

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 10 April 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Health & Community

SUBJECT: Adults Section 31 Agreement with Halton & St. Helens PCT, Halton Borough Council and St. Helens Council

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide an update on progress to develop commissioning between Halton Borough Council, St. Helens Council and Halton & St. Helens PCT and put forward a proposal to enter into a formal Section 31 agreement with the PCT.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- i) **To note and comment on the report;**
- ii) **Subject to any minor drafting amendments, the Executive Board to agree that a Section 31 Agreement is approved between Halton Borough Council, St. Helens Council and Halton & St. Helens PCT.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Over the last 10 years the Council has developed a good working relationship with Primary Care Services, this has become more robust over the last 2 years. There are many reasons for this improvement, including a stronger Council focus upon Health and Adult Social Care and a very strong PCT Management and Board.

3.2 Key achievements have included joint commissioning strategies for all adult service groups which the Commission for Social Care Inspection have commended, as well as clarity and direction on the modernisation programme.

3.3 Weaknesses have centred on roles and responsibilities and lead commissioning. At a Joint Chief Executive Officers meeting in June 2007 between St. Helens and Halton Councils and the PCT it was agreed that the PCT would commission and fund an analysis of the current commissioning arrangements and Atos Consulting undertook this work.

3.4 Since then representatives from the PCT, the Council and St. Helens Council have been meeting to finalise the report and agree a way forward and Appendix 1 is a synopsis of the key actions and an agreement on the way forward.

4.0 **CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 All three organisations are now in a position to cascade the report and agree a way forward to formalise the actions from the report.

4.2 Many of the actions will take sometime to implement during 2008, however, all three organisations would like to agree strategic leadership roles for commissioning care streams by introducing new partnership agreements through a formal DOH Section 31 Agreement.

4.3 The following lead roles are proposed:

Commissioning Area	Lead Organisation
Mental Health	Halton and St Helens PCT
Older People (inc Intermediate Care)	Local Authority
Alcohol and Substance Misuse*	Local Authority
Adult Learning Disability	Local Authority
Physical Disability	Local Authority
*The PCT will develop a joint PCT/LA role to support the commissioning of health outcomes for alcohol services.	

4.4 Such a process would deliver the following **outcomes**:

- Clarity on strategic leadership roles for commissioning and improving communication with internal and external partners;
- Clarity on definitions of commissioning and roles and responsibilities.
- Clearer work programmes to modernise services
- Focus on enhancing quality outcomes through a more clearer commissioning process;
- Opportunities to deliver more efficiencies through more effective partnerships
- Better linkages with the LAA and LSP processes.

4.5 Attached at Appendix 2 is the draft Section 31 Agreement and it is proposed that the 3 organisations approve and sign up to the document. Further work will be undertaken to ensure that Halton Borough Council's priorities (Appendix 3) are fully integrated into the Partnership Agreement. The Agreement is for Adult Services only.

5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no policy implications.

6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are no financial implications as the proposals and future arrangements are all contained within the current organisational

financial envelopes.

- 6.2 This does not include the Adult Learning Disability Pooled Budget arrangements, as these were not contained within the remit of the work commissioned. Agreement has been reached to review the ALD Pooled Budget by considering the financial and business plan and the Intermediate Care Pool is already working well and is being extended.

7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

This agreement is for Adult Social Care only, although key areas of interface with Children's Services (e.g. those in transition) will be kept under review to ensure adequate safeguards and continuity.

7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The development of effective partnerships with our Health partners is essential to achieving improved outcomes.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 8.1 Failure to progress this will mean that staff and organisations will not be able to understand their roles and responsibilities. This could lead to an inefficient service.

- 8.2 Failure to address the issues could lead a dysfunctional commissioning process between the organisations.

- 8.3 Both St. Helens and Halton Councils will need to ensure that they will always retain their rights to Borough specific services and this agreement facilitates such rights.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

- 9.1 This agreement will ensure a greater commissioning focus upon a range of equality and diversity issues, in particular, commissioning

services for individuals and groups such as British Minority Groups, people with HIV and Aids and migrants.

10. **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None.