

2009/2014
Integrated Business Plan

avante®
partnership

Introduction and Background

Avante Partnership is a registered charity and until September 2009 was known as KCHT. The organisation was formed in 1990.

KCHT's core business was the care and support of older people through its registered care homes, supported living and a range of domiciliary and homecare services. KCHT also supported children, young people and families in the community as well people with learning disabilities and other support needs.

The organisation provided a range of different services under a single KCHT brand. These services are primarily focused on the needs of older people through different service offerings including residential care, domiciliary support and supported living. In addition we provide domiciliary support to adults with a range of support needs including those with physical disabilities and mental health support needs. At the other end of the scale, KCHT provided a range of support to children, young people and families.

Following a strategic review in 2008 it was agreed that KCHT should not withdraw from any area of direct service provision it was involved in, but the organisation needed to quickly establish greater clarity through simplifying the presentation of our various offerings and market positioning. It was decided that to achieve this, the organisation needed to maintain and enhance specialisation and organisational clarity at the point of service delivery by the creation separate Operating Companies whilst maximising economies of scale through maintaining a single infrastructure and back office functions through the creation of a 'virtual' group structure. This structure would allow each of the operating companies to establish new and exciting brands to seek sector specific sources of funding, strategic partnerships and new business opportunities.

Establishing Avante Partnership

'Organisation structure and design is crucial to the successful implementation of strategy'

Exploring Corporate Strategy –
Johnson and Scholes

'Organisations should be designed in a way that enables them to achieve their objectives, given the environment they are operating in.'

Designing Effective Organisations –
Goold and Campbell

Underlying Principles and arguably a Number of 'Givens'

- Increasingly there is a preference for social care services to be delivered by 'specialists'; organisations that are seen as experts in a particular field and that can win the confidence of commissioners, individuals and the community.
- Commissioners of services are under increasing pressure to secure better value for money. This will not change for the foreseeable future.
- Commissioners are looking to procure services in different ways.
- There will be significant opportunities for not-for-profit providers in the future, but only those providers who are big enough and innovative enough will be in a position to take full advantage.
- The pressure on service providers to reduce costs, whilst delivering higher quality, will continue into the foreseeable future.
- Large 'super brand' providers will be in the best position to deliver the growing expectations on the third sector as the providers of public services.

Within Avante Partnership, we have established **Avante Care and Support** as our provider of a range of services for adults in Kent, Medway and the London Boroughs of Bexley and Greenwich. The organisation primarily supports older people in registered care homes, sheltered housing schemes and in the community. Avante Care and Support also supports adults with disabilities in the community.

Avante Care and Support provides a wide range of care and support services to adults. These include:

- 19 registered care homes for older people, many of whom have dementia
- Respite support
- Day care for older people including those with dementia
- Domiciliary and homecare
- Management of 15 sheltered housing schemes
- Community support for people with disabilities

Within Avante Partnership, we have established **Stepahead Support** as our provider of support services for children, young people and families

Stepahead Support's primary areas of activity are:

Supporting young people and Independent Living support

This is provided through

- 1-1 support
- Activities and workshops
- Advocacy
- Signposting and referring to other agencies
- Providing supported accommodation
- Homelessness prevention

Family Support - that reduces the likelihood of family breakdown or a young person going into care.

This is provided through

- 1-1 support for the young person
- 1-1 support for parents
- Family mediation
- Informal and formal parenting support
- School clinics
- Homelessness prevention
- Activities and workshops

Avante Care and Support	Turnover in £'000s	No. of residents/service users
Residential care/daycare	23,845	1,329
Community Support	1,903	752
Stepahead Support		
Children, young people and families	1,280	2,240
Total	27,028	4,321

As operating companies within Avante Partnership, Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support have developed their own Business Plans, within which they set out their Vision, Mission and Values that are powerful and uplifting statements of intent that will bind their organisations together and tell the world what they stand for.

For more detailed information about Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support, please refer to their respective Business Plans.

