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**Meeting:** Executive  
**Date:** 3 July 2012  
**Subject:** Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care  
**Report of:** Cllr Mrs Carole Hegley, Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing  
**Summary:** To inform the Executive of the significant achievements made in Adult Social Care, and the subsequent sector wide recognition received from the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care Board.

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**Advising Officer:** Julie Ogle, Director of Social Care, Health and Housing  
**Contact Officer:** Jackie Woods, Service Development Team Leader  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Executive  
**Key Decision** No  
**Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate)** N/A

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

The Councils Adult Social Care services contribute towards improving the quality of life of all in Central Bedfordshire, specifically by:

- Promoting health and well-being and protecting the vulnerable;
- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire; and
- Value for money

### **Financial:**

1. Financial implications were met from existing budgets.

### **Legal:**

2. Not applicable.

### **Risk Management:**

3. There were a range of specific reputational, operational and technical risks identified, related to the improvement plans. Robust Risk and Change Management strategies were devised to ensure mitigating actions were developed and implemented.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

4. The Adult Social Care workforce has been realigned to the future needs of residents within CBC. The review and subsequent implementation was undertaken with the support of HR and Union representatives.
5. It is anticipated that structures will continually be evaluated to validate appropriateness.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

6. Public Authorities must ensure that decisions are made in a way which minimises unfairness and without a disproportionately negative impact on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people, women and men. An Equalities Impact Assessment was not appropriate at Programme level.
7. However, there were Equalities and Human Rights implications related to the implementation of a number of the milestones from across the improvement programme. Where appropriate Equality Impact Assessments were completed.

**Public Health:**

8. Not applicable.

**Community Safety:**

9. Not applicable.

**Sustainability:**

10. Not applicable.

**Procurement:**

11. Not applicable.

**Overview and Scrutiny:**

12. Overview and Scrutiny received a report on 28 June 2010, and approved proposals for assuring sustained improvement through the establishment of the second phase of the Recovery Programme.

**RECOMMENDATION:****The Executive is asked to:**

1. **endorse the significant improvement in the Council's Adult Social Care services as recognised by the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care Board.**

*Reason for Recommendation:* *To recognise the progress made by the Adult Social Care services in Central Bedfordshire.*

## **Executive Summary**

13. Central Bedfordshire Council has brought about a step change in the quality of services offered, both stabilising and making substantial improvements to its Adult Social Care services. Improvements are being experienced every day by service users, carers, and partners, as well as the employees and management of the Council.
14. Confirmation has now been received from the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care Programme Board that Central Bedfordshire is considered to have improved from the “Adequate” status assigned by the Care Quality Commission at the end of 2009/10.

## **Background**

15. Central Bedfordshire Council inherited poorly performing services from the former Bedfordshire County Council.
16. This position was recognised early in 2009 by the new management team at the inception of the new Council, and was confirmed following the annual performance assessment carried out by the Care Quality Commission at the end of 2009/10.
17. The Management Team, with the support of the Chief Executive, the Leader, the Deputy Leader and the Executive Member for Social Care, Health and Housing implemented a recovery and improvement programme to improve the quality of the Adult Social Care services in Central Bedfordshire.
18. The Recovery and Improvement programme was established to take adult social care to safe, sustainable service delivery in the key areas of concern and was a strategic initiative to deploy focused, prioritised resources to ensure a rapid improvement in service delivery. The Programme was shared with the Care Quality Commission and the Government Office, who were in support of the approach taken.
19. The first phase of the Adult Social Care Recovery Programme was completed in June 2010 and covered eleven work streams:
  - Safeguarding
  - Mental Health Services
  - Workforce Strategy
  - Carers
  - Commissioning
  - Market and Contract Management
  - Staffing Arrangements
  - Partnerships
  - Performance Management
  - Budget
  - Financial Management

20. Phase two was commissioned to ensure sustained improvement with the deliverables managed and delivered through the following five work streams:
- Practice, standards and performance.
  - Safeguarding
  - Integrated finance and business processes
  - Shaping, stabilising and managing the adult social care market
  - Transforming people's lives
21. The second phase was formally completed in April 2012.

### **Improvements made to Adult Safeguarding Arrangements**

22. The importance of protecting vulnerable adults was a high priority and to ensure recovery actions taken were having the desired effects and demonstrated improvement, a peer challenge by the Local Government Group was requested. The peer challenge took place in June 2011, led by John Rutherford, Director of Adult & Community Services for Bolton Council.
23. The review confirmed that the self assessment undertaken by the Council was a true reflection of progress made to date and that **“the Director and her team have given clear leadership through these difficult times by identifying the importance of good practice and initiating a number of processes and procedures to achieve this goal. The processes are good, clear and effective, and there is now an understanding of the importance of safeguarding throughout the service and in partner organisations. There is clear political leadership and support for the safeguarding agenda.”**
24. The Safeguarding Peer Challenge report reflected that there were really good foundations upon which the Council can seek to build.

### **Improving from Adequate**

25. The national Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care Programme Board provided a process of peer challenge and review which could be used to obtain recognition of the improvements achieved by those Councils rated as adequate.
26. On engagement with the Programme Board a Peer Director, Mick Connell, Director of Adults and Community in Leicestershire, was appointed to provide further independent challenge to the overall recovery and improvement of the Councils Adult Social Care services.
27. The Director met with Members, the Management Team, Providers and customers in forming a view about the improvements that the Council had made: **“I have been impressed by the work undertaken in CBC to improve adult social care services. I am confident from my information gathering, discussions and observations that the council is now performing “well” overall. In my view, the council continues to make good progress and will be able to sustain this in the future.”** The report is attached as Appendix A – Peer Challenge Report.

28. On 23 March 2012, the Director of Social Care, Health and Housing presented Central Bedfordshire Council's case for improvement along with the assessment made by the Peer Director to the Towards Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care Programme Board (TEASC).
29. The TEASC Board recognised that the Council has made sustainable improvements over the last three years and that the improvements are embedded in the work of the council and its partners and will be sustained. They also endorsed the contribution the authority is making in terms of supporting other councils locally and nationally. The strong and determined leadership shown by the Director and Elected Members in bringing about the improvements was acknowledged.
30. The formal letters of acknowledgment are attached at Appendix B – Letter from the Towards Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care programme board to the Director, SCHH, and Appendix C – Letter from the Towards Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care programme board to the Leader.
31. It is pleasing that the Council's adult social care services are no longer regarded as "adequate". However, there is no room for complacency and the improvement approach continues so that services are brought to a standard that will enable delivery of the highest quality, sustainable services to meet the needs of residents of Central Bedfordshire.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Peer Challenge Report

Appendix B – Letter from the Towards Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care programme board to the Director, SCHH

Appendix C – Letter from the Towards Excellence in Councils' Adult Social Care programme board to the Leader

**Background Papers:** None