

**22<sup>nd</sup> July 2013****Agenda Item: 12****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR JOINT COMMISSIONING,  
QUALITY AND BUSINESS CHANGE****ESTABLISHMENT OF A DATA INPUTTING TEAM****Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to establish a Data Inputting Team within the Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection Department's Business Support structure to administer the data inputting activities on the Frameworki system for the commissioning of packages of care and support for service users and carers.
2. To seek approval to establish 5 fte Business Support Assistant posts for a temporary 12 month period.

**Information and Advice**

3. Frameworki is the electronic records system which social care staff use to record information about approximately 18,000 older people and disabled or vulnerable adults who receive social care and support from the Council. This includes the process of arranging the services once a service user's needs have been identified and their personal budget allocated.
4. Frameworki is used to identify the cost of care and support packages and enables the Council to monitor financial commitments to enable budget monitoring and forecasting. As the care and support needs of service users fluctuate, it is essential that information about care packages is recorded accurately on Frameworki in order to avoid the over commitment of financial resources and overpayment to providers for care services.
5. Currently, the data input of activities required to commission and maintain adult social care services is undertaken by approximately 400 social care staff. The commissioning of care packages on Frameworki is a complex process which, alongside the selection of the correct care service, involves the inputting and balancing of financial data. Although this is an administrative function it is critical in terms of ensuring accuracy to enable effective financial management. It is recognised that the various commissioning 'episodes' in Frameworki are complex to navigate. The tasks vary from case to case making it difficult for staff to become familiar with the process and, as a result, the process can be time consuming for social care staff to complete. Despite regular training, many staff report a low level of confidence in carrying out these activities and this is seen to be a primary reason for the inconsistent description of the department's financial commitments that the Frameworki system provides.

6. The Council has commenced a wholesale systems review to look at the various systems that are currently being used for the commissioning of adult social care services. This will include Frameworki, BMS and Abacus, which is a separate system used by the Adult Care Financial Services for payment to providers and for collating service users' contributions.
7. Whilst much has been done to improve the quality of data within Frameworki, more needs to be done, particularly in relation to information about financial commitments. Currently the Council has not been able to implement proposals to make payments to providers via Frameworki and the Abacus system continues to be used for this purpose creating additional work in entering information into two separate systems.
8. During 2012, training was provided to all operational social care staff in relation to a new 'personalisation' episode on Frameworki when all service users were allocated a Personal Budget. In order to make the necessary changes to existing service user records in Frameworki, a dedicated data inputting team was recruited for a temporary three month period to commission the required social care services whilst the training programme was rolled out. The team was able to develop a good level of expertise, achieve faster processing times and focus on data quality. This also released considerable time for social care staff to undertake their other duties including increased face to face time with service users.
9. Contact has been made with other local authorities that use Frameworki to understand whether they have similar challenges in relation to accuracy of financial commitments and data quality. Derbyshire County Council, Worcestershire County Council and the Royal Borough of Greenwich Council have all established a dedicated team to undertake this data inputting activity. All three authorities report that data integrity has improved as a result of the introduction of dedicated input teams. One local authority reports that prior to the introduction of their dedicated teams in 2011 out of a sample of 200 social care purchase orders, only 12% were correct, whereas since the introduction of the dedicated teams they perceive that they are achieving over 80% accuracy. Due to the high level of confidence in the financial commitments these authorities now also pay providers for services directly from Frameworki or are working towards this.
10. In December 2012, a Business Analyst from the Improvement Programme undertook a business process review and completed an options appraisal to help increase the confidence in the data. In summary, the report recommended that the department should give consideration to the establishment of a dedicated Data Inputting Team to commission adult social care services on Frameworki, highlighting the benefits as follows:
  - the development of expertise in relation to complex commissioning processes and in enabling higher levels of data accuracy
  - achieving a more efficient and responsive service through faster processing times
  - releasing time for front line social care staff to undertake their social care activities including assessing the needs of service users and carers, reviewing packages of care and in undertaking safeguarding activities
11. The business process review considered the skills required to undertake this role and it is widely agreed that the data inputting tasks can effectively be completed by business support staff rather than social care staff. This will also have the benefit of releasing some

of the time of social care staff to enable them to undertake other activities, including increased face to face time with service users. The review also considered the number of staff that would be required based on the volume of commissioning of packages on Frameworki both for new services and for changes to existing packages, and the average time taken to complete the tasks. On the basis of this work, it is anticipated that 10 fte Business Support Assistant posts would be required to undertake the required data inputting work.

