
OVERVIEW OF ADULT SERVICES PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under my Adult Services Portfolio :-

a) Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy

The consultation with service users, carers and partners relating to the draft Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy has been concluded. The final document and action plan are now being progressed with a public launch planned for September 2005.

b) Older People's Commissioning Strategy and Physical & Sensory Impairment Commissioning Strategy

Consultation with service users, carers and partners relating to the above draft Commissioning Strategies has commenced.

c) Direct Payments

A "Celebrating Success" event co-ordinated by Darlington Association on Disability took place on 29th June 2005 in relation to the social care Direct Payments service.

d) Deaf and Hearing Impaired public meeting

Engagement with local deaf people continues, with a public meeting held on 15th June 2005 for deaf and hearing impaired members of the community.

e) Daisy Day 2005

A very successful Daisy Day was held for the fifth year in the Market Square on 1st July 2005. Darlington Active Independent and Staying Young is a fun, free event organised by the Warden Service Team each year for the over 50's. More than 20 organisations were represented at the event to provide information on a wide range of issues including health, housing, leisure, exercise, employment, falls advice, home adaptations and benefits advice. As important however was that it was an afternoon of fun, live entertainment and dancing.

2. Since my appointment to Cabinet as Lead Member for adult services on 19th May 2005, I have embarked upon a series of briefings, meetings and visits to staff, offices and establishments to familiarise myself with the services provided. These include the following:

May 2005

a) In May I met with the Assistant Director of Social Services, and her Commissioning Management Team, who explained to me their work areas and responsibilities. I was also given a tour of the offices at Central House, which gave me the opportunity to meet with managers and staff in the department.

b) I was shown the facilities at both Dalkeith House (Extra Care Scheme) and The Gardens (Intermediate Care Services).

June 2005

c) I attended as an observer a joint meeting with the Darlington Learning Disability Service.

d) I met with the Community Mental Health Teams, and saw the mental health service the Council commissions from the voluntary organisation MIND at Hundens Lane.

e) I met with the Assistant Director and her Commissioning Manager for the Learning Disability Service, who briefed me on Darlington's Learning Disability Commissioning Strategy.

f) I visited a number of establishments providing day services for adults with learning disabilities. These included Beck House, Darlington Railway Museum Café, Nubeck Nursery, and Tex Work.

g) I continue to meet regularly with the Assistant Director of Social Services for weekly briefings on service developments.

3. Further visits to staff and services in adult and older people's social care will follow in the coming months as I continue to improve my knowledge of these service areas.

**Councillor Bryan Thistlethwaite
Cabinet Member for Adult Services**