

Devon Supporting People Joint Commissioning Body

Monday 9th March 2009

10.00 p.m. to 12.30 p.m.

Livestock Centre, Marsh Barton, Exeter

Attendees

Cllr Hugo Barton	Devon County Council
Cllr Mike Saltern	South Hams District Council
Cllr Jill Elson	East Devon District Council
Cllr David Lausen	Torrige District Council
Cllr Diana Moyse	West Devon Borough Council
Ms Trudy Robinson	North Devon District Council
Ms Jennie Stephens	Devon County Council
Mr Dick Scott	Mid Devon District Council
Mr John Golding	East Devon District Council
Ms Marion Playle	West Devon Borough Council
Mr Steve Warran	Exeter City Council
Ms Liz Steele	Torrige District Council
Ms Anne Proctor	Devon and Cornwall Probation
Mr Iain Mellis	Devon PCT
Mr Max Sillars	Devon County Council
Mr Kevin Oke	Devon County Council
Ms Clare Miller	Devon County Council
Ms Lucie Spiers	Devon County Council
Ms Vanda van der Linden	Devon County Council

Apologies

Cllr Ray Stanley	Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Rob Hanniford	Exeter City Council
Cllr Ray Frost	Teignbridge District Council
Mr Graham Davey	Teignbridge District Council
Mr Nick Payne	West Devon Borough Council
Mr Rory McCallum	Children's & Young People's Services
Mr Alan Robinson	South Hams District Council

1. Apologies

Apologies were read out.

Cllr Barton welcomed Ms Anne Proctor who represents Devon and Cornwall Probation and replaces Ms Mitchell. The members introduced themselves for the benefit of Ms Proctor.

2. Minutes from last meeting

The minutes were agreed as an accurate and true record.

3. Matters Arising

Mr. Sillars informed the JCB that with regards to the finance report JCB/08/169 from the JCB meeting of 15th December 2008, the HSSP has since reviewed the question of how recommendations are passed on to the JCB.

In future, if consensus is not reached at the HSSP, the position of each HSSP organisation represented would be passed on to JCB to help manage any vote subsequently held.

4. Report JCB/09/170: Finance

Mr Sillars introduced the financial strategy and explained the intended methods of future reporting to the JCB. JCB will receive four progress reports during the year focussing upon the implementation of the 5 finance strategy principles (as listed in report JCB/09/170) highlighting 'progress/obstacles/next steps and recommendations for each.

Mr. Warren requested the 'Value For Money' strategy principal should not be solely based upon the benchmarking of costs, but should also include and incorporate the quality value of the service.

The JCB acknowledged and discussed the problem of how to report on provider activities that were currently difficult to attribute to post coded areas, because service user names and locations were not part of all Supporting People contractual arrangements. The JCB generally did not wish to introduce further requirements for data to be collected, but there was consensus for Cllr Saltern and Ms Stephens' view that all activities being commissioned should be attributable to the relevant district/locality where they were delivered.

Ms. Steele provided a similar example of a reporting anomaly whereby at a desk top level, Torridge appears to have no Domestic Violence services. In reality it does, but the operational base is outside of Torridge. It was agreed that the Supporting People Team would liaise with Ms Steele over finding solutions to reporting upon activities where it was not desirable or practical to collect and hold service user specific data. The JCB requested that this issue be brought back to the next meeting.

Mr Oke presented an update to the forecast programme grant spend for the year (as at 31st Jan 09), which estimates an under spend in the region of £576k. This represents an increase of £124k from that reported in December (as per 1.3, appendix 2). He also confirmed a 2.5% inflationary increase has now been agreed for 2009/10 in respect of all contracted services.

Cllr Elson enquired as to whether any providers have indicated they wish to withdraw from their contractual obligations as a result of the 2.5% inflationary increase being insufficient. To date no such cases have been brought to the attention of the Supporting People team.

Recommendations agreed.

5. Report JCB/09/171: Performance Assessments

Miss Spiers referred to the new performance based contracts introduced from March and informed the members how the three stages of activity relating to the performance assessment might work in relation to the allocation of non guaranteed funds.

Cllr Elson queried where service user involvement and views come into the performance assessment.

Mr Sillars explained that the planned merger of the Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) social inclusion group and the homelessness steering group is underway. The DAAT group already benefits from service user involvement. The work package concerning the development of the performance assessment will be led by the newly merged group, and will include provider representatives. Provider representatives can advise on how service user views might best be included.

Mr Scott raised questions around how the various performance indicators will be weighted. Ms Spiers acknowledged that the question of weighting was an important issue, and one that will be dealt with by the steering group.

Ms Stephens added that in terms of the weighting given to various performance measures, we can apply our experience from tendering processes.

Mr Mellis referred to the new NHS contract, which includes performance measures around service user views. The Supporting People Team agreed to refer to the NHS contract in developing a performance assessment framework for housing support.

Mr Golding suggested that the JCB should be focussed on service user outcomes and customer satisfaction. The agenda does not seem to suggest a Service User focus. The Supporting People strategy needs to concentrate on customers.

Ms Stephens acknowledged that we should be focused on both aspects; the service users' views and long term outcomes.

