

STOCK-TAKING EXERCISE OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG ACTION TEAMS

Background

1. Ministers have said that they wish to undertake an assessment of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams (ADATs) to ensure that the Executive is obtaining best value from its investment in tackling substance misuse.
2. The stock-taking exercise will build upon existing work already undertaken such as the drugs scoping work by Peter Bates, Chair of NHS Tayside and the work by the Scottish Leadership Foundation who looked at how expertise at a senior level in ADATs could be used to improve performance and financial management and deliver better services.
3. Ministers recognise the valuable work that ADATs have done, and are continuing to do, and anticipate, that by moving ahead now with the stock-taking exercise, they will be in a position to provide greater clarity for the future, and provide ADATs with certainty for facing the challenges which lie ahead.

Terms of reference: key elements

4. The full terms of reference for the stock-taking exercise of ADATs, approved by the Minister for Health and Community Care and the Minister for Justice, are at **Annex A** to this paper. The key elements, and the rationale behind the approach, are set out below.

Best value framework

5. It is intended to use the best value framework, which provides a recognised benchmark, to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of ADATs within the context of continuous improvement. Under this approach ADATs would be required to demonstrate evidence of: commitment and leadership; sound governance at a strategic and operational level; accountability; joint working; sound management of resources and use of review and options appraisal.
6. This will provide a firm evidence base on the capabilities of ADATs and, where appropriate, suggest practical measures - and associated resource implications - that are considered necessary to further develop ADATs to deliver on the Executive's future work programme in relation to drugs and alcohol.

Assessment Team

7. The exercise will be led by undertaken by a small team of professionals with skills, knowledge and experience of best value drawn from local authorities, NHS Scotland and a police force. The Executive is currently in discussions with these organisations about the release of suitably skilled people.

8. This approach will draw on a mix of expertise from the key organisations that are responsible for delivering drugs and alcohol services at a local level.

Timetable

9. The Best Value stock-take is due to begin in late September, taking approximately three months to carry out the detailed fieldwork, with a final report to Ministers in February 2007.

Consultation

10. It is important to ensure that ADATs and their partners, service providers and users, local people and other key stakeholders are fully engaged and consulted in the exercise. The assessment team will spend three months working in the field and there will be opportunities offered to stakeholders to make an input to this exercise.

11. The Executive will also work with the Scottish Association of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams (SAADAT) to provide other opportunities, where appropriate, for ADAT input.

Role of SACDM

12. There is a role for SACDM to provide professional/expert advice to the Executive during the stock-taking exercise, and on the implementation of any recommendations flowing from the exercise.

13. It is proposed that the assessment team will present the preliminary findings from their fieldwork to SACDM in January 2007. SACDM will also be consulted on the final draft report, including a dissemination strategy, before publication. The Executive will also consider, after the exercise is completed, setting up a short-life project group to advise on the implementation of any changes.

14. The Scottish Ministerial Advisory Committee on Alcohol Problems (SMACAP) will be consulted in a similar manner to SACDM.

