

10A : BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COMMUNITY CARE PLAN 2001-2005

Report of Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care.

- 1 Buckinghamshire County Council has drafted a four year Community Care Plan in line with current statutory requirements. Following wide consultation, the Cabinet endorsed the Community Care Plan at their meeting on 24 September. It is now ready for publication following endorsement from the Council.
- 2 Currently the Community Care Plan is a statutory plan which local authorities prepare in partnership with health services, district councils and people in the local community.
- 3 The County Council's constitution requires approval of the Community Care Plan by the full Council.
- 4 The Department of Health published guidance in July 2000 on Joint Investment Plans and its relation to other plans. The guidance said that local and health authorities could be free to choose whether to produce a Community Care Plan as a standalone document or demonstrate that the statutory requirement had been met within their Joint Investment Plan/Health Improvement and Modernisation Plan process. At the time Buckinghamshire chose to maintain the Community Care Plan as a standalone document and to identify it as a main statutory plan in the overall planning processes of the Council. This was because users and carers said that the Community Care Plan was the only local document that gave an overall picture of the current joint work by the local statutory agencies and voluntary organizations.
- 5 In light of this, and the opportunity offered by the reorganization of the County Council to extend the life of the Community Care Plan to be coterminous with the Council Plan, the Departmental Management Team of Social Services agreed in February of this year to the publication of a four year Plan.
- 6 Following endorsement by the Cabinet, the Council is recommended to approve publication.

Resource Implications

- 7 There is budgetary provision for publication and circulation costs which are expected to amount to £3,700 (2,000 copies).

Feedback from Consultation and Local Member Views

- 8 A draft was edited from material provided by Local and Health Authorities and District Councils in Buckinghamshire.

The Four Year Plan

- 9 As in previous years the Plan is based on Adult Care service plans and targets and also provides:
 - outline structures of local statutory organizations
 - guidance about, and links with, other Plans and processes
 - information about performance for each client group
 - information about access to services, eligibility criteria and charging policies
 - information about costs of services
 - main contact links.
- 10 The Plan is in two parts.

Part One covers demographic issues, strategic aims, performance measure systems and financial issues.

Part Two based on Adult Care service plans, identifies the work of all the partners contributing to Community Care under client headings. This is in response to consultation where users/carers wanted to find all the service information particular to their interest in one chapter. It also includes those services that cross client boundaries.

Appendices provide responses to last year's consultation.

11 The draft was circulated to contributors to the draft in May/June for their comments and corrections. During July and August it was further circulated widely for comments to 250 local statutory and voluntary organizations. The consultation exercise was co-ordinated by the three Locality Forums who arranged for further consultation of users and carers through the Forums.

12 The closing date for final comments was 7 September when some 12 agencies fed back comments from a wide range of users and carers and staff of their organizations. The comments continue to reflect the usefulness of the document as a source of general guidance about service provision and specific information about future activity for the main client groups. Comments include:

“Content and style of the document for those users and non-users that have an interest in this area of community service it is a useful reference of where we are and where we are trying to go” – Wycombe Locality Forum.

“The plan contains a whole host of useful information that will be of help in planning services. There is also evidence of the huge agenda we are facing and the actual good work that is going on” – Chiltern and South Bucks PCG.

Communication Issues

13 When the document has been published it will be distributed widely to the county libraries and district council offices and through social services “Green Box” distribution system to GP surgeries, local statutory and voluntary organisations to be made available to the general public.

14 Copies will also be made available on request to the communications team of social services.

15 The document will also be published on the County Council’s web site.

Other Issues

16 In August 2001 the Department of Health set out a consultation paper proposing the removal of the statutory obligation to produce Community Care Plans with a view to streamlining government requirements of the local planning system.

17 In response to the consultation, the Cabinet has endorsed this proposal following a Cabinet meeting on 24 September.

18 The Cabinet agreed with the Department of Health that partnership working has since developed and the objectives and process for developing a Community Care Plan are included within several existing documents in the planning process including Joint Investment Plans, Health Improvement and Modernisation Plans and National Service Frameworks.

19 The Cabinet also agreed with the Government’s view outlined in their consultation paper, that where Local Strategic Partnerships are being developed the need to implement the National Service Frameworks would have the built in requirement to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are represented.

20 The Community Care Plan outlines the way forward for adult service provision over the next four years. There is therefore an opportunity over the next four years to develop new ways of providing the information so valued by users and carers in line with the Government’s drive to streamline local planning.

21 One way could be developed through the Health Improvement and Modernisation Plans and National Service Frameworks as suggested in the 2000 guidance. The health authorities are expecting new guidance on the production of Health Improvement and Modernisation Plans in the New Year that may well clarify this.

22 An alternative is to build on the development of “Better Care – Higher Standards, a Charter for Long Term Care in Buckinghamshire”. The requirement is to produce a revised document each year, ensuring information is up to date, and that users and carers consultation on a set of 6 quality standards, measured against agreed targets is published.

23 Copies of the full Plan (84 pages) will be circulated to all members of the Council. Additional copies may be obtained from the Contact Officer, Hedy Richards on 01296 382944.

RECOMMENDED

That the Council endorses the publication and distribution of the Buckinghamshire Community Care Plan 2001-2005.

**HUGH CAREY
CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE**