



HEALTH SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 24TH MARCH 2015

SUBJECT: GWENT WIDE INTEGRATED COMMUNITY EQUIPMENT SERVICES

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with information on the Gwent Wide Integrated Community Equipment Services (GWICES), as requested at a previous Scrutiny Committee.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report will outline information regarding the partnership, use of Intermediate Care Fund, savings made and proposals for continuation of the current partnership agreement and section 33 arrangements.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 GWICES was initially developed as a partnership between the 5 Local Authorities and corresponding 5 Local Health Boards as a result of significant capital grant funding from Welsh Government to integrated community equipment services across health and social care to improve services for people
- 3.2 Following reconfiguration of health services, the partnership was reviewed and amended to reflect 5 Local Authorities and Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 The GWICES partnership has been in place for many years the current contract for provision of the service is with Vision Products who are a sheltered workshop and form part of Rhondda Cynon Taff.
- 4.2 Governance is maintained by the following groups - Equipment Prescribers Group (EPG), Operational Management Group (OMG) and Management Advisory Board (MAB). All partners have a representative at all groups.
- 4.3 EPG have been responsible for "bundling" which means grouping equipment together than performs the same function this limits selection for prescribers and reduce the range offered which assist with maintaining accurate stock levels and identifying non moving equipment.
- 4.4 The chair of EPG was part of the Value Wales tendering group, which has been successful in significantly reducing costs of certain pieces of stock equipment by establishing a procurement framework.

- 4.5 Members of the Management Advisory Board have recently agreed to take up the option of extending the contract with Vision until 2018.
- 4.6 Torfaen County Borough Council are the lead commissioning team for GWICES. One of the team members is an Occupational Therapist (OT) who is responsible for scrutinising all special orders, these are one off items not part of standard stock. These are all reviewed to ascertain if there is anything suitable in stock that could do the job as a result of this the OT has identified savings of £153k for 2013/14 and a similar figure is anticipated for 2014/15 based on quarterly savings identified.
- 4.7 As part of the ongoing work, GWICES has worked with another equipment partnership hosted by RCT on a complex equipment project. This project looked to facilitate exchange of equipment between equipment services in Wales.
- 4.8 The project was approved and funded by Welsh Government in 2013 and the two partnerships agreed to pilot this approach, via development of a pricing matrix and grading of equipment. The pilot started in Jan 2014 and over a 12 month period the table below outlines the savings:

Number of exchanges	Cost of purchases new	Refurbished cost	Cost Savings
27 (includes accessories and parts for equipment)	£28,121	£12,230	£15,891

Whilst the above demonstrates financial savings what is also clear has been the time saved by the two partnerships exchanging equipment and avoiding placing new orders with companies leading to customers receiving equipment quicker.

- 4.9 The pilot is currently being expanded to look at selling slow/ non-moving stock to other organisations. Learning is being shared across Wales to look to roll the scheme out across all partnerships.
- 4.10 The Intermediate Care Fund has been used successfully in terms of capital and revenue funding. Tranch 1 of the funding was for £350k revenue, of which £100k was identified to manage demand for the health board. The remaining £250k was used to purchase equipment for the care review project which is being tried in all boroughs, this will be evaluated by the GWICES OT in terms of any cashable savings identified in terms of moving and handling equipment for use by one carer. In addition, the bath lift replacement scheme was increased to ensure compliance with Lifting Operating and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER).
- 4.11 Tranch 2 of the funding identified £95k capital which was used to purchase upgrades and additional functionality for the CQUIP IT system to enable accurate recording and tracing of equipment. A further £370k revenue was available, this was used to purchase standard stock equipment which is frequently issued e.g. hoists and slings. All funding has been fully utilised and will assist with expenditure in the next financial year.
- 4.12 Review of the operating policy for GWICES highlighted different practices in different boroughs in respect of equipment that is provided to long-term care homes. As a result, a piece of work was undertaken to agree standardised provision for all establishments, which will be reflected in the overarching contracts with each borough. GWICES will cease to provide standard stock equipment from 1st April 2015 as this can be used by many residents, i.e. not specific to an individual, GWICES will continue to provide very specialist equipment for an individual where identified.

- 4.13 To facilitate this change of practice each home will be asked to validate the equipment they have, if they decide they wish to keep it, the equipment will be gifted to them however they will be responsible for any servicing, maintenance or repair. Any equipment they no longer required will be collected and the CQUIP data basis updated to reflect this.
- 4.14 The section 33 partnership agreement is currently being reviewed changed are being proposed to remodel the costs for the partnership which when agreed will come into place in April 2016 base budgets will then be adjusted accordingly.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Equalities impact assessment is not required report is for information only.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Specific financial information is contained within the body of the report.
- 6.2 The adult services budget for disability equipment for 2014/15 stands at £735k. However, the budget will be reduced by £132k as part of the directorate's budget strategy for 2015/16. Leaving a budget of around £603k.
- 6.3 Projected costs for 2014/15 provided by the GWICES lead commissioner as at January 2014 are £535,439, which equates to a projected in year underspend of £92,520.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications associated with this report.

8. CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 All comments received have been included in the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 Members note the content of the report.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Report is for information only.

Author: Jo Williams Assistant Director
Consultees: Social Services Senior Management Team
Cllr Robin Woodyatt Cabinet Member Social Services
Adult Services Divisional Management Team
Sean O'Brien Team Manager Occupational Therapy
Andrew Watkins Interim Senior Accountant