12. It is therefore proposed that the Data Inputting Team consisting of 10 fte Business Support Assistants is established for a 12 month period, to be reviewed during this time in terms of its effectiveness.
13. The tasks that would be undertaken by the Data Inputting Team would include:
  - recording on to Frameworki the social care and support services that have been agreed by the social care staff and approved by the budget holder
  - ensuring the financial information used to establish commitments is accurate to enable budget holders to undertake their monitoring and forecasting activities
  - generating and issuing purchase orders
  - informing operational social care staff of completion of the commissioning episode on Frameworki and confirming the start date for the care package
14. Social care staff will continue to use Frameworki on a daily basis to record their social care activities in relation to individual service users and carers.
15. The total cost of the team, based on the options appraisal recommendation of 10 fte Business Support Assistants will be £217,290 for a 12 month period. In order to deliver in-year savings, tight criteria have been applied to the filling of vacant posts and as such, there are five vacant business support posts within the department which could be released to fund half of the posts on the Data Inputting Team. Funding for the 5 remaining posts would be met from departmental reserves.
16. Although this proposal will not realise immediate savings it can be viewed as an enabler for future savings and efficiencies. Also, it will release the time of more costly social care staff to enable them to undertake other activities.
17. It is proposed that the Business Support Assistants will report to an existing Business Support Officer to ensure consistency within the Business Support structure. The team will receive technical support from existing Business Systems Support Officers and from the Frameworki Team.

### **Other Options Considered**

18. One option is to continue to support social work staff to undertake this activity and to offer further training to improve their technical skills and confidence in relation to data inputting on to Frameworki. However, there are mounting pressures arising from inaccurate financial information on Frameworki making it difficult to accurately forecast financial commitments. This has required considerable input from finance colleagues to check and validate commitments to enable more accurate financial reporting.

19. Consideration was given to establishing a permanent Data Inputting Team in order to address the concerns about data quality and confidence. However, it is important to review the impact of the team in terms of improved data recording and a subsequent improvement in budget monitoring and forecasting. The establishment of a team on a temporary basis will also help contribute to the wider corporate systems review that is underway to enable better informed proposals about the future systems requirements of the Council.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

20. It is anticipated that the introduction of a dedicated Data Inputting Team, within the existing Business Support structure should:
- improve the commissioning of adult social care services
  - reduce the associated financial risk
  - improve the effectiveness of social care staff's time

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Implications for Service Users**

22. The establishment of a Data Inputting Team will not have any direct impact on service users or the way in which they access services from the County Council. However, improved systems and processes may ensure the services they receive are more responsive.

### **Financial Implications**

23. The total cost of the 10 fte Business Support posts will be £217,290. Half of this (£108,645) will be funded from existing Business Support vacancies and from in year under spends arising from the strict application of the vacancy control process. The remaining half of this (£108,645) will be funded from departmental reserves.

### **Ways of Working Implications**

24. It is anticipated that the data input Business Support Assistants will be based at existing County Council locality bases: Prospect House, Sherwood Energy Village, Sir John Robinson Way (subject to the retention of the building) and Lawn View House.

### **Human Resources Implications**

25. This report proposes to establish the following additional posts to complement the use of the existing 5 fte vacant Business Support posts:
- a. 5 fte Business Support Assistants, NJE Grade 3, scp 14-18 on a temporary 12 month basis to form part of the new Data Inputting Team.

26. The posts will be advertised on a fixed term basis in accordance with the Council's vacancy control process. Prior to internal advertisement, posts will be considered for redeployment of displaced staff or other staff requiring redeployment. Normal redeployment processes operated by the County Council will apply.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

It is recommend that the Adult Social Care and Health Committee:

- 1) Approve the establishment of a Data Inputting Team consisting of 10 fte Business Support Assistants to administer the data inputting activities on the Frameworki system as part of the commissioning and maintenance of individual packages of care and support for service users and carers.
- 2) Approve the establishment of the additional 5 fte Business Support Assistants, NJE Grade 3, scp 14-18 (£19,861-£21,728) on a temporary 12 month basis to complement the existing 5 fte vacant business support posts.

**CAROLINE BARIA**

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### **Constitutional Comments (KK 08/08/13)**

27. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.

### **Financial Comments (CLK 10/07/13)**

28. The financial implications are contained in paragraph 23 of the report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

None

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All

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