

CABINET

17 JANUARY 2012

Title: The Adult Social Care Local Account 2010/11	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Adult Services	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: No
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Accountable Divisional Director: Karen Ahmed, Divisional Director of Adult Commissioning	
Accountable Director: Anne Bristow, Corporate Director of Adult & Community Services	
Summary: The Government has changed the regime for the regulation and assessment of the social care services delivered by local authorities. In line with the push towards greater localism, and local political accountability, they have moved the emphasis away from a centralised regime of audit led by the Care Quality Commission to a model whereby the Council accounts to local people for its performance and invites their scrutiny and challenge. The Local Account is our published report on our performance for the year 2010/11. The way in which this will work is still being developed, led by the social care sector itself, who are still developing the structure and content of a 'model' Local Account. Nonetheless, the expectation has been set that there will be a Local Account for 2010/11, and this is the document Cabinet is being asked to approve. Given that we are some time after the close of 2010/11 year, we are using this as an opportunity to gain views on the published report so as to inform the Local Account for 2011/12, which it is intended to bring to Cabinet in June 2012.	
Recommendation(s) The Cabinet is recommended to: (i) Approve the publication of the Local Account 2010/11 attached at Appendix B, subject to any comments and/or amendments; and (ii) Provide guidance in the development of the Local Account 2011/12.	
Reason(s) In the absence of a centralised audit regime for adult social care, it is important that the Council sets out its own view of where adult social care services need to improve, as well as what we do well, so that local residents can engage with our assessment of our	

performance. The Local Account does this. By using 2010/11 as a first publication we can refine it further over the coming months, so that the 2011/12 version is a fuller, more robust assessment in line with Member and public priorities.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 On entering office, the Coalition Government set out immediately to remove a number of centralised performance and audit regimes. Amongst these was the Care Quality Commission's Annual Performance Assessment of councils' adult social care services, which marked the Council against a list of national targets. The Care Quality Commission maintains a risk-based approach to inspections of the safety of services, leaving councils to account for their overall performance. In line with the principles of localism, the emphasis was placed on councils being accountable to their residents for their performance.
- 1.2 Responding to these moves, the adult social care sector began development of sector-led improvement, with support from the Department of Health and the Local Government Association. The aim is to build a model by which councils, working together, could present a broadly consistent account of their performance, support each other in identifying weaknesses, and thereby build the reputation and quality of adult social care services nationally. It is recognised that failures in one council impact on the reputation of services nationally, and that, therefore, as well as shining a light on their own performance, all councils have an interest in engaging with their peers to support the wider improvement of the sector.
- 1.3 This model is built into the Government's recent publication "Transparency in Outcomes: A Framework for Quality in Adult Social Care" which includes new guidance for measuring performance, and recommendations that councils produce an annual statement on outcomes and priorities: a Local Account. The Local Account is therefore primarily an effort to improve transparency, while emphasising the importance of community and citizen involvement in driving improvement over distant bureaucratic inspections.
- 1.4 Appendix A provides a diagram which summarises how sector-led improvement would interface with central Government or regulator action on extreme failure. There is some debate still underway about the exact 'tipping point', but it is provided for Members' background interest in connection with the Local Account.

2. Proposal and Issues

- 2.1 The first Local Account is attached at Appendix B, in a draft for Members' review and approval. Members are recommended to approve publication, but in doing so to recognise that this is a first, exploratory version. There will be much development of its structure and content as we get feedback on the first one, and plan for the 2011/12 version, to be issued in a more timely fashion, in June 2012.
- 2.2 The structure of the Local Account is based around the "Vision for Adult Social Care" that was published by the Government in November 2010. This sets out seven principles as follows:

- **Prevention:** empowered people and strong communities will work together to maintain independence. Where the state is needed, it supports communities and helps people to retain and regain independence.
- **Personalisation:** individuals not institutions take control of their care. Personal budgets, preferably as direct payments, are provided to all eligible people. Information about care and support is available for all local people, regardless of whether or not they fund their own care.
- **Partnership:** care and support delivered in a partnership between individuals, communities, the voluntary and private sectors, the NHS and councils - including wider support services, such as housing.
- **Plurality:** the variety of people's needs is matched by diverse service provision, with a broad market of high quality service providers.
- **Protection:** there are sensible safeguards against the risk of abuse or neglect. Risk is no longer an excuse to limit people's freedom.
- **Productivity:** greater local accountability will drive improvements and innovation to deliver higher productivity and high quality care and support services. A focus on publishing information about agreed quality outcomes will support transparency and accountability.
- **People:** we can draw on a workforce who can provide care and support with skill, compassion and imagination, and who are given the freedom and support to do so. We need the whole workforce, including care workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and social workers, alongside carers and the people who use services, to lead the changes set out here.

