

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CORPORATE SERVICES
CABINET MEMBER**

“EXPERTS BY EXPERIENCE”

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To outline Adult Social Services requirement and commitment to improve engagement and involvement of vulnerable adults across North Lincolnshire.
- 1.2. To seek endorsement to develop and trial “Experts by Experience” posts within the Strategic Commissioning and Performance sectors of Adult Social Services.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. Adult Social Services commenced its “Fit for the Future” project looking at the structures and culture required into the future, in order to deliver on the outcomes and priorities of the White Paper “Our Health and Care Our Say” published in January 2006 and the “Putting People First” concordat published in 2007.

One of the key challenges, laid out in these documents for local authorities, is to actively listen to their citizens, placing them in more control of their own lives, supporting real involvement and control over policy setting and service delivery at National and Local levels.

- 2.2 Adult Social Services have utilised a range of different approaches across North Lincolnshire to improve the involvement of vulnerable adults in service planning, delivery and evaluation. Experiences of how effective these approaches have been vary dependent on the level of individual support needs, capacity and capability as well as commitment from citizens to undertake the task of acting as representatives of specific citizen groups, others groups and/or undertaking consultation on behalf the service area. No formal payment has been made to citizens who have worked in partnership with Adult Social Services to improve local support structures and services.

2.3 There has been, over more recent years, a move towards acknowledging citizens who have been recipients of services as being “Experts by Experience” whose skills to be effective partners should be recognised and supported more formally and increase the user voice in shaping the future. The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) initiated an “Experts by Experience” project in early 2006. This project recruited and trained people who had experience of Social Care service from diverse backgrounds to become active in a range of regulatory and council service inspections. The project results showed an overwhelming positive response to the involvement of “Experts by Experience” in the work of CSCI.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Option 1.

The proposal from Adult Social Services is to recruit five “Experts by Experience” to join the Strategic Commissioning and Performance section. The overall role of these experts would be to advise, support and guide the team to engage and involve citizens effectively in planning, reviewing and monitoring the quality of services commissioned from both in-house and external service providers. The post holders would link to the citizen specific partnerships recently established following the review of the governance arrangements between the local authority and its strategic partners.

These partnerships are:-

- People with Learning Disabilities
- People with Physical Disabilities and/or sensory impairment
- People with Mental Health problems
- Older People
- Carers

3.2 Option 2.

The alternative option is to continue with current arrangements of ad hoc engaging and involvement of people who use services.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option 1.

The proposals made will:

- Enable “Experts by Experience” to help others make a real difference to theirs and others lives.
- Demonstrate recognition of the importance of vulnerable adults as partners through remuneration.

- Provide staff, at all levels, with an honest perspective on services they manage and deliver.
- Support the council to deliver on its priorities.

4.2 Option 2.

To continue with current arrangements does not allow the service to achieve greater citizen involvement or partnership working in order to deliver the priorities of the White Paper “Our Health and Care Our Say” which have been translated into Adult Social Services vision and plan for delivery.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 Financial implications -

As these are unique posts aimed at specific citizens, it is anticipated the contracts will reflect the individual circumstances of the post holders. The costings are therefore based on individuals working a maximum of 10 hours per week on annualised contracts. Five posts at mid point Grade 3 with on costs equated to £23,681 per annum.

Adult services will delete a grade 9 Commissioning Officer post funded from the Social Reform Grant and use the money, £33,000, to fully fund these posts. As the people to be employed will be disabled and covered by the Disability Discrimination Act the remaining, £10,000 will be required to meet their special work related needs, i.e. special chairs, equipment, accessibility arrangements and travel costs.

5.2 Staffing implications -

Support for the new posts has been identified within the Strategic Commissioning team.

5.3 Property implications -

There are no immediate property implications.

5.4 IT implications -

IT support will be required to support mobile working and to respond to the specific needs of the people employed into “Expert by Experience” posts.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Statutory implications -

These proposals will support the improvement of the council to carry out its statutory duties to work in partnership with vulnerable adults across North Lincolnshire.

6.2 Environmental implications -

There are no environmental implications.

6.3 Diversity implications -

The proposals support the council's diversity priorities in respect of increased employment opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds with varying support requirements and in promoting improved access to services.

Recruitment will be fully in line with North Lincolnshire Council's Recruitment and Selection process as well as through published guidance from the Employers Forum on Disability. Posts will be advertised widely and methods of assessment will be as flexible as possible in order to accommodate candidate's needs. Human Resources will be fully involved in this process.

6.4 Section 17 – Crime and Disorder implications -

Support for and feedback on the Safeguarding Adult framework will be enhanced.

6.5 Risk and other implications -

These proposals support vulnerable citizens of North Lincolnshire to have a louder voice in risk management and support for their independence.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultations with the trades unions will be through this report.

7.2 Service Users of Adult Social Services have consistently requested a stronger voice and real involvement in both planning and service delivery.

7.3 Adult Services Cabinet Member has approved this approach and for the matter to be referred to Corporate Services for the posts to be established.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That Corporate Services Cabinet Member approves the creation of the “Experts by Experience” posts as described in this report.

SERVICE DIRECTOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

1. “Fit for the Future” – Report to Adult Service Cabinet Member 26 June 2007.
2. The council’s response to the White Paper “Our Health, Our Care, Our Say” report to Cabinet Member 18 July 2006.
3. “Putting People First” – The future of Adult Social Services report to Adult Social Services Cabinet Member 30 January 2008.
4. “Experts by Experience” – The benefit of experience involving people who use services in inspections. CSCI.