Our Strategic Objectives...

These overarching objectives should be read alongside those agreed by the Operating Boards of Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support. They will be reviewed by the Trustees annually and will be supported by a number of operational Action Plans, targets and strategies.

- Be one of the Sunday Times 100 best companies to work for
- Provide inspiring places for people to live and work in
- Strengthen our financial viability to invest in services

Achieving these objectives at a time of transformational external change, increasing customer demands and expectations against growing competition will require us to think very differently about what we do and how we do it. We will also need to think very differently about the world in which we operate.

To deliver our strategic objectives we must understand and ensure the 'pre-conditions for success' are met. We must...

Establish Organisational Clarity

– we must understand where we are going over the next few years and why. Once we decide, we must share our thinking and plans with our staff, stakeholders and supporters and bring them with us.

Deliver Increasing Efficiency

– we must maximise our resources, drive our costs down and invest in our business systems.



Maintain Good Governance

– we have a strong Board of Trustees and officers must support and enable them to successfully undertake their leadership, scrutiny and monitoring role.

Develop Leaders at every Level

– our success in the future will be built on our middle managers' ability to not just manage their services, but to lead their people and create environments where our staff are motivated, energised and committed.

Deliver Quality and Choice in our services

– we have to understand what our customers of the future really want and provide it.

Establish Effective User and Carer Engagement and Satisfaction

– we must engage those we care for and support, their families and advocates. We must use this engagement to listen to what they want and change and develop what we do to meet their needs, wishes and ambitions.

Maintain our Financial strength

– we may be a 'not for profit' organisation, but we must ensure that we maintain financial discipline and rigour on a shift-by-shift, day-by-day basis.

If we deliver against these pre-conditions, we will give ourselves the best chance of delivering our strategic objectives.

Delivering our Strategic Objectives

Be one of the 'Sunday Times 100 Best Companies to Work for'

The Sunday Times' Best 100 Companies to Work for' list is now established as the nationally recognised benchmark of excellence as an employer for organisations irrespective of size and sector. Hundreds of companies enter each year to gain a position on the list and for Avante Partnership, the journey towards securing a position on the list will be as important as getting on the list itself.

To achieve a position on the 'Best 100' companies list, it will be our staff, through an externally managed and validated survey who will give their views on Avante Partnership and its operating companies as an employer in the key areas of:

- Leadership
- Individual personal growth – how much people feel stretched by their job
- The organisation
- Their manager
- Their team
- Wellbeing
- Fair deal – how happy people are with pay and benefits
- The organisation giving something back – to the community and society

Our success or failure in delivering this strategic objective will be heavily dependent on our ability to develop our managers and Heads of Departments as 'Leaders at Every Level'.

In this increasingly challenging and complex operating environment, our competitive advantage will be built on the skills, knowledge and enthusiasm of our staff and the impact they make in their day-to-day work, in our services and in their dealings with customers and stakeholders.

Our leadership and leadership philosophy will be built on **Trust, Responsibility** and **Accountability**. To achieve this, our leaders will be supported and developed so that they:

- Share our vision and live our values
- Manage with integrity, transparency and honesty
- Create environments, where staff motivate themselves to succeed
- Take responsibility and welcome accountability
- Seek to innovate and continuously improve the services provided to the people we care for and support as their 'internal customers'
- Build and maintain an inclusive working style within and between teams and departments



Provide inspiring places for people to live and work in

Avante Partnership is responsible for providing property management and redevelopment services for Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support. Whilst a number of Avante Care and Support's 19 residential homes and other homes have been modernised and redeveloped we still have much work to do to complete the redevelopment programme in the next five years.

