

The Commission of Enquiry into co-operation between Housing, Health and Adult Social Care

Introducing the Commission

Adult social care is being transformed to give users more choice and control over the services they receive. In future, much closer working between public bodies responsible for Social Care, Health and Housing will be required to ensure services are planned, commissioned and delivered to meet individual needs.

This Commission of Enquiry into closer co-operation between Housing, Health & Adult Social Care is being set up to examine the role housing and housing-related services need to play to deliver personalised services alongside health and social care.

The Commission of Enquiry will be held over a 6 month period and will hear evidence from the public, service users and carers, staff working in health, housing and social care and a wide range of 3rd sector and private sector organisations. The task of the Commission is to arrive at proposals about how housing, health and social care services can provide more individualised and more effective care for people in their own homes. Whilst the Commission does not have the powers to impose solutions, it is envisaged that the recommendations will be jointly agreed by all the participating bodies as the way forward.

Why set up a Commission of Enquiry?

Too often, people needing low levels of support, end up requiring acute health care, admission to hospital or costly residential care. Earlier, more flexible help from housing, health and social care services and the local community might avoid this happening.

Housing plays a fundamental part in the health and well-being of everybody. The design, location, condition and accessibility of housing and local amenities all contribute to the life-chances of residents and their ability to live as full a life as possible in their own home.

With an increasingly ageing population, and services users with clear views about their needs and how they should be met, it is important to take stock and improve how these services work together.

Background

Putting People First, published in 2007, set the direction for adult social care over the next 10 years. The target for full implementation of *Putting People First* is April 2011. Department of Health guidance identified 4 key areas for change:

- Universal Services (housing, leisure, transport etc)
- Early intervention & prevention
- Choice and Control (including personal budgets)
- Social Capital

Lord Darzi's Next Stage Review, published in 2008, proposed patient rights and control over their treatment and care, with closer partnership working across sectors.

The Green Paper on Social Care, *Shaping the Future of Care Together*, published in July 2009, proposes changes to the funding of care services, recognising that the demographic profile of society is changing. The new system needs to provide for all, in a way that is more fair, simple and affordable.

The recently published Chartered Institute of Housing report *Housing, Health and Care* highlights the linkages between housing and social care services in the delivery of personalisation; success will depend on close, joint working across service and organisational boundaries.

What happens next?

The Commission is just being set up. Its first steps include:

- Preparing for a series of Listening Events for service users and carers in May-June;
- Running staff focus groups to explore how health, housing and social care services currently work together;
- Establishing Task Groups to investigate specific issues to present to the Commission for further consideration.

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The Outcome of the Commission

The Commission will produce its final report and recommendations in December 2010. We envisage a **joint protocol / concordat** for Housing, Health and Adult Social Care which sets out a shared agenda for delivering personalised services across public, charitable and private sector services. This will cover a wide range of areas including:

- clear, integrated service pathways that are easy to understand by service users and service providers and which offer real choice and control;
- closer partnership working so that service users are not required to find their way around the system;
- clear policy objectives covering the future role and use of sheltered housing and residential care;
- the specific planning requirements for new housing developments;
- greater emphasis on locally delivered preventative measures with fewer calls upon more costly reactive interventions by acute health/residential care providers;
- better integration of existing services such as housing advice, Disabled Facilities Grants, community alarms, home improvement agencies etc.

To deliver these changes will require an integrated, cross-organisation change programme, harnessing the skills and resources of a range of disciplines and interests, with all the opportunities for sharing learning and collaboration across the public and independent sectors.

Resources

The Commission of Enquiry's remit will encompass all the councils and local NHS organisations operating within the Thames Gateway South Essex sub region: Essex, Basildon, Rochford, Castle Point, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock Councils, and NHS South West Essex and NHS South East Essex.

In combining forces as a Commission of Enquiry, the councils and NHS partners will be able to make a fundamental assessment of how best to take forward the personalisation agenda.

The Commission will also allow the participating public bodies to jointly address the growing financial pressures and demand for services.

The Commission will ensure that all the relevant powers are being fully utilised (Well Being powers and Health Act Flexibilities etc) and the recommendations of the Commission, once ratified, will be taken forward through the respective Sustainable Communities Strategies, LSPs and Local Area Agreements.

Each of the participating public bodies are being asked to make a significant commitment to the work of the Commission by examining the way they deliver services and, where necessary, reshaping them.

