

Report to: **Cabinet**

Date: **29 June 2004**

By: **Director of Social Services**

Title of report: **Integrated Community Equipment Services (ICES)**

Purpose of report: **To seek approval to the proposal to use powers under Section 31 of the Health Act (1999) to enter into a pooled budget agreement with the Primary Care Trusts in East Sussex.**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:

- 1. agree to the Council, as lead commissioner, entering into a pooled budget agreement with the four Primary Care Trusts in East Sussex(Bexhill & Rother PCT, Eastbourne Downs PCT, Hastings & St. Leonards PCT, and Sussex Downs & Weald PCT) to support the contract for the Integrated Community Equipment Service provision; and**
 - 2. authorise the Director of Social Services, in consultation with the Director of Law and Performance Management, to agree the terms of the inter-agency agreement with the Primary Care Trusts.**
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1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 The new arrangements for the service will be managed within existing budgets. Details are included in appendix A and B. There is outline agreement from PCT Chief Executives to funding the new service, and reports are going to Chairs in the near future.

2. Introduction

2.1 In March 2001 the Department of Health issued the circular Community Equipment Services (HSC 2001/008:LAC (2001) 13) simultaneously with a guidance document called " Guide to Integrated Community Equipment Services". These documents set out action for the development of integrated Local Authority and National Health Service (NHS) equipment service with a target implementation date of April 2004.

2.2 One of the key defining characteristics of ICES is there should be revenue funding from pooled Health and Social Services contributions using Health Act (1999) flexibilities to support and improve equipment services for service users.

2.3 The NHS Plan set out the Government's commitment to modernising equipment services that are provided by both the Local Authority and by the NHS.

2.4 Implementing an integrated service has been identified as an objective within the Council Plan.

2.5 There is a "key threshold indicator" within the Department of Health's Performance Assessment Framework which relates to the percentage of items of equipment delivered within seven working days. This indicator directly affects the star rating and Comprehensive Performance Assessment of the Council. A properly funded and contracted service is essential to good performance against this indicator.

3. Background

3.6 The proposal is to replace each existing arrangement for equipment provision in both Health and Social Services with one contract for an integrated service.

3.7 A tendering exercise for provision of the service has been undertaken in line with the Council's Contract Standing Orders. Evaluation has been completed by officers of the Council and it is expected that the contract can be awarded shortly to the most economically advantageous tender for the service.

3.8 To support the contract a pooled budget is required together with the appropriate governance and commissioning arrangements.

4. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation

4.1 ICES is an opportunity to provide an equitable, timely and quality service to service users and their carers in East Sussex.

4.2 It is recommended that the Cabinet agree that financial resources can be pooled to support the contract for ICES.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Community Equipment Services HSC 2001/008 : LAC (2001)