

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**SUBJECT: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICES**

**MEETING: HOUSING AND SOCIAL CARE COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 31<sup>st</sup> AUGUST 2010**

**AUTHOR: ACTING DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report provides Members with information on the implementation of the eligibility criteria for Adult Social Care services.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 On 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009, Members of Falkirk Council agreed to introduce eligibility criteria relating to how adults with social care needs could access social care services, in accordance with the National Guidance which had been produced by the Scottish Government in conjunction with COSLA. The National Guidance indicates that eligibility criteria should be used as a method of ensuring that resources are targeted to those in greatest need and at greatest risk. The guidance prioritises risk into 4 bands;
- **critical risk** : this is where there are major risks to an individual's independent living or health and well-being likely to call for the **immediate\*** or **imminent\*** provision of social care services
  - **substantial risk** : this is where there are significant risks to an individual's independence or health and well-being likely to call for the **immediate\*** or **imminent\*** provision of social care services
  - **moderate risk** : this is where there are some risks to an individual's independence or health and well-being. These may call for the provision of some social care services managed and prioritised on an ongoing basis or they may simply be manageable over the **foreseeable future\*** without service provision, with appropriate arrangement with review.
  - **low risk** : this is where there may be some quality of life issues but low risks to an individual's independence or health and well-being with very limited, if any, requirement of provision of social care services. There may be some need for alternative support or advice and appropriate arrangements for review with the **foreseeable future\*** or **longer term\***.

In these definitions the timescale descriptions are used to indicate that services are likely to be required as follows:

- \* **immediate** : required now or within approximately one to two weeks
- \* **imminent** : required within six weeks
- \* **foreseeable future** : required within the next six months
- \* **longer term** : required within next twelve months or more

2.2 In deciding to implement eligibility criteria across all adult social care groups, Members also agreed that;

- priority should be given to those people whose needs and risks are assessed as critical or substantial
- a more limited approach should be taken to the provision of services when needs and risks have been assessed as moderate, with services only being provided where there is clear evidence that service provision would prevent an individual deteriorating to the point where their needs became substantial
- the Acting Director of Social Work Services would be responsible for setting levels of service which would apply, in particular where levels of need were assessed as moderate and restriction may need to be placed on service provision.
- eligibility criteria would be applied to all new service users and to existing service users at the point of review

### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.1 Following the decision by Council to implement eligibility criteria, it has been necessary to develop detailed guidance to staff to ensure effective and consistent application of the criteria and to ensure consistent decision-making about the level of service which can be provided, having regard to available resources. A copy of the operational guidance which has been developed is attached (**Appendix 1**). This will be applied as new people are referred to Community Care Services and will also be applied in relation to existing service users as they are reviewed.

3.2 The purpose of eligibility criteria, as indicated above, is to ensure that resources are focussed on those people whose needs are greatest and risks highest. This means that those people who are in receipt of services prior to their review under the new criteria may experience a reduction in service levels. It is important that Elected Members have a clear understanding of the rationale behind such decisions in the event of any concerns raised by any constituents and so it is proposed that a series of briefing will be offered to Elected Members which will include information on how needs are assessed and decision reached about adult social care provision.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

**It is recommended that Members of the Housing and Social Care Committee**

- 4.1 note the Operational Guidance which has been produced in relation to the implementation of the eligibility criteria relating to adult social care services**
- 4.2 note that Members will be provided with an opportunity to receive a detailed briefing on how assessment processes operate within Community Care Services**

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**Acting Director of Social Work Services**

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2010

Contact Officer: Margaret Anderson, 506525

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**