

COMMITTEE: BEST VALUE SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE: 6TH APRIL 2004

SUBJECT: CDMT UPDATE REPORT

REPORT BY: HEAD OF POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

CONTACT OFFICER: JUDITH INGHAM 546496

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL COMMUNITY SAFETY

EQUALITIES ENVIRONMENT

FINANCIAL CONSULTATIONS

STAFFING OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: NONE

1. **PURPOSE**

To inform Members of the proceedings of the Corporate Directors Management Team with respect to Best Value.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

Best Value Scrutiny Panel is recommended to note the report

3. **BACKGROUND**

3.1 The Corporate Directors Management Team (CDMT) Improvement and Procurement Board meet on the last Thursday of each month. The meetings are attended by the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, the Director of Scrutiny, the Heads of Internal Audit, Corporate Finance and Policy and Performance, the Procurement Manager, two officers from Policy and Performance and two trades union representatives. The terms of reference of the Board include considering Best Value review reports, providing feedback and input into the reviews, monitoring their progress, and then ensuring the improvement plans are carried out.

3.2 This report describes the discussions and findings of the Board in March with relation to Best Value.

4. **PROGRESS WITH BEST VALUE REVIEWS**

Engineering & Transportation	Completion of the review has been deferred for six months (until July 2004) due to recruitment difficulties. Scrutiny Panel to receive an update on the latest recruitment position at this meeting.
Housing Strategy & Private Sector	The review team expect to complete the review this month.
Children's services for 0-10 year olds	The Vision report was approved by CDMT Board and the Children's Strategic Partnership Board in September. It was agreed that the Improvement Plan will be integrated with the work on the issues identified in the Green Paper, and other initiatives such as Identification Referral and Tracking, Children's centres, Extended Schools and recommendations from the Lord Laming Inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié. CDMT has requested an update on progress to the next CDMT Improvement and Procurement Board at the end of this month.
Sports and Leisure	The final report, the Options Analysis and Improvement Plan, was considered by BV Scrutiny Panel at your last meeting, and is on the agenda of the Regeneration and Citizenship Scrutiny Committee for 8 April, and Executive for 26 April.
Community Development	The Options Analysis and Improvement Plan is on the agenda for this meeting, and scheduled for consideration by the Regeneration and Citizenship Scrutiny Committee on 8 April, and Executive on 26 April.

5. **IMPROVEMENT PROGRESS FOLLOWING BEST VALUE REVIEWS**

Local Land Charges

- 5.1 The Head of Legal Services gave an oral report on improvement progress following this best value review which was completed in 2001. Approximately 14 out of the 20 tasks in the improvement plan have been completed.
- 1) Time taken to complete a search has been reduced to three days, though recently it rose above that for a short time due to a staff shortage
 - 2) The link with Planning to carry out some aspects of the search on-line using Planning data will be going live shortly
 - 3) Land Charges regularly benchmarks performance with other local authorities
 - 4) Land Charges has not pursued a Chartermark as they had originally planned due to lack of staff time
 - 5) Forecast income from searches may not be met this year because of a reduction in search requests, and a higher percentage of personal searches. The fee for personal searches is £10 as opposed to £120 for a search carried

out by the Land Charges staff. In addition, fees are lower for searches received on-line through the national Hub system, currently less than 10% of all searches received. In the future these trends towards personal and on-line searches are likely to reduce fee income.

Services for Frail Older People and Services for Adults with a Learning Disability

- 5.2 The Head of Community Care delivered reports on improvement progress following this best value review which were completed in spring 2002. The reports are attached as Appendices A and B. He then answered questions.
- 5.3 (See point 2 in Appendix A) The block booking for 42 nursing home beds represent just over half the total demand the Council has for nursing home beds and is likely to save money. There is an action plan to increase block bookings, and possibly to extend them to residential care, but plans will be finalised next year after a review of the market is completed in partnership with the Corporate Procurement Unit. The authority has to proceed cautiously to avoid having to pay for beds surplus to need.
- 5.4 (See point 5 in Appendix A) Unit costs of home care have indeed been reduced by achieving efficiency savings, despite the impact of salary increases for inflation. Costs will rise again however as a result of the single status agreement increasing home carer salaries. The Council employs home carers from the private sector when it is cost-efficient to do so.
- 5.5 (See point 7 in Appendix A) Demand from residents aged over 65 for residential/nursing care or for intensive home care has increased, and this is why the proportion of the population receiving either of these forms of assistance has gone up. For admissions to residential care, the Council was successful in reducing demand in 2001/02 because we increased the availability of intensive home care, but increasing demand in 2002/03 reversed the decline in the proportion of the population assisted. The Council rations care according to a matrix of assessed need, and has already raised the threshold in order to limit supply to stay within budget.
- 5.6 (See point 8 in Appendix A) Applegrove residential care home has been replaced by a very sheltered housing unit, but no final decision has been taken on future use of the Elm Trees site, part of which is being used as temporary offices at present. The decision will be taken as part of the review of older people's living needs.
- 5.7 (See point 10 in Appendix A) The Meals on Wheel service will go out to tender in September this year. At present, it appear it will be difficult to achieve a price reduction as culturally appropriate meals for BME people are only available at a higher quality, and it will be expensive to achieve the same level of quality for meals for people not from BME backgrounds.

