

Briefing re: Replacement Electronic Social Care Case Recording System

Summary of report:

To provide Social Care Scrutiny Panel with an initial update on the replacement of the Electronic Social Care Case Recording System, currently PARIS

Recommendation:

1. To note the report.
2. To agree that the progress on the replacement of the Electronic Social Care Case Recording System is reported no less than 6 monthly until completion of implementation.

Background

The Social Care and Inclusion Directorate have been reviewing their requirements for electronic social care case recording systems in the light of new legislation. Children's Services have an immediate need to ensure its case management system delivers against current operational requirements as well as longer term. This has been highlighted by recent OFSTED inspections. Both services are jointly preparing to go out to tender for a phased implementation with Children's services being the first phase. Both Directorates see the benefits of a common system (not least to young people with disabilities and their families in transition) and are committed to achieving this. Their services are in different places in terms of readiness to implement a replacement system and this report seeks to inform Scrutiny of thinking so far and give an outline of how this project will progress.

Social Care and Inclusion outline business case

The Care Act comes into effect from 1st April 2015. The new legislation places new duties on councils with social service responsibilities. These include:

- New duties to self funders
- Additional duties to carers and young carers
- The setting up and maintenance of care accounts
- Assessment, reviews and charging are amended requirements
- New duties of prevention, information and advice
- Market shaping, provider failure, and
- Safeguarding adults is a new duty
- Transitions from children to adult services

These will necessitate the holding and tracking of personal and financial information on a much wider range of citizens than our current service users. The current case recording system is not well placed to deliver against these requirements and the product has a small market share nationally.

The Children's Services Directorate outline business case will be reported to the Children's scrutiny panel and therefore is not detailed here however there are a number of joint benefits to both services. There are valuable synergies from a joint system covering both Adult's Social Care & Inclusion and Children's Services (such as the support service, licences, overheads, training and users) but is also recognised that the system for each service needs to be fit for purpose.

The maintenance costs of a single system will be less than for two separate systems.

A single system will better meet the needs of services to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, and the requirement in the Children and Families Act to provide personal budgets for children with assessed Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

Procurement process

The procurement process will select a single supplier that can meet both the needs of Children's Services and Social Care & Inclusion. The procurement route will be to access a central government procured framework agreement and will be in accordance with the Council's Contract Rules and in accordance with legislation, including the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (as amended).

The procurement tender specification will set out the need for a 2 phase approach in recognition that Children's Services and Social Care & Inclusion are at different stages of readiness to undertake an implementation. Phase 1 will commence as soon as the contract is in place with the preferred supplier to fully support the implementation within Children's Services. This will enable the new system to address issues raised within the OFSTED report, support the Improvement Plan and meet the desired timescales. Phase 2 for Adult's Social Care & Inclusion will commence as soon as reasonably practicable without risking the Children's programme of work

The Tender process to select a supplier for phase 1, the selection of a Children's recording system, is due to conclude in May 2014. To meet a November implementation deadline the contract award needs to be before the next Cabinet meeting. Approval would enable the successful supplier to commence implementation and this would better support the Children's Services Improvement Plan and align with the OFSTED recommendations. The approved budget is already in place will now be re-profiled to meet these timescales.

Council priorities

A new electronic social care case recording system is fundamental to help and support the delivery of Children's and Adult's services. Both make an important contribution to all four council corporate priorities:

- Supporting businesses to thrive and supporting local people into work – through the provision of childcare and help to support parents into work, and through facilitating employment for carers and adults with disabilities or mental health issues
- Improving health and well being – by improving child and family health chances, and promoting independence for adults and older people
- Creating safe, sustainable and inclusive communities. Reducing levels of crime and providing the right environment for people to live in – by working with parents to raise aspirations and improve parenting skills
- Improving safeguarding, learning and life chances for children and young people, recognising that a child's 's early years crucially help determine what kind of future they will have – through early years development, supporting school readiness and providing early help and safeguarding as needed; and through the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and older people

Programme Delivery

A joint Children's and Adult Social Care Programme Board is set up to oversee the implementation if the recommendations are approved by Cabinet on the 30th April 2014. The programme delivery team is currently being reviewed to ensure appropriate governance and adequate resourcing. There will be full involvement of professional care staff in the planning and development of the new system. External governance of the programme will be supplied through C4EO.

Author:

Name Paul Gordon

Head of Business Change

☎ 07792 920257

✉ gordonp@walsall.gov.uk