Our primary aim is redevelop our residential homes using all available knowledge and expertise in design and construction, especially in the support of people with dementia. National Minimum Standards set out the requirements for providers and designers of residential care services. These will form the basis of our redevelopment programme with the additional requirements of people with dementia shaping the basic requirements. These will include:

- Providing small-scale living environments within large homes;
- Providing familiar features and a homely style
- Ensuring that there is scope for involving residents in ordinary domestic activities;



- Providing good signage and 'cueing' features, for example, by providing well-lit, inviting entrances to day rooms;
- Designing in additional space for daytime activities

At the same time as we are prioritising the redevelopment of our residential homes portfolio, we will actively seek to develop new and alternative types of housing for older people, including people with dementia. We will look at alternative forms of tenure including housing for sale, shared ownership and rent. This will require the organisation to be prepared to understand and manage a series of a new set of risks. We will actively seek new partnerships with the private, statutory and housing association sectors with the express purpose of bringing in additional capital funding that will allow us to develop these new models.

We understand the importance of the quality of the physical environment in which we ask our staff to work. It will become increasingly important for recruitment and retention that homes and services are places that are light and airy, are easy to clean and maintain and that are places that staff want to work in.



Strengthen our financial viability to invest in services

Avante Partnership is a financially robust organisation. We consistently achieve positive financial performances, exceed our loan covenants and have a strong balance sheet.

Year	2007/08 £'000s	2006/07 £'000s	2005/06 £'000s
Turnover	26,837	26,830	25,874
Net Surplus	887	1,744	1,282
Net Surplus %	3.3	6.5	5
Net Assets	25,596	24,981	22,396



Over the life of this plan, we will conduct a rolling programme of organisational reviews and ask ourselves searching questions about how we maximise our income and how manage our expenditure.

In the early years of this Plan, we will need to invest significant amounts in the organisation's infrastructure, resources and property portfolio in order to ensure we are able to build a firm foundation for the future. In particular, we will need to invest in the following areas:

- The redevelopment of our residential care homes
- Information technology and systems
- Leadership training and development
- Marketing and PR
- Practice development in the care and support of older people with dementia

- Business development
- Organisational development
- Customer relationship management
- Quality and performance management

Each of these areas will be subject to the development of individual strategies, which will be supported by fully costed and prioritised Action Plans.

In order to fund these important areas of investment and ensure we deliver the operating surpluses need to meet our loan covenants, we will need to deliver efficiencies across all operating areas, critically review loss-making services and maintain and increase our income.



Business Development and Growth

Both Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support have set challenging growth targets within their business plans. The Property and Business Development Team within Avante Partnership will provide the technical and financial support required to deliver the growth targets.

Our business development priorities over the next five years will be to:

- Focus on growing Avante Care and Support's core business; specifically providing care and support for older people, increasingly those with dementia. Within this, our priority remains the redevelopment of our existing care home portfolio. We do not intend to proactively develop new residential homes over the life of this plan, but we remain open to opportunities that may arise through externalisation exercises undertaken by local authorities and health.
- Incrementally expand our current geographical coverage.
- Proactively build relationships with existing and new commissioners through successfully responding to tendering opportunities in specific areas and using our local knowledge proactively develop new and innovative service models and proposals that respond to local need.
- Develop more individualised packages of support in line with best practice through our community support service.
- Invest in and increase our organisational understanding of assistive technology for the benefit of our existing and future services and the people we care for and support.

- Recognise our support of people with dementia as Avante Care and Support's key client group and invest accordingly to maximise opportunities to develop new and innovative services to meet the changing needs of this group of people.
- Explore options and possibilities for the development of nursing homes and services.
- Grow the community support business delivered by Avante Care and Support by 30% per annum over years 1-3 of this plan, followed 10% a year in years 4 and 5 of the plan.
- Deliver year-on-year sustainable growth within Stepahead Support.

Avante Partnership and its operating companies is committed to working in partnership with organisations and individuals who share our values. Over the life of this plan will actively seek new and innovative strategic partnerships with the statutory, voluntary and private sector organisations.



Committed to the Environment

During year 1 of this Plan, we will seek to establish a clear policy direction to ensure Avante Partnership and its operating companies plays its part in protecting the environment. We will begin by asking ourselves the following questions:

- How can we reduce our environmental impact dramatically by doing things differently?
- How can we reduce our energy consumption?
- How can we minimise waste from our activities and recycle as much as is possible?