Mr Warran requested clarification as to whether the non guaranteed elements of homelessness contracts collectively, were reserved for re-allocation only to services with a primary client group of 'homelessness'. Mr. Sillars replied that the JCB would need to make a decision about how much of these non guaranteed funds stayed the homelessness 'sector', in September 2009, for the forthcoming financial year. Mr. Oke confirmed the need for an annual JCB decision about the use of non guaranteed element of contracts. He clarified that aside from performance awards and strategic planning for changing needs, part of the non guaranteed element of contracts is likely to be called upon to achieve savings within each sector over the next three years.

Recommendation agreed.

It was agreed that a further recommendation be added, about the need to include service user outcomes in performance assessments. This could be through service user survey, or otherwise.

6. Report JCB/09/172: Joint contracts

Mr Sillars highlighted advantages and potential challenges in implementing joint contracts.

Ms. Steele stated that although the proposal for joint contracts made sense for people that received treatment and care as well as housing support, other people who need only housing support should not be disadvantaged.

Cllr Elson highlighted the need for Devon Partnership Trust to be part of any joint contract development.

Mr Sillars informed the JCB of the intention to keep them updated about specific proposals for joint contracts. However in some cases the need to improve the quality of services

through joined up working was pressing. In order to prevent delay he requested that work to develop joint contracts continue between JCB meetings. The JCB agreed.

Recommendation agreed.

7. Report JCB/09/173: HIA Review

Ms Miller set the context for the report and summarised the background changes to the CLG's ambitions within 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods' strategy.

Cllr Elson pointed out that we have only two years before the contract ends so work needed to begin as soon as possible to take account of the personalisation agenda.

Ms Playle informed that West Devon's experience of the HIA contract is good and local working arrangements are very effective. Cllr Saltern emphasised that Devon Care & Repair (DCR) delivers a good service, but there is a need for local data to better understand local delivery.

Ms Miller advised that a national monitoring system has been designed by Foundation / CLG and data is input under the Foundation's electronic management information system (FEMIS). The Devon Partnership added its local monitoring requirements. This is split down by districts. Amendments could be made if required.

Mr Golding referred to Appendix 2 (meeting minutes) where it was said that 'customer feedback is invaluable but costly'. He felt it was a crucial part of the review process.

Ms Miller responded that DCR undertakes customer satisfaction survey with their clients. There would be a cost to us if partners require independent objective Focus Groups to capture more qualitative information.

Mr Scott added care needs to be taken to ensure the quality of data from questionnaires and surveys. He gave an example of where an ambiguous question had not turned out to be a good tool to gauge actual outcomes.

Mr Warran expressed dissatisfaction with the way the service is delivered in Exeter i.e. fewer jobs delivered, poor monitoring of the service. He said that reports were good overall, but when compared to the previous in-house agency performance the situation 'does not look good'. He has been advised that ECC pays more in fees than previously, and that HIA contract had slowed what had previously been a good process down.

Ms Stephens acknowledged the issues raised, and agreed with Mr Warran that improvements to service delivery, value for money, performance and customer satisfaction were vital objectives for the HIA project group to address.

Mr Scott expressed his confidence in the HIA project group plans. He conceded there had been and still were a range of issues and problems to be overcome, but in his view there was now a clearer and more positive way forward.

Action: The HIA project group to ensure the issues raised by Mr Warran are addressed within the final HIA review report.

8. Report JCB/09/174: Report from Devon Sheltered Housing Providers

Ms Spiers introduced a report, which looks at the implementation of older persons housing and support strategic review, its strengths and weaknesses from providers' perspective.

As it was the first time that the JCB has been presented with a report from a providers' forum, the members were asked for guidance on receiving such reports in the future. It was suggested that a forum's representative is invited to the JCB to present a report, and to answer potential questions arising from the report.

The JCB welcomed the development of receiving reports directly from a provider perspective, and felt this was good practice.

Ms Stephens suggested that any reports should come with a front summary sheet from Supporting People with recommendations for the JCB.

Action: Devon SP to request that, in future provider's reports are presented by a representative. The Supporting People team should highlight any recommendations for action by the JCB via a front sheet summary.

9. Report JCB/09/175: Role of District Older Persons Housing Groups

Mr Sillars gave an update on the developments of the implementation of the Older Person's strategy. The report set out the emerging roles of the districts and locality groups as well as the JCB. Examples of best practices were given and future challenges were highlighted.

The issue of engaging service users was raised. Cllr Elson informed that East DDC has housing review groups, which includes tenants and gives an opportunity to involve service users in a decision making process. The groups provide information about extra care schemes, which want to work in partnership with East DDC.

West Devon emphasised the importance of engaging providers and health & social care commissioners in developing future strategy together.

Action: Ms Sillars to provide weblink to letters from Hossacks solicitors.

Action: Devon Supporting People Team to prepare a report for JCB members detailing the progress of providers in their district in the implementation of the Older Person's strategy.

Recommendation agreed.

AOB:

Cllr Lausen made a request for basic information about the programme, to provide context for the issues discussed. He suggested that case studies are presented, which demonstrate good practice or complexity of issues that the programme deals with.

Action: Supporting People team to collate case studies for JCB.

Next Meeting: 8th June 2009