Trading Standards

- 5.8 The Head of Environmental and Consumer Services and the Trading Standards Manager attended to give an oral report on improvement progress since this best value review was completed in spring 2001.
- 5.9 Following the Best Value Inspectorate's inspection of the review, which determined that the service was Fair with Uncertain prospects for improvement, there was low morale in the service and a number of staff left, reducing staffing to 15 out of a complement of 20. Since then the service has worked hard to improve, and improvement has particularly gained momentum over the past year with the appointment of the Trading Standards Manager. The service submitted a trading standards strategy to the Government last year as a new statutory requirement, and was placed in the top 25% of all authorities. That strategy has now been implemented in full.
- 5.10 Trading Standards now provides an extra 27 hours a week of access to consumer advice over the telephone, through a contract with the Hertfordshire County Council call centre. They have also introduced a guidance pack of consumer advice for the public, which includes sample letters to help them communicate with businesses if they have a problem.
- 5.11 The review showed that the service was underused by BME communities in Luton, so Trading Standards have recruited 5 community champions to take the message into specific communities. The community champions are being trained in consumer issues and given details of organisations which can help with other issues if they receive queries which fall outside the remit of Trading Standards. Trading Standards plans to recruit 15 more next year. They have also contacted 25 community groups, and received invitations to deliver talks to 14 of them so far.
- 5.12 Trading Standards has worked with focus groups of residents to identify what issues are important to them. As a result the service is prioritising consumer safety and the sampling of goods. Some people attending the groups expressed concern about trading malpractice in Bury Park. This was not reflected in complaints to Trading Standards, so they investigated further, and found that there were instances of illegal trading, for example in weights and measures. As a result, the service has worked with local business representatives to ensure businesses understand the legal requirements and can meet them.
- 5.13 Trading Standards has been restructured into general working teams rather than specialist teams, and the metrology laboratory has been outsourced. The work of testing meters for Kent Water Meters is billed to a separate cost centre and is a self-funded service. For the first time since Luton took over Trading Standards in 1997, all posts in the service are filled.
- 5.14 The service participates in regional initiatives, and is a regional leader in the initiative to tackle doorstep mis-selling. There is a particularly effective

partnership locally on this initiative between the Council, Police, Customs and Excise, Inland Revenue, Age Concern and Neighbourhood Watch. It is not known if Luton has more doorstep mis-selling than other areas, but reports have increased, probably due to the publicity given to the campaign.

- 5.15 Trading Standards has attracted funding from three separate external sources to assist its work to prevent sales of alcohol and tobacco to children.
- 5.16 CDMT Improvement and Procurement Board congratulated Trading Standards on the improvement to the service.

6. BEST VALUE REVIEW PROGRAMME

- 6.1 CDMT Improvement and Procurement Board were informed of the conclusions of the Best Value Scrutiny Panel concerning the best value review programme and commented as follows:
- 6.2 **Waste collection/disposal:** Little would be gained from carrying out a review of this service, as there is a 5 year improvement plan in place following the Street Services review two years ago, market testing to reduce costs is underway, and the Council is about to open a waste treatment facility on a 12-year contract with the private sector
- 6.3 **Regeneration, to incorporate deprivation:** This can be done, but it will be necessary to define the boundaries of the review tightly as the theme is cross-cutting and broad
- 6.4 **Youth service:** The service has just undergone a review by external consultants, who are about to produce a report. There is little scope to achieve more from a further review, and no capacity to carry it out due to staffing shortage in the service, including the lack of a service manager. Best Value Scrutiny Panel members may wish to engage with the current youth service review instead.
- 6.5 **Environmental health and licensing:** This can be done
- 6.6 It is preferable not to review both Regeneration and Environmental Health this year, as together with Engineering and Transportation this would mean three reviews within the Environment and Regeneration department in a single year, and it would be difficult to support this amount of review work.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: CDMT Improvement and Procurement Board report on implementation of BV review recommendations – Services for Frail Older People

