome of the annual performance assessment for adult social care services in Central Bedfordshire for 2008/09. The national publication of the assessments was on 2nd December 2009. For Central Bedfordshire the view of the regulator is expressed in a commentary rather than a judgement acknowledging that 2008/09 adult social care services were delivered by Bedfordshire County Council.

Introduction

1. The reporting and performance monitoring regime for Adult Social Care for 2008 – 2009 has changed in line with new legislation and the introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment. The Care Quality Commission is the new regulator for adult social care and health and along with changes in the self assessment format, the way that local authorities are graded has changed. There is no longer a star rating for social care, instead there is judgement against each of the prescribed delivery outcomes and this is aggregated up into an overall judgement about how well the Council is performing overall. The assessment result will inform the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Organisational Assessment.
2. The new unitary Councils of Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Councils will not receive a judgement for adult social care services for performance in 2008/09 but will receive a commentary (Appendix A – embargoed until 2nd December 2009). This is in recognition that Bedfordshire County Council delivered adult social care services in 2008/09 and no longer exists.

3. Members will recall the report to Executive on 18th August 2009 that established a Recovery and Improvement Programme approach to secure the delivery of adult social care services. This was as a result of the fall in performance from 2* to 1* (adequate delivery of outcomes and uncertain capacity to improve) for 2007/08 and the Director and her management team's view that performance had in fact continued to deteriorate in 2008/09.
4. Members will recall the immediate steps taken to review performance through a strategic review and diagnostic work undertaken by the Care Services Efficiency Delivery Team. This was alongside work to determine the robustness of the budget and externally commissioned work to review mental health services delivery and the development of a Workforce Strategy.
5. The Recovery and Improvement approach adopted by the Council is overseeing the 11 key areas of concern: safeguarding; mental health services; carers; commissioning; managing the social care market and contract monitoring/management; workforce strategy; staffing arrangements; partnerships; performance management; budget, and, financial management. The Recovery Programme Board that is chaired by the Chief Executive and reporting to the Members Reference Group is ensuring delivery of the recovery agenda.

Background

6. Councils with Social Care responsibilities are subject to continual assessment by the Care Quality Commission. For Central Bedfordshire this means six weekly meetings with CQC and reflects the level of concern over adult social care performance and the Council's approach to recovery has been supported by CQC and Government Office colleagues.
7. Performance ratings are the product of a wider performance assessment process bringing the Care Quality Commission and local authorities into regular contact throughout the year. The evidence for arriving at the performance assessment comes from in-year monitoring (mainly through the comprehensive Self Assessment Statement and Routine Business Meetings), any inspection or joint review reports, a set of national performance indicators and the Performance Assessment Notebook. Evidence considered is both quantitative and qualitative.
8. The new self assessment focuses on seven outcome areas (see below), and each of these areas can be judged to be poor', 'adequate', 'good' and 'excellent'.
 - Improved health and well-being
 - Improved quality of life
 - Making a positive contribution
 - Increased choice and control
 - Freedom from discrimination and harassment
 - Economic well-being
 - Maintaining personal dignity and respect

9. The assessment includes the areas of 'leadership' and 'commissioning and use of resources', but these are ungraded and the assessment result will be expressed as a narrative..
10. The judgement is usually arrived at by using:
 - the Self-Assessment Survey completed by the council in May;
 - the National Indicator Set, and data from national returns;
 - regulatory activity;
 - service inspection evidence, judgements and monitored progress against action plans;
 - routine business meetings and annual review meeting as part of a continuous dialogue around council performance;
 - progress against agreed improvement/action plans;
 - delivery of relevant Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets and any other local targets underpinned by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) implementation plan;
 - The Performance Assessment Notebook (PAN), containing evidence and some assumptions, which are shared with the Council after the Annual Review Meeting;
 - any other issues suggesting cause for concern which have been discussed with the council such as safeguarding, complaints and enforcement action.

Care Quality Commission Annual Performance Assessment Report for 2008/09

11. The Annual Performance Assessment Report, (Appendix A - embargoes until 2nd December 2009), summarises overall performance for the seven outcome areas and in addition the Care Quality Commission's evaluation of leadership and commissioning and use of resources.
12. The summary of performance indicates that during 2008 – 2009 the Bedfordshire County focused on transitional arrangements and 'failed to drive the necessary improvement or to develop the conditions to transform Adult Social Care'. This lack of focus has resulted in the Central Bedfordshire Council inheriting an under-performing adult social care service with a challenging improvement agenda.
13. There is recognition that the Council has been proactive and responded swiftly by producing a detailed action plan for improvement. There is acknowledgement of focused leadership and corporate support. The report indicates that there is confidence in the recovery and improvement plans proposed.

Conclusion and Next Steps

14. CQC colleagues have been clear that the Council should not have unrealistic expectations about how quickly adult social care services will improve. It seems likely that had the legacy Council continued that there would have been a poorer assessment outcome and the potential for national intervention. It is seen as a strength that Central Bedfordshire has acknowledged the level of performance and is committed to driving improvements.

15. The Recovery Programme approach will deliver the immediate actions required over the next few months to stabilise the service. It is a challenging agenda and requires the continuing commitment of the Council and its partners to be able to deliver the outcomes for Central Bedfordshire residents that we aspire to.
16. The Chief Executive will continue to chair the Recovery Programme Board which will report to the Members Reference Group and the recovery plan will continue to be closely monitored through the 6 weekly meetings with the Care Quality Commission.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Annual Performance Assessment Report 2008/2009, Care Quality Commission

-To follow as embargoed until 2 December 2009

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None