This Commission of Enquiry will receive funding from Improvement East: the Regional and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) for the East of England which supports local authorities and Fire and Rescue Services in their drive to improve services and increase efficiency. Improvement East is supporting this sub-regional project because of the potential to share learning across the whole region when the Commission has completed its work.

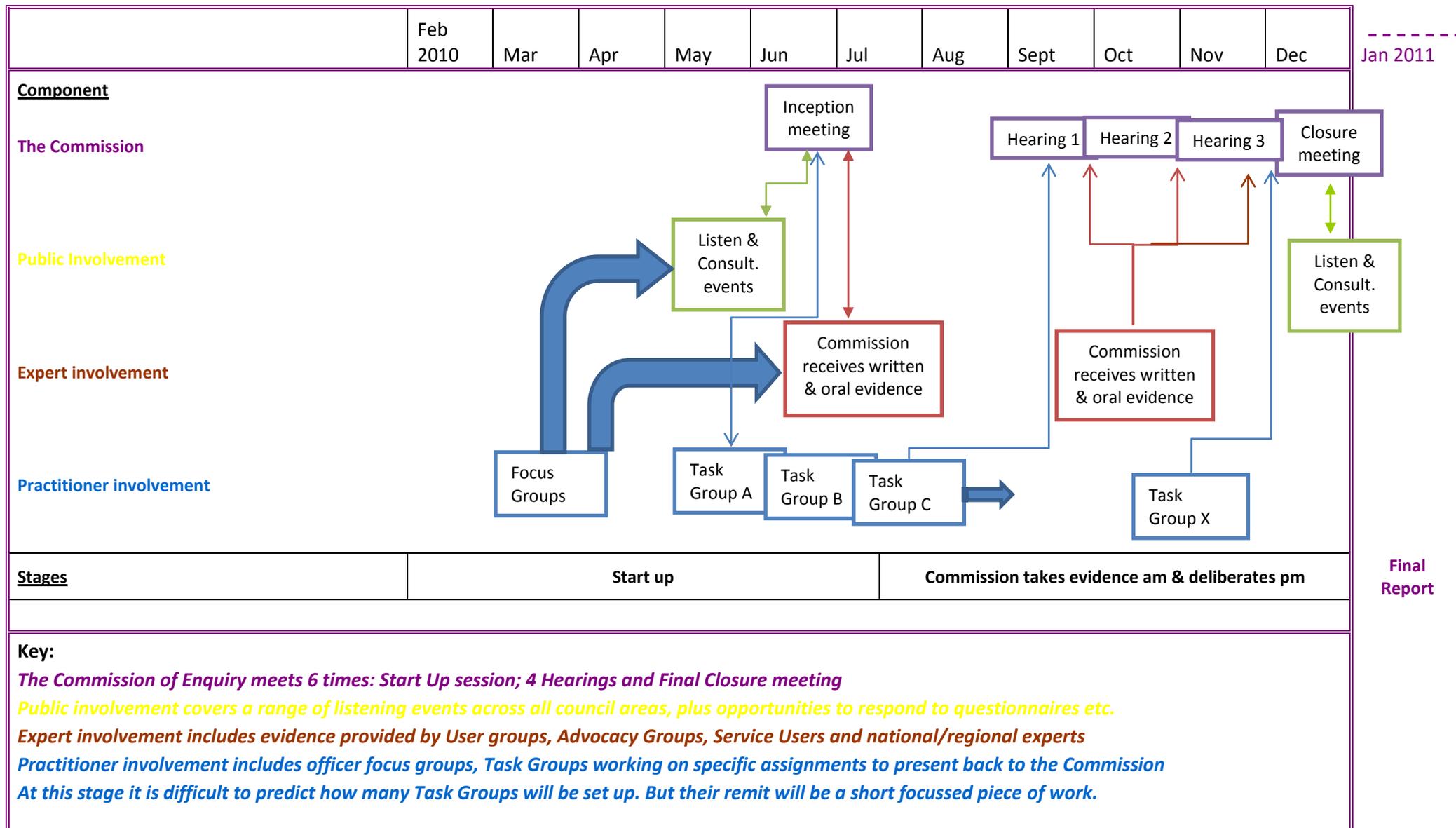
Further information

The Commission will be sending out regular bulletins and inviting people to participate in the work. There will also be a Commission of Enquiry website where you can keep up to date with and comment on the work as it progresses.

Any initial queries can be sent to Sue Williams at Thurrock Council: suwilliams@thurrock.gov.uk



High Level Diagram of the Commission of Enquiry



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Notes