Appendix B: CDMT Improvement and Procurement Board report on implementation of BV review recommendations – Services for Adults with a Learning Disability

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D

None

APPENDIX A

Services for Frail Older People

Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress
1. More integrated Assessment & Care Management services and Intermediate Care	Achieved	Countywide, multi-agency Single Assessment Process agreed and implemented from May 2003. User Held Records also introduced at the same time. LBC/PCT Intermediate Care Teams now integrated with jointly appointed Team Manager. To be co-located at Chantry School from May 2004.
2. Improved commissioning and contracting of external services	Achieved Further developments planned	Quarterly meetings are held between senior LBC staff and providers of external services. Strategic Commissioning currently under review, action plan being developed following issues identified by joint review team. Block contracting introduced Dec 2003. Agreements in place with nursing home owners to have 42 beds blocked booked from 12 April 2004. Each bed will be £10 - £20 cheaper each week than beds which are spot purchased.
3. In-house home care to specialise	Achieved	Internal home care service has targetted its resources more efficiently by developing specialist teams. It has moved from patched based teams to providing specialist teams providing intake services; specialist dementia services; ethnic minorities team; three teams based in extra care sheltered housing. A new team is to be established at Applegrove – March 2004. The Joint Review Team commended this approach. Restructuring completed to integrate Home Care / Warden Services
4. Enable independent home care to meet quality standards and deliver promoting independence	Achieved	Planning and Commissioning Officer – Home Care works closely with home care providers to monitor and improve standards. This includes an accreditation system; an annual inspection of premises, procedures and policies; survey of services users receiving home care; complaints monitoring. Training for home carers provided by the Older Persons Independence Team - November 2003 and February 2004.

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Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress						
5. Reduce in-house home care unit costs/increase efficiency	Achieved	Unit cost of Home Care likely to increase because of single status agreement. Home Care unit costs improved by basing teams within very sheltered housing units. Between April and November 2003, the average unit cost of an hour of home care was: £16.44 at Abigail compared to £22.49 dementia team and £23.19 intake team.						
6. Reduce overall home care costs (PAF B17)	Achieved	<p>Cost of in-house intake and dementia teams are still high, but nature of work undertaken by these teams reduces other costs e.g. no of hours needed to be commissioned from independent providers; reduction in demand for residential care for people with dementia.</p> <p>PAF B17 – Unit cost of home care for adults and older people.</p> <table> <tr> <td>2000/01</td><td>2001/2</td><td>2002/3</td></tr> <tr> <td>13.4</td><td>13.0</td><td>12.3</td></tr> </table> <p>'Good' performance achieved in 2002-3 for unit cost of home care for adults and older people compared to 'Acceptable, but possible room for improvement' achieved 2001-2.</p>	2000/01	2001/2	2002/3	13.4	13.0	12.3
2000/01	2001/2	2002/3						
13.4	13.0	12.3						
7. Continue to move resources from residential to community based services (PAF C26 & C28)	Annual Review	<p>Continuous improvement supported by the development and implementation of Actions Plans included in the Needs & Commissioning Strategy – 2001, reviewed December 2002; Prevention Strategy – March 2002; Carers Strategic Direction Statement – June 2003; Intermediate Care Strategy – Feb 2004.</p> <p>Increased provision of intensive home care, day care, equipment and adaptations achieved.</p> <p>PAF C26 – Admissions of supported residents aged 65 or over to residential/nursing care</p> <table> <tr> <td>2000/01</td><td>2001/02</td><td>2002/3</td></tr> <tr> <td>100</td><td>97</td><td>111</td></tr> </table>	2000/01	2001/02	2002/3	100	97	111
2000/01	2001/02	2002/3						
100	97	111						