- How can we tap into the passion of the people we care for and support, our people, our customers and those we do business with to make us more environmentally friendly?
- How can we exert a positive environmental influence within our sector through our relationships

By 2012, we will achieve the ISO 14001, environmental management standard to sit alongside our ISO 9001 accreditation.

Marketing and Brand Development

Our marketing and brand development focus during the life of this Plan will be on Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support as the main service delivery vehicles for Avante Partnership. Our reputation will be built on our ability to deliver high quality care and support services and not on the back office functions that will be managed through Avante Partnership.

Why do we need to market Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support?

We need to...

- Understand our 'customers' and what they need from a modern social care provider
- Develop new relationships in order to deliver our strategic objectives
- Use the most effective combination of communication channels to deliver clear, prioritised messages, internally and externally
- Build a strong and consistent brand 'expression' (how we look, what we say, how we say it)
- Raise our profile - people want to work for organisation they've heard of!

The drivers for us to develop marketing and Brand Development strategies?

- We want to support more people
- We want to develop services that meet the changing needs of our 'customers'

- We want to retain existing business
- We want to develop new models of care and support
- We want all staff to understand why we have to market Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support
- We want all staff to have to understand and accept their responsibility to market Avante Care and Support and Stepahead
- We want to raise the profile of Avante Care and Support and Stepahead Support

Our Marketing Challenges

- Understand our strengths and weaknesses
- Understand the opportunities and threats in the various markets within which we operate
- Understand and know the competition
- Build a series of new brands
- Understand and segment our audiences better
- Increase our 'visibility' in the public arena
- Grow net income and improve our margins
- Develop our 'service' and 'support' messages
- Develop and deliver 'leadership at every level'

In year 1 of this Plan we will develop our marketing and brand development strategies. This work will be led by a group of senior managers from across the organisation with the input and support of Trustees who have particular experience and knowledge in this area.

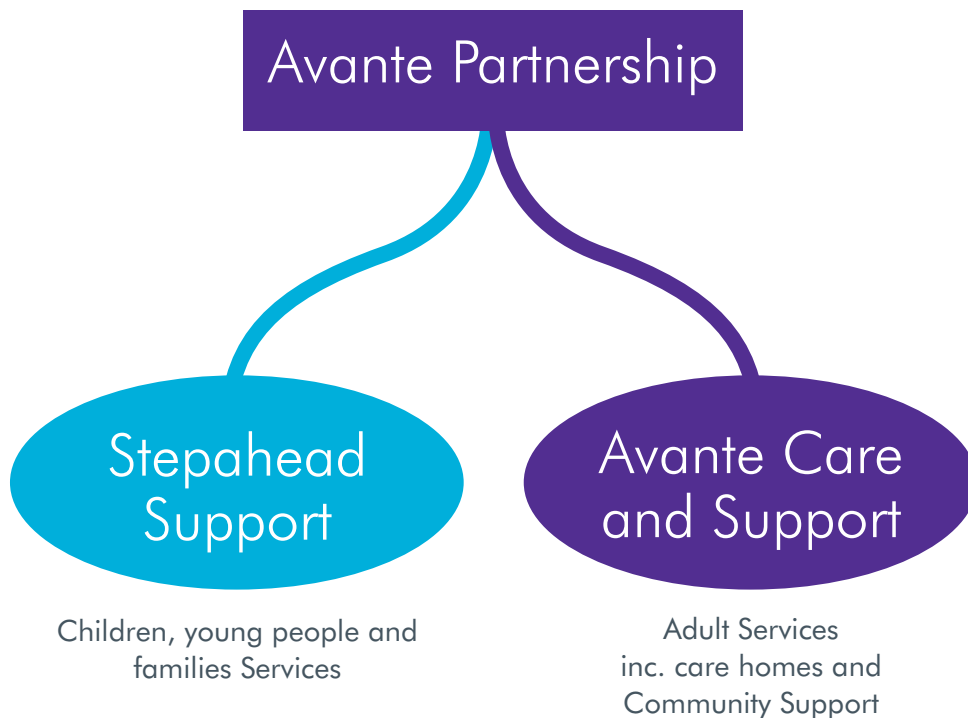
Governance

The Board's responsibilities are:

- To set and monitor strategy
- To set plans and budgets; monitor and review performance
- To set and monitor standards of care
- To ensure the proper governance of the organisation.

