

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director Partnerships, Planning & Policy, Lesley-ann Fenton (Introduced by the Executive Member (Business))	Executive Cabinet	18 <sup>th</sup> February 2010

## REPORT OF LANCASHIRE REVIEW OF HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCIES

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To advise members of the review of Home Improvement Agencies in Lancashire

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- To approve the proposed responses to the recommendations made in the review for Chorley Council and these be returned to the consultants & LCC.

### REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

#### (If the recommendations are accepted)

- To ensure Chorley Council has provided a full and considered response to the review & that we have influenced any decisions made by LCC and other partners which affect our services.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- None.

### BACKGROUND

- In 2009, an external consultant, the Housing Quality Network Consultancy was commissioned by LCC to undertake a review of the provision of Home Improvement Services (HIAs) across Lancashire. The Supporting People Commissioning Body provide funding to various HIAs and these contracts are due to end in 2010 and 2011. In order to advise future commissioning decisions and to lend weight to attracting funding from other partners, a review was commissioned.
- The purpose of the review was to enable commissioners to work together to develop longer term approaches to commissioning and funding of HIA services across Lancashire. The key recommendations are that the number of HIA services in the county should be reduced and a new approach to funding agencies based on needs should be adopted.

### REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

- The report makes a number of recommendations and these include the following:
  - Consolidation of the number of services
  - A new approach to funding
  - A phased approach to implementation

- All services to be accredited
- Clear criteria for access to HIA services
- Councils should ask HIAs to provide DFG services and should provide additional funding for this.
- LCC Social Care should commission all minor aids and adaptations services within HIAs countywide
- Commissioners should actively manage contracts
- Access to services should be monitored
- PCTs should consider how they can contribute to funding services which prevent accidents and ill health
- HIAs should promote services more pro-actively and respond to customer demand

7. The report advises that they have undertaken the review in the context of accessibility to services, delivering services to those needing long term care, increasing choice and, ensuring services meet those in greatest need. The report includes a proposed needs model using data such as age of population, levels of disability, tenure and stock condition. It predicted that based on delivery in 08/09, there was an unmet need of 4,859 jobs in Chorley & South Ribble.

8. As part of the review, existing provision was scrutinised and assessed for value for money and performance. Further, it looked at how much HIAs should cost in each district and concluded that resources should not be distributed equally to all districts, as some areas have higher needs than others. Anchor Home Improvement Agency was not deemed to have achieved good value for money.

9. Customers, carers and stakeholders were consulted as part of the review and the report states that general themes in the feedback given included the following:

- Customers and service users expect services to be provided in all districts
- There is a need for services to support people who can afford to pay but who are vulnerable and would otherwise not have repairs done
- There is potential to increase take-up considerably if services are better promoted
- There is a need for better integration of services for disabled people

#### **KEY QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDING DISTRICT COUNCILS.**

10. The report produced by HQN is now being consulted across all Districts as key commissioners and stakeholders and there are five questions which are being asked. The proposed responses for Chorley Council are in bold text.

11. Question one: Do you agree that the number of HIAs in Lancashire should be reduced?  
**Chorley recognises that there are benefits to joint commissioning of HIA services, in terms of efficiencies and economies of scale. However, local provision can provide value for money and more local added value. Therefore, in order for Chorley to explore this approach, benefits including value for money and added value for the customer would need to be evidenced.**

12. If so, will three HIAs based on PCT localities work?

**Possibly, although local service provision may become diluted, particularly if there is only a single base for the HIA.**

13. Question two: Funding should be allocated on the basis of need.

If your agency is a funding partner, will it be adopting the funding formula proposed in paper four?

**N/A**

If you are a provider, what challenge will the funding formula pose?

**Currently it is not possible to set the budget for 2011/12 given the lack of clarity regarding capital grant.**

14. Question Three: Do you support the idea of a phased approach to implementation, delaying implementation until April 2012?

**Yes as budgets are not yet set and given the recent changes at Chorley Council, given we have taken the decision to bring the service back in house, this may prove very successful and we would want to monitor and review the impact of this.**

15. If you are a provider, will you be able to continue until April 2012 on proposed funding or would you prefer recommissioning for April 2011?

**From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, Chorley Council will be a provider and on the premise that Supporting People grant is transferred to Chorley Council from this date, the Council would prefer recommissioning to take place in 2012**

17. What factors do you think should affect the pace of change?

**The impact of the move to area based grant, the implementation of the single capital pot methodology (RHP) and publication of the Lancashire North West Needs Model findings.**

18. Do you agree that localities should be able to choose whether or not to adopt the recommended (most efficient) option in their area?

**Yes definitely & these decisions must be informed by the respective Executive Cabinets.**

19. For recommendations 3-10, we are interested to hear your views and receive comments

**The report recommends that Councils should consider contracting out DFGs to HIAs. This is a statutory function of the Council and contracting out does not always achieve value for money, and can reduce the level of grant available.**

**Chorley agrees that LCC should commission small aids and adaptations from HIAs.**

**Chorley agrees that contracts should be managed & supports the development of a common outcome framework.**

**Access should be fully monitored; including the outcomes from customers who are not able to access grant. PCTs must look at what resources they can contribute to an area of service which brings them cost savings.**

**Chorley supports the promotion of HIA services.**

20. Do you have any other comments on the future of HIAs in Lancashire?

**HIAs deliver significant outcomes to vulnerable people and in particular, contribute to the elimination of risks to older people and young people with disabilities. For this reason, other agencies, including the PCTs and Social Care must be fully engaged and contribute resources to these.**

20. The outcome of the consultation with all Councils and stakeholders is to be collated by the consultants and tabled for discussion at the Supporting People Commissioning Body.

## **CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

21. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the Central Lancashire sub-region		Develop local solutions to climate change.	✓
Improving equality of opportunity and life chances	✓	Develop the Character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	✓
Involving people in their communities	✓	Ensure Chorley Borough Council is a performing organization	✓

22. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Corporate Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		No significant implications in this area	✓

LESLEY-ANN FENTON  
 Director of Partnerships, Planning & Policy.

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Zoë Whiteside	5711		