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		<p>'Good' performance achieved 2002-3.</p> <p>PAF C28 – Intensive Home Care (BVPI 53)</p> <table> <tr> <td>2000/01</td><td>2001/02</td><td>2002/3</td></tr> <tr> <td>13.8</td><td>16.3</td><td>16.8</td></tr> </table> <p>'Very Good' performance achieved 2002-3.</p> <p>PAF C32 – People helped at home</p> <table> <tr> <td>2000/01</td><td>2001/02</td><td>2002/03</td></tr> <tr> <td>93</td><td>93</td><td>97</td></tr> </table> <p>'Good' Performance Maintained</p>	2000/01	2001/02	2002/3	13.8	16.3	16.8	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	93	93	97
2000/01	2001/02	2002/3												
13.8	16.3	16.8												
2000/01	2001/02	2002/03												
93	93	97												
8. Cease provision of in-house long-term residential care	Recommendation scheduled for review July 2004	Two residential homes have been closed. A very sheltered housing unit – opening March 2004, home is replacing one of the homes. Future of three residential homes that have not yet been refurbished is still under review. Needs assessment completed - January 2004. Risk assessment completed – March 2004. Options being costed. Consultation Strategy agreed by Scrutiny - September 2003.												
9. Improve provision of equipment and adaptations (PAF D38)	Achieved	<p>Integrated Community Equipment Service established and providing equipment within agreed timescales.</p> <p>PAF D38 - % equipment and adaptations costing less than £1000 delivered within 3 weeks (BVPI 56)</p> <table> <tr> <td>2000/01</td><td>2001/02</td><td>2002/3</td></tr> <tr> <td>82</td><td>89</td><td>97</td></tr> </table> <p>'Very Good' performance achieved 2002-3</p>	2000/01	2001/02	2002/3	82	89	97						
2000/01	2001/02	2002/3												
82	89	97												
10. Reduce cost of Meals at Home service	January 2005	Service to go out to tender in 2004. Information from other authorities suggests reduction in costs cannot be achieved without unacceptable deterioration in quality and choice to customers.												

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Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress
11. Improve services for older people from minority ethnic communities	Achieved	Services for older people from BME communities are continuing to develop in partnership with the local community e.g. luncheon clubs (12 luncheon clubs currently provided by 8 organisation – to increase to 19 clubs and 11 organisations 2004). These organisations also provide befriending service, advocacy service, advice & information service, health promotion, exercise; weight management and healthy eating. Carers support services are also being developed – African Caribbean Carers Support Service launched Feb 2004. Asian groups to raise awareness and identify demand for services from April 2004.

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Services for Adults with a Learning Disability

Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress
A1 : Establish Locality Forum to oversee development of new services	Spring 2002	Inclusive Forum established in April 2002; has met quarterly since then. Good engagement of service users and carers, who have fed back that they feel more informed of and involved in service developments
A2 : Seek additional sources of funding to complement community care budgets	Joint Investment Plan in place by January 2002;	i) JIP completed and submitted. ii) 2 year ESF funding of approx £90K secured for Minority Ethnic project in 2002 (see A4 below) iii) Supporting People grant income secured in 2003, allowing expansion of supported living and promoting independence activities
A3 : Improve performance on PAF indicators	Continuous	Improvement in PI C30 secured during 2003/4 (progression from 2 “blob” rating to 3 “blob” rating, well on the way to 4 blobs)
A4 : Improve access to services by Black and Asian communities	<u>Interim</u> :Sept 2002 – ensure that the small number of Asian people assessed as requiring a service but not in receipt of one at the time of the review are offered a culturally acceptable service	Achieved – through individual commissioning arrangements with specialist providers (positive feedback received from the carers involved)

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Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress
A4 : Improve access to services by Black and Asian communities (continued)	" <u>Final</u> ": March 2004 (Target : 100% of assessed Black and Asian customers receiving a service they regard as culturally acceptable)	From the extensive Black and Asian survey/ community outreach work carried out by the ESF project, the picture as of March 2004 is that, out of the 46 people from Black and Asian Communities identified as being eligible for social care support, 93% have indicated that they are satisfied with the service they are receiving, with the carers of just three individuals not prepared to take up any of the services (incl direct payment arrangement) offered (See also note 1 below)
A5 : Stimulate expansion of local independent social care market to enhance choice and reduce unit costs	5 new service providers operating in Luton by March 2003	- New " Keyring " Supported Living service operational from March 2003 – 6 people diverted through this from more expensive residential care option; - Three new "Adult Placement" arrangements in place from January 2004 (delayed due to CSC processes) - Access to 3 new specialist providers in Bedfordshire for people with complex needs from January 2004 (See Note 2)
A6 : i) Improve standard of care management assessment through introduction of new standards/monitoring processes and ii) Implement "person centred planning" (PCP) pilot	Continuous 20 customers to benefit from PCP by March 2004	New quality monitoring systems have been introduced, resulting in a much higher standard of assessment (as noted by Joint Review Team - page 36 : " <i>....Reviewers found assessment and care planning to be of a high standard</i> ") 10 Luton customers have engaged in full scale PCP as part of Bedfordshire-wide pilot (See note 3)