Conclusion

15. SACDM are asked to note the process and timetable for the ADAT stock-taking exercise.

JD- Safer Communities Division
September 2006

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

1. Ministers are committed to undertake an assessment of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams (ADATs) to ensure that the Executive is obtaining Best Value from our investment in tackling substance misuse. Ministers recognise the valuable work that ADATs have been doing and consider that carrying out the stock take now will re-energise ADATs for the challenges ahead.
2. The Scottish Ministerial Advisory Committee on Alcohol Problems (SMACAP) endorsed draft terms of reference for the alcohol element of the planned stock take at their meeting on 5 September 2005 which are reflected in the current terms.
3. In October 2005, Peter Bates, Chair of NHS Tayside was commissioned by Justice Ministers to provide a snapshot of “where we are now” in terms of delivery on the Executive’s drugs strategy, as a prelude to informing the drugs element of the joint terms of reference for the ADAT stock take. His report set out the key principles needed for a partnership model that would enable it to deliver effectively on funding, accountability and structural commitments.
4. The Scottish Leadership Foundation has also undertaken a series of leadership development events to ADATs across Scotland in the past 3 years to look at how expertise at a senior level could be used to improve performance and financial management and deliver better services. The process of examining ADATs current performance and future capability to deliver Ministers’ priorities in relation to drugs and alcohol will build on this work as well as the work outlined in paragraphs 2 & 3.
5. The stock-taking of ADATs will be taken forward in line with Best Value principles. Current Scottish Executive guidance on Best Value is shown at Annex 1.
6. The stock take will take account of:
 - other partnerships in place at a local level including Community Planning Partnerships, Community Health Partnerships, Community Safety Partnerships and Community Justice Authorities;
 - the Hidden Harm Action Plan and future work commissioned by the Cabinet Delivery Group on Children and Young People focusing on children in substance misusing families;
 - the Alcohol Action Plan;
 - any strategic priorities which Scottish Ministers may set for Scottish Crime and Drug Enforcement Agency (SCDEA) and the ACPOS Drug Strategy;
 - community justice interventions including Drug Treatment Testing Orders, arrest referral, mandatory drug testing for arrestees and arrangements for substance misusing ex-prisoners on release from custody;
 - the development of quality standards for substance misuse services and the inspection of substance misuse services by the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA); and
 - the Regeneration Policy Statement which seeks to regenerate Scotland’s most deprived communities.

Purpose of the best value exercise

7. The purpose of the exercise is to assess the current performance of ADATs and examine their capability to deliver Ministerial priorities on drugs and alcohol (and we will provide the team with information on those priorities) within the framework and against the principles of best value.
8. In doing so, the following should be established:
 - the methods used by ADATs to demonstrate their strategic leadership, vision and direction and how strategic decision-making at a local level is used to inform the identification of priorities, the use of resources and the assessment of their impact at a local level and against national priorities;
 - the mechanisms in place to secure a culture of continuous improvement in relation to key areas such as performance and financial management including those arrangements in place between the Scottish Executive and ADATs; commissioning and service review practices; staff development; and strategic partnership working to achieve shared outcomes for service users and communities;
 - the methods by which ADATs demonstrate improvement in services and outcomes year on year whilst balancing quality and costs with service delivery;
 - best practice demonstrated by ADATs; and
 - the issues which inhibit efficient and effective working within the current ADAT structure and recommendations on the actions that are needed to overcome these.
9. The exercise should provide a firm evidence base to enable the Minister for Justice and Minister for Health and Community Care to take a view on the partnership framework needed to deliver on the Executive's priorities for drugs and alcohol; and – as appropriate - to what extent ADATs should be developed to ensure that they are the most efficient and effective partnership model for taking this work programme forward and the associated resource implications.

Process of conducting the exercise

10. A small specialist team of assessors drawn from amongst Best Value professionals in the National Health Service, Local Authorities and Police will carry out the stock-take.
11. The assessors will be seconded on a temporary basis to the Scottish Executive for the duration of the stock-taking.
12. Audit Scotland will provide independent expert advice on Best Value issues.
13. The assessment team will receive administrative and policy support from Executive officials in the Public Health and Substance Misuse Division, Health Department and the Safer Communities Division and the Analytical Services Division in Justice Department.

Methodology

14. We envisage four stages in the exercise:

- i) Preliminary research - scrutinising background information such as local drug and alcohol strategies, performance management framework, Corporate Action Plans, service protocols etc prior to meeting with the ADATs.
- ii) Fieldwork - in-depth interviews with each ADAT and its partners, including ADAT support staff, service providers (including the voluntary sector) and a sample of service users and local community representatives. The Chair, Vice Chairs and National Development Officers of the Scottish Association of Alcohol and Drug Action Teams (SAADAT) will also be interviewed.
- iii) Full analysis of the fieldwork and desk based information.
- iv) Production of an interim and final report covering paragraphs seven to nine.

