
OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO

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

(a) Visits to Social Services Teams and Establishments

I have continued my visits to Social Services teams and establishments to assist in my understanding of the functions of the Department. Timetables are attached at **Appendix A**.

(b) Meetings with Education and Social Services

I continue to meet with the Cabinet Member for Education and the Directors of the Social Services and Education departments, to continue the development of integrated working between the two departments. This will be particularly important as we begin to understand better the implications of the Children Bill 2004 (please see item 3).

(c) Vane House

On 13th April 2004, I attended the official opening of Vane House by the Mayor of Darlington. This sensory rehabilitation centre is now fully operational and serving the needs of people with a visual and/or hearing impairment. At the official opening, I had the opportunity to speak with these service users.

(d) Tackling Anti Social Behaviour Conference

On 29th April 2004, I attended an event organised by the Darlington Partnership entitled "Tackling Anti Social Behaviour in Darlington" which continues to be one of the main priorities for the Council.

2. **Social Services Developments**

(a) Community Safety Partnership

I am very pleased to announce that our Community Safety Partnership was awarded Beacon Status in April.

The evaluation report is very complimentary about the services, a copy is attached for Members' information at **Appendix B**.

(b) Youth Offending Service

Darlington's Youth Offending Service has been ranked 4th nationally in the Youth Justice Board's league table for Recidivism. This shows that over a period of 3 years, the Service has made substantial progress in reducing reoffending by young people. The league table is attached for Members' information at **Appendix C**.

(c) Fee Level Agreement

The Department has negotiated a 3 year fee level agreement for residential care for older people in Darlington, which links fees paid to quality standards. This improves choice, and quality for those older people in Darlington who can no longer remain independent.

(d) Children's Trust

Darlington's pilot Children's Trust is continuing to develop and now has a shadow Board, terms of reference, and a 3 year action plan. Cabinet received an update on progress in April 2004.

3. **Children Bill 2004**

The Government continues to follow the process, leading the Children Bill 2004 (published on 15th March 2004) into legislation by a proposed date in November this year.

This Bill will have implications for how the Council delivers education and social services for children in the future.

The timetable so far:

March 2004	Children Bill published
April 2004	Integrated Children's Inspection framework announced (in development)
May 2004	Consultation of integrated inspection framework
August 2004	"Next Steps" document – pay and workforce strategy
November 2004	Royal Assent.

Councillor Eleanor Lister
Cabinet Member with Social Services Portfolio

Programme for Cllr Lister
Thursday 22 April 2004

Finance and Performance Department

Time	Schedule
1.30pm – 3.45pm	<p>Welcome – Neville Simpson Councillor Lister visited the following teams at Central House and North Lodge and talked with members of staff about their roles and responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contracts and Review• Client Based Finance• Support Based Finance• CareFirst Project Team• Customer Care and Management Information• Support Services• Training Section• Word Processing Staff

Programme for Cllr Lister
Friday 23 April 2004

Learning Disability and Mental Health Services

Time	Schedule
1.30pm	Met Lynn Dougan – Commissioning Manager at Uppertorpe. Meet with staff and discussed individual roles
2.00pm	Tour of Beck House, Barmpton Lane – met with service users and staff - discussion re future
2.45pm	Visit to The Links, Brinkburn Road – met Service Users and staff Discussed the service being provided
3.30pm	Visited Greenbank Unit and shown respite and long-term care. Met team members and services users
4.15pm	Cllr Lister and Lynn Dougan had discussion where issues were raised such as budget/health/new structure for Learning Disability re: Valuing People agenda

Beacon Council Scheme: Round

**Theme Assessment: Visit**

Council:	Darlington (NE)
Theme applied for:	Crime & Disorder Partnerships

Overall Score: Outstanding (6)/Excellent (5)/ Very good (4)/ Good (3)/Fair (2)/Weak (1)	Outstanding (5)
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Summary assessment:
<p>Darlington is the epitome of true partnership working, with all services housed under one roof and genuine multi agency co-operation taking place on a daily basis. The Police have made a huge commitment to the partnership both in resources and through joint funding and have reorganised so as to have co-terminus boundaries with the council and PCT.</p> <p>Some excellent examples provided of community engagement.</p> <p>The Authority has successfully secured Beacon status (for other themes) on two occasions and is well deserving of the status for Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership.</p>

2. Outline how you meet the six key criteria below (the criteria are explained in more detail in the Application Brochure 2002).

i. Vision & Strategy	Score: Excellent (5)
<p>Strengths: Strong evidence that the Council's strategy is both inward and outward looking with strong links to the Tees Valley's LSP strategy and to the Regional Government offices CRU.</p> <p>Areas for investigation: At the time of the visit the Authority had successfully introduced 65% of its implementation plan. By the time of the February presentations they should be in a position to detail further achievements.</p>	

ii. Consultation	Score: Outstanding (6)
<p>Strengths: Darlington has a relatively small ethnic population so I was impressed with the efforts made to secure ethnic representation and to canvass ethnic opinion. I was equally impressed with their ability to evidence real lessons that had been learnt by the council through this consultation process. For instance the extent to which the Chinese population are suffering abuse from late night revellers, or the cultural issues within the Bengali community which mean that attitudes to domestic violence, for instance, are different to our own.</p> <p>Areas for investigation: None</p>	

iii. Partnerships	Score: Outstanding (6)
<p>Strengths: Darlington is the epitome of true partnership working, with all services housed under one roof and with genuine multi-agency co-operation taking place on a daily basis. They have, in addition taken measures to take the partnership to the communities, through a number of imaginative initiatives, for instance through the</p>	

Beacon Council Scheme: Round

**Theme Assessment: Visit**

use of mobile classrooms.

Areas for investigation: None

iv. Actions**Score: Excellent (5)**

Strengths: Good evidence of frequent monitoring and evaluation of initiatives with larger initiatives independently evaluated by outside evaluators.
Strong procedures to reinforce weekly and monthly updates.
Excellent examples of information sharing between the different agencies, including the use of personal information so as to tackle specific individuals.
Strong evidence regarding the benefits to both the partnership and the police of the joint tasking through the NIM.

Areas for investigation: None

v. Outcomes**Score: Excellent (5)**

Strengths: The partnership has developed a unique, cross organisation model of delivering community safety activity and can through this mechanism demonstrate sustained reductions in crime and disorder and improvements in substance misuse services.

Areas for investigation: None

vi. User & Community Satisfaction**Score: Very Good (4)**

Strengths: The Partnership has a good 'Compliments and Complaints' process to support its commitment to improved customer service. The partnership is represented upon a number of residents groups, watch schemes and tenants groups. The Residents Panel and Victim Support are both represented upon the partnership board.

Areas for investigation: The Council have not to date sought to canvass feedback, through specific questions within their surveys, as to the extent that the community are aware of the work of the CDRP. They do however have a positive media policy etc which should reflect favourably, should they choose to do so.

vii. Dissemination of Good Practice**Score: Excellent (5)**

Strengths: The partnership has a strong relationship with the Tees Valley LSP and the Regional GO CRU and was able to give specific examples of where they are co-operating so as to share their best practice both regionally and nationally. For instance their model for reducing drugs treatment waiting times, piloting the partnership self assessment scheme and working to produce a regional drugs availability survey using data from all three of the regions police forces.

Areas for investigation: none