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Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress
B1 Improve day-time opportunities through : i) commissioning of new Drop In-style day service	i) Specification in place by March 2002 and 50 customers using new service by March 2003	i) New service not yet commissioned (See note 4) – but existing services have continued to develop community access (e.g through greater use of community leisure facilities) and Day Services Modernisation Plan has been produced (Autumn 2003)
ii) development of supported employment initiatives	ii) 30 customers to have moved into supported employment by December 2002	ii) Approx 40 people have been given access to employment-related activity, but are still linked to day services; approx 5 people have fully moved into supported employment An Employment Strategy was produced in Autumn 2003, setting out new targets and detailed plans around this objective (see note 5)
B2 Expand specialist challenging behaviour services through either integration with NHS Trust service or expansion of LBC service alone	All people with challenging behaviour able to access appropriate service by March 2003	Achieved through i) enhancement of both LBC and NHS Trust services (new , safer location secured for LBC service, offering 2 additional places and new management team brought in to the Trust service, resulting in development of 5 additional day care places) and ii) commissioning of externally purchased, individualised service for specific individuals (e.g use of specialist independent service for an autistic client with severe challenging behaviour whose needs could not be met within LBC/Trust services)
B3 : Improve stakeholder (user and carer) involvement in day to day operations	All service units to have stakeholder meetings by March 2003 All staff selection panels to have stakeholder representation on them by March 2003	Achieved : advocacy groups established in all LBC-managed units, with regular monthly meetings supported by the Advocacy Alliance Not yet achieved (see note 6) – but new target set to achieve this objective by Dec 2004, assisted by a more flexible corporate approach to the Fair Selection process

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Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress
C1 : Expansion of respite care options through whole system review of respite care and commissioning of new services	<p>i) Review completed by March 2002</p> <p>ii) All customers requiring short breaks able to access by March 2003</p>	<p>i) Review completed in March 2004 (delayed due to decision to undertake across whole of Luton and Beds through the JCA)</p> <p>ii) Family-based options expanded, a new flexible "floating support" service introduced from March 2004 and new residential service due on-line by April 2004 (delayed due to need to secure additional sources of revenue)</p>
C2 : Explore feasibility of combining in-house supported living and day service teams to provide more effective support	Implement pilot scheme by October 2002	Decided not to consider or proceed with this until day services modernisation plan agreed .(Draft Plan produced in Autumn 2003, Scrutiny process should be complete by July 2004) (see note 7)
D1: Expand the use of direct payment arrangements	15 customers using a direct payment by March 2004	By end of March 2004, we will have 8 DP arrangements for people with a learning disability in place, with a further 4 "in the pipeline" (see note 8)
D2 : Expand the use of carers assessments	By March 2002, 100% of carers eligible for an assessment will have been offered one	This goal has been achieved during 2003/4, as evidenced through the Carefirst database. All carers eligible for an assessment are now routinely offered one; also, take-up of this offer has greatly increased (from an estimated 5% at the time of review to approx 50% now)
D3 : Improve transition planning for young adults through the introduction of a person centred planning approach	By March 2004 , all young adults in transition to be assessed through a pcg approach	Achieved : The Transitions Worker has completed a person centred assessment for all young people requiring adult support, resulting in the diversion of most individuals away from traditional service options. (As evidenced by the care plans for each individual in transition during 2003/4) New goal now set is to ensure full-scale person centred plans for all young adults in transition, from Summer 2004

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Task / issue to be addressed	Deadline	Progress
D4 Improve information about services /service developments through i) review of existing leaflets and ii) establishment of regular newsletter for stakeholders	i) Complete review of leaflets by March 2002 ii) From January 2002	i) Achieved – new accessible set of leaflets produced. (but now need to survey users and carers on what impact this has had; accessible survey questionnaire will be introduced across all areas by September 2004) ii) Achieved from April 2002 : Locality Forum minutes act as regular news up-date

Overall Context:

Since this BV Action Plan was drafted and agreed, the Government have published the “Valuing People” White Paper and introduced a challenging and extensive programme of service modernisation, requiring the production of a wide range of modernisation plans and strategies. In addition, the decision has now been taken to end the current “Joint Commissioning Agency” arrangement and for Luton Housing and Social Services Department to take on “lead commissioning” responsibility for health and social care commissioning on behalf of Luton PCT, requiring a significant input of management time over the past six months.