Consultation

15. The Scottish Executive will discuss the stock-taking exercise with the Scottish Advisory Committee on Drug Misuse (SACDM) and the Scottish Ministerial Advisory Committee on Alcohol Problems (SMACAP), as appropriate and feed in their views to the team.

Project timescales

16. A timetable for the exercise is as follows:

Task	Date
Terms of reference approved by the Minister for Justice and Minister for Health and Community Care	End August 06
Inform drug and alcohol stakeholders	Late August 06
Assessment team agreed and in place	Late September 06
Desk based work and fieldwork by assessment team	October-December
Interim report to Ministers	Late January 2007
Final report to Ministers	End February 2007
Publication of report	To be decided by Ministers

Safer Communities Division
Justice Department
Scottish Executive
August 2006

Public Health & Substance Misuse Division
Health Department
Scottish Executive
August 2006

BEST VALUE

Scope

1. This paper describes the duty of Best Value in Public Services and contains guidance to Accountable Officers on what their organisations should be able to demonstrate in fulfilment of their Best Value duty to secure continuous improvement in the performance of the organisations' functions.

Key Points

2. Accountable Officers appointed by the Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Administration (PAO) have a specific responsibility to ensure that arrangements have been made to secure Best Value.

3. The Scottish Ministers expect all Accountable Officers to comply with the duty of Best Value placed upon them.

4. The Boards (or equivalents) of constituent parts of the Scottish Administration and other relevant public service organisations have corporate responsibility for promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources by the organisations in accordance with the principles of Best Value.

Background

5. Best Value provides a common framework for continuous improvement in public services in Scotland, and is a key foundation of the Scottish Executive's Public Service Reform agenda. Accountable Officers appointed by the Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Administration (PAO) have a specific responsibility to ensure that arrangements have been made to secure Best Value. The Scottish Ministers expect all Accountable Officers to comply with the duty of Best Value placed upon them. In addition the Boards (or equivalents) of constituent parts of the Scottish Administration and other relevant public service organisations have corporate responsibility for promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources by the organisations in accordance with the principles of Best Value. Under the terms of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 the implementation of the duty of Best Value by relevant public service organisations is subject to scrutiny by the Auditor General for Scotland. Guidance on the implementation of Best Value (see paragraphs 8 to 10 below) has been produced following extensive consultation with Scotland's public service organisations.

The Duty of Best Value

6. The duty of Best Value in Public Services is as follows:

- To make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost; and in making those arrangements and securing that balance,
- To have regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, the equal opportunities requirements, and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

7. There are nine characteristics of Best Value that public service organisations are expected to demonstrate:

- Commitment and Leadership
- Sound Governance at a Strategic and Operational Level
- Accountability
- Sound Management of Resources
- Responsiveness and Consultation
- Use of Review and Options Appraisal
- A Contribution to Sustainable Development
- Equal Opportunities Arrangements
- Joint Working

Implementing the Duty of Best Value

8. [Best Value Guidance to Accountable Officers](#) and [Best Value Secondary Guidance to Accountable Officers](#) is available on the Scottish Executive website. This Guidance provides detail on the characteristics of an organisation that wants to secure Best Value and articulates how each of the individual characteristics work together to support one another.

9. Constituent parts of the Scottish Administration and other relevant public service organisations should be able to demonstrate how they achieve these characteristics. They should also strive for continuous improvement around each characteristic, prioritising where change is necessary and clearly documenting the actions taken. The guidance, rather than specifying the process, is drawn from a philosophy of creating a Best Value regime and, as such, is descriptive rather than prescriptive. Each organisation is free to determine the route by which it intends to achieve Best Value and arrive at the identified goals. It is the outcome of these efforts that matters, and not the detail of the processes. Best Value should be appropriate to, and proportionate to, an organisation's priorities, operating environments and scale / nature of business and should be implemented accordingly.

10. A series of [Toolkits](#) and a [Best Value Self Assessment Questionnaire](#) accompany the Guidance, and public service organisations may find these helpful in securing Best Value.