2.3 The Local Account aims to be honest about the Council's performance and recognise that there are areas where services need to improve. Throughout, the Account provides evidence of what the Council are doing to drive improvement. One of the ways to judge performance is by benchmarking. The Local Account compares the Council's current performance with previous performance, national and regional performance. Whilst benchmarking is useful, the Local Account is set on local priorities which differ over time and between geographical areas.

2.4 The Local Account is a way of opening up information on adult social care. It should foster a conversation between the Council, service providers, commissioners, service users and the public. The Local Account should empower people to challenge or commend local services as they see fit. The Local Account should promote accountability and engagement; it delivers a clear account of adult social

care services which can be disseminated, discussed, challenged and services developed as a result.

2.5 Some questions on which Members may wish to reflect, and to provide guidance to officers in the development of future Local Accounts, include:

- a) In a document that covers a subject of this complexity, and aims to account to residents for performance, the language and tone is critical: is the narrative pitched appropriately?
- b) Are the right areas covered, and should there be more (or less) use of case studies and other examples?
- c) Does the seven-point breakdown, in line with the Vision for Adult Social Care outlined above, provide an effective structure in which to account for our performance?
- d) Should there be more (or less) use of data to account for performance, and should there be more tabular presentation of raw numbers or is it better to account for the data in narrative form as we have sought to do here?

2.6 The timescale for publication of 2011/12's Local Account is June 2012.

3. Options Appraisal

3.1 Members have the option to approve (with any amendments) or reject the draft Local Account attached.

3.2 As outlined above, approval is recommended as it allows the Council to get this first iteration into the public domain and to seek views from service users, the public and providers. Members may have reservations about publishing the Local Account for 2010/11 in January 2012, but to do so will enable us to improve successive editions of the Local Account, when local feedback on this first version can be combined with guidance and thinking from London-wide and national sector-led improvement groups. Some areas are not publishing an Account this year, whilst others are using it as a developmental year as described above. It is suggested that we take the latter approach, being proactive about publishing the Local Account in the spirit of self-directed improvement.

4. Consultation

4.1 The 2010/11 Local Account has not been subject to external consultation. However, it is proposed that user groups, the Local Involvement Network, voluntary organisations and other partners are now consulted. Consultation should cover both the approach adopted in respect of the 2010/11 Local Account and include the gathering of user/carer input for the 2011/12 Local Account.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Ruth Hodson, Group Manager, Finance

5.1 There are no financial implications for the Adults and Community Services Directorate. However, if there are any improvements in performance needed with costs attached this will have to be managed within the already pressured budgets.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Doreen Reeves, Group Manager, Legal Services

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report that are not dealt with elsewhere in the body of the report.

7. Other Implications

7.1 Risk Management

The process of self-directed or sector-led improvement requires an honesty about weaknesses in the Council's adult social care provision, a willingness to acknowledge them publicly and to set in place appropriately challenging and robust actions. The Local Account has been drafted in that spirit, and the proposal to publish before guidance and 'models' have been developed further reinforces that approach.

7.2 Staffing Issues

The Local Account provides information about staffing, but makes no recommendations that are not being assessed and managed through other mechanisms.

7.3 Customer Impact

The Local Account will become a critical mechanism for assessing the feedback from service users and setting out how services will respond as a result. It contains information about how services have responded to individual needs and to the tailored needs of specific groups, most particularly in the sections on Plurality and Partnership, but in fact threaded through the document.

7.4 Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is dealt with comprehensively in the document, most particularly under the 'Protection' theme. The Local Account focuses on adult provision, but in recognising individual needs it describes services that will provide tailored support to those with care needs who have responsibility for children, improving the outcomes for those children as well. At page 19 it deals specifically with joint working between adults' safeguarding and children's safeguarding where risks to the safety of children are identified through work with adult service users.

7.5 Health Issues

The health of vulnerable adults in receipt of social care services is a key issue described through the Local Account. The document also details the moves that have been made to implement Government health reforms which place the Council more firmly at the heart of efforts to improve the health of the local population.

7.6 Crime and Disorder Issues

The document deals with a number of initiatives taken during the year in question to improve the safety of vulnerable adults and older people.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

- Appendix A Promoting excellence in councils' adult social care – a model for accountability (The London Joint Improvement Partnership)
- Appendix B London Borough of Barking & Dagenham (draft) Adult Social Care Local Account 2010/11