Avante Partnership's Management Board is supported by:

- Finance and resources committee
- Avante Care and Support's operating board
- Stepahead Support's operating board



Partnership-wide activities

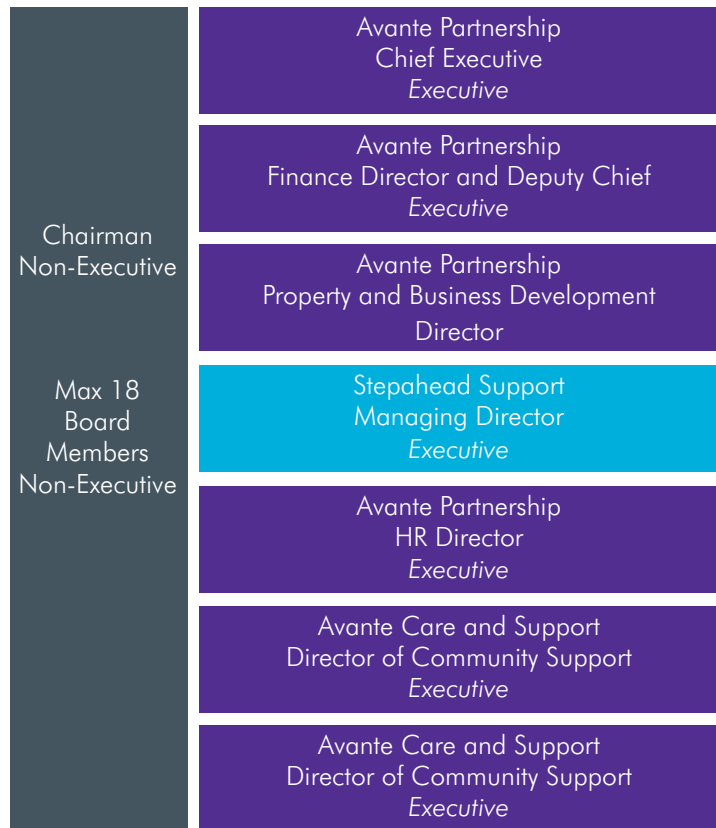
- Financial Services
- Price setting and negotiation
- Quality control and performance monitoring
- Marketing & public relations
- Business development
- Property, maintenance and facilities management
- Strategic planning, policy development

Operating company activities

- Service delivery
- Management of local customer relationship
- Operational planning & delivery
- Resident and service user involvement

Governance and Management Structure

- Max 18 Board members in total (TBC)
- Executive members - group CEO, group FD and group business and property development director plus MD's of four operating companies
- Day- to-day organisational management undertaken by executive
- Board meets 4 times per year including AGM
- Operating company boards and finance and resources committee meet 4 times



Avante Partnership Corporate Functions

Chief Executive
 Partnership Strategy Development Governance
 Internal and external Communication
 Organisational Development

Finance and Resources

- Payments inc. payroll
- Strategic financial planning
- Financial reporting
- Treasury management
- Management accounting
- Financial appraisal
- Internal and external audit
- Information technology
- Procurement
- Risk management
- Company secretarial and legal
- Quality and performance
- Fleet transport management

Property and Business Development

- Option appraisal
- Tendering
- Financial modelling
- Business risk management
- Partnership development
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Service redevelopment and redesign
- Facilities management
- Property and asset management
- PR and marketing



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