

REPORT ON THE FINDINGS OF THE BEST VALUE REVIEW INTO COMMUNITY SAFETY, REDUCING THE FEAR OF CRIME IN OLDER PEOPLE

TO: Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- To summarise the scope and methodology adopted during the review
- To share the findings of the review team
- To seek comments on the recommendations and improvement plan
- To inform the committee about the process for negotiating targets and measures within the improvement plan
- To inform the committee on the approach to monitoring improvements

INTRODUCTION

CADEX commissioned this joint, crosscutting Best Value Review in July 2003 and the review team was formed in September 2003. A member steering group has been supporting the team throughout the review process. Each aspect of the review has been conducted in partnership therefore it seemed most appropriate to form this joint committee to scrutinise the findings of the review team. The terms of reference for this committee are attached for information.

This covering report summarises the scope of the review, presents the key findings of the review team and the recommendations within the improvement plan. The recommendations have been developed in partnership and will require a partnership approach for implementation to be a success. There are two further stages to the development and implementation of the improvement plan, which are set out for consideration by this committee.

REVIEW SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

A report was considered by CADEX on 1st July 2003, which proposed the scope of the review and the approach that should be taken. The review team and member steering group refined the scope and methodology and these are detailed in part one of the attached review report.

The scope of the review was quite broad, but this reflected the nature of fear of crime and the strategic focus of the review. The review team were however conscious of the need to maintain a breadth of vision so that strategic solutions were generated in response to findings whilst ensuring that the concerns of local older people were addressed. As the review progressed, it became apparent that some aspects of the review scope, such as visible street policing and intergenerational understanding were more important to older people than other factors. The team therefore focused on these emerging areas of priority.

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CADEX had requested that the review should not follow one authorities toolkit but that it should address the five “C’s”. A methodology for the review therefore had to be developed and this is outlined in pages 4 and 5 of the review report. A set of short reports that detail key pieces of fieldwork such as the review questionnaire, which provided evidence for the review team, are available as detailed on page 5 of the report. Developing a set of challenge questions helped to provide structure to the review and other aspects of the methodology that worked well were the review questionnaire, focus groups of older people and stakeholder workshop. The review team had been advised that older people from black minority ethnic (BME) communities would participate in the focus groups of older people but they did not attend the groups. The team would have liked to conduct a specific piece of work with BME elders once this deficit became apparent, but the review was concluding by this stage. The team had also hoped to gain more insights from the research it commissioned from the University of the West of England (UWE) but it was evident that the evaluation of successful projects we were seeking was not easy to obtain.

FINDINGS

The findings of the review team are detailed in Part two of the review report. Examples of good practice within the county and in other authorities are highlighted in grey and areas for development are detailed throughout the report and summarised in Appendix 12 and in the executive summary. The findings are broad ranging, which reflects the scope of the review. Some findings concern the direct experience of older people and others relate to the processes that underpin the commissioning and delivery of services. The findings include issues relating to contact with police, communication of actual crime and crime prevention advice, information management, engaging older people in finding solutions to fear of crime, business processes in CDRPs, support for victims and intergenerational understanding. The findings were discussed and prioritised at the stakeholder workshop and are expressed in the improvement plan as the baseline issues.

THEMES FOR CHANGE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The team undertook an exercise to generate broad themes for development from the full range of information it had gathered as it was agreed that an options appraisal was not relevant for a strategic review. The themes for change are as follows:

Theme One – A comprehensive and co-ordinated service response to reassuring older people.

Theme Two – A person-centred approach to commissioning services that reassure older people.

The first theme centres on adopting a multi-agency approach to reassurance and brings together priorities such as increasing visibility, intergenerational work and practical service responses centred on increasing feelings of safety either in the community or at home. The second theme brings together a number of areas for development that centre on commissioning activities such as information analysis, consultation, communication, work with the media, planning and the mainstreaming activities that underpin these processes.

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Six areas of recommendation underpin the above two themes for improvement and these are detailed in the improvement plan. Participants at the stakeholder workshop began the process of identifying recommendations and actions and these have been included in the improvement plan. In addition, the report identifies some areas of improvement that are being progressed elsewhere, such as partnership working between the district and county councils and the development of an older peoples strategy.

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING THE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

There are two further stages to the development and implementation of the improvement plan that partners will need to conclude. These are as follows:

- Developing targets and measures- a range of services and agencies will be responsible for implementing aspects of this improvement plan and further negotiation will be required with these services before specific targets and measures can be agreed. In some instances, exact costs cannot be specified until targets are agreed. In addition, a number of options for resourcing improvements such as the Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) require negotiation. A steering group comprising of members of the review team will complete these negotiations and further refine the improvement plan.
- Implementation- this will need to be overseen by a group that has a sufficiently broad remit and the authority to ensure delivery. An option currently being explored is that an external agency under the leadership of CADEX co-ordinates the implementation of the improvement plan. In addition, this joint committee could consider reconvening to scrutinise the implementation of the improvement plan.

SUMMARY

- The scope of this joint Best Value review has been broad due to the nature of fear of crime in older people and the strategic focus of the review.
- The findings of the review team are broad ranging and a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach will be required to deliver the improvement plan.
- A steering group will co-ordinate the negotiations about targets and measures within the improvement plan and resourcing options prior to the report being presented to the executives of the partners.
- Monitoring arrangements are being finalised but it is likely that that these will sit with CADEX due to the breadth and nature of the improvement plan.