

Decision Maker: Adult and Community PDS Committee

Date: 14 April 2010

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **SUPPORT FOR STAFF SECONDED TO PARTNERSHIP BODIES**

Contact Officer: Richard Millar, Democratic Services
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Chief Officer: Mark Bowen, Director of Legal, Democratic and Customer Services

Ward: N/A

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 Arising from a Disciplinary Dismissal Appeal case, to consider issues of concern in relation to support provided for staff seconded to partnership bodies which have been referred to this PDS Committee by the General Purposes and Licensing Committee.
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2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 **The Committee is requested to consider the five particular issues set out in the report, together with the response from the Director of Adult and Community Services, and to agree any action as deemed appropriate.**

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: No cost
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Adult and Community Services
 4. Total current budget for this head: £1.4m
 5. Source of funding: Core funding
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 30fte
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: n/a
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory requirement. Mental Health Act, 2008.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Referrals 2,500pa. Mental Health Social Care accessed - 300service users appr. pa.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Arising from a Disciplinary Dismissal Appeal case which was considered by the Appeals Sub-Committee over two meetings on 25th November and 4th December 2009, issues of concern, in particular in relation to support provided for staff seconded to partnership bodies, had been raised and referred to the General Purposes and Licensing Committee.
- 3.2 This matter was considered by the General Purposes and Licensing Committee on 16th February 2010 where the Chairman of the Appeals Sub-Committee (Councillor Nicholas Bennett JP) for the two meetings which had dealt with this case highlighted and expanded on the five issues (set out below) which had been of particular concern to the Sub-Committee. In response, the Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources) addressed the Committee and pointed out that processes already existed for properly managing staff seconded to partner bodies but accepted that coordination methods could be improved. He indicated that partner organisations needed to be reminded of the requirement for meeting performance appraisals and training needs of seconded staff and that managers would also need to provide annual appraisals carried out in relation to supervisory staff. He also stated that, whilst across the Council, staff turnover is reasonable, in the area of social care in general (including mental health) the turnover is high which reflected a problem nationally; and considered that the support of staff on secondment required proper contract monitoring of the partner organisation by departmental management.
- 3.3 Having regard to the issues which had been raised by the Appeals Sub-Committee, and the response of the Assistant Chief Executive (Human Resources), the General Purposes and Licensing Committee agreed that the following issues should be referred to this PDS Committee for further review:-
- (i) consideration be given to extending the training of line managers to include staff seconded to partnership bodies and to the monitoring of the effectiveness of those arrangements;
 - (ii) a better identification is required of the training needs appropriate to specific posts, particularly for new managers and that there should not be an assumption that managers appointed to posts have all the necessary skills and practical training required;
 - (iii) in similar disciplinary matters, evidence needs to be made available of annual appraisals carried out of supervisory staff, including those on secondment;
 - (iv) further consideration needs to be given to management turnover and the use of locum staff as part of recruitment and retention issues; and
 - (v) the Commissioners' responsibility for monitoring service provision should include the effectiveness of the management and supervision of London Borough of Bromley staff seconded to partner agencies and the protocols covering secondment arrangements.

Comments of Director of Adult and Community Services

- 3.4 The Council's professional mental health social work staff are seconded under a Health Act, Section 75 agreement to Oxleas Mental Health NHS Trust and work within an integrated structure alongside Oxleas clinical staff.
- 3.5 Staff work within multi-disciplinary teams with line management and supervision provided by their Oxleas appointed team managers who may come from either a nursing or social work background – that is not necessarily from their own discipline. This manager will arrange annual reviews and appraisals. It is frequently the case that appraisals are three way to include both the managerial and professional supervisor. The professional supervision is given

by a more senior social worker, if the line manager is from a Health discipline. This eventually comes to the Head of Social Care, via a supervision 'tree'.

- 3.6 It is the responsibility of the Head of Social Care to ensure that the individual training needs of LBB mental health staff are identified and met. All social work and Approved Mental Health Professional training is managed by the Head of Social Care who ensures that statutory updates, refreshers and re-warranting is undertaken at the correct time. The Head of Social Care also ensures all social care related training; to include safeguarding children and adults is disseminated to all staff including social workers. Training needs apart from that are dealt with by 'managerial' supervision
- 3.7 In addition to training provided by Oxleas Trust, LBB staff also have access to LBB social care training. Oxleas Trust through the Head of Social Care are also part of the Social Care Practice Board which oversees the drawing up of an annual social care training plan.
- 3.8 Whilst there will always be the need to use locum staff to cover for short term vacancies, there is not considered to be a particular difficulty in recruitment to mental health social work posts within the service at the present time.
- 3.9 The effectiveness of the management systems within the Mental Health services are monitored through regular engagement with the Head of Social Care and her membership of the ACS senior team and through regular meetings between the Director and the Oxleas Borough Mental Health Director.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no specific policy implications arising out of the issues referred to PDS by the Appeals Sub -Committee

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no specific financial implications arising out of the issues referred to PDS by the Appeals Sub -Committee

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising out of the issues referred to PDS by the Appeals Sub -Committee

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no personnel implications arising from this report, other than those already referred to in the body of this report.

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| Non-Applicable Sections: | Policy, Legal, Financial |
| Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer) | [Title of document and date] |