Despite these changes and additional challenges, good overall progress is being made to implement the original BV action plan.

Specific Comments

Note 1 : (A4)

i) The original picture (established during the BV Review) was of a small minority of Asian families either not accessing existing services due to their belief that they were not culturally sensitive enough or not coming forward in the first place to ask for help. In addition to the evidence of current satisfaction highlighted in the matrix above, The ESF Project Team have firmly established from extensive outreach work undertaken with communities that the knowledge of what services are available and the preparedness to access these services within the different Black and Asian communities is now very high – due, in part, to the liaison and awareness-raising work done by the team itself in its first year. (This is based on reporting by multiple sources from within these communities, rather than only on “community leaders”, so should be reliable) It would therefore not appear to be the case now, as originally suspected, that there is a significant level of “hidden” demand for support within these communities.

ii) Further work is being done to come up with acceptable support packages for the three people identified as having rejected support offers already made.

iii) The Project has developed an action plan for further service improvements over the next two years, which has been incorporated into the day services modernisation and other Valuing People Plans. These plans include a continuous programme of diversity

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training for staff, the establishment of family support groups for isolated carers from some of the Asian communities, and a programme of person centred planning for existing Black and Asian customers

Note 2 (A5) : Working through the Joint Commissioning Agency, some of the new opportunities developed have been located in Bedfordshire rather than Luton, as it has proved difficult to secure suitable properties in Luton itself; Luton residents' will have shared access to these new facilities (most of which are nearby in South Beds) alongside Bedfordshire residents.

Note 3 (A6) : Further progress on increasing access to person centred planning has been held back through the failure of the Joint Commissioning Agency on three separate occasions to recruit to the planned PCP Co-ordinator post for Luton. LBC have taken over this task and have appointed someone, due to start in May.

Note 4 (B1) : We have not proceeded with the original plan to commission a new Drop In service

as this has been superseded by the Valuing People requirement to produce a much more comprehensive day services modernisation plan (Draft Plan produced in Autumn 2003, which is now subject to Scrutiny by the Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee).

Note 5 (B1) The original targets set for moving people completely out of day services into supported employment opportunities have proved to have been unrealistic due i) to the much longer preparation for work input required by the majority of current day centre users and ii) the difficulty in accessing sufficient complementary funding needed to establish social enterprises and social firms. The former issue is being addressed through the creation of a Social Enterprise Unit across Learning Disability and Physical Disability services (to ensure more focused and sustained input), whilst the latter issue of funding should be alleviated over the next 12 months through a new dialogue with the Learning Skills Council regarding more realistic criteria for accessing work training funds they control.

Note 6 (B3) Initial attempts to move forward on the inclusion of service users and carers on recruitment panels have been thwarted by HR concerns about how this can be reconciled with the strict processes and procedures surrounding the "Fair Selection" process. However, the new, more flexible HR policy should allow this objective to be achieved during 2004/5

Note 7 (C2) : Given the far reaching considerations of undertaking the comprehensive day services modernisation programme now required as part of the Valuing People programme, it was felt advisable not to proceed at this stage with a pilot integration of day services/supported living teams; however, the two sets of staff have now been brought under a single 4th tier manager to improve flexibility across the two teams and the idea of combining the teams may be revisited as part of the modernisation plans

Note 8 (D1) : Linked to the Joint Review Action Plan, a specific action plan around direct payments for all community care services has been drafted, which will result by September 2004 in the introduction of a more robust and comprehensive support system. The target for direct payment arrangements for people with a learning disability for 2004/5 is to achieve a further 20 arrangements.

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In addition, the Department of Health's Valuing People Support Team is due to issue guidance shortly on the new concept of "indirect payments" for people with a learning disability (commissioning funds ring-fenced to specific individuals, but not directly managed by them or their carers) – in acknowledgement of the fact that many people with a learning disability (as well as many older carers) are not interested in the option of direct payments, even with good support mechanisms in place. Once this guidance has been issued, specific local targets will be set around this new commissioning approach.

Bernie Middlehurst, Lead Commissioning Manager

March 2004