
OVERVIEW OF ADULT SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Purpose of Report

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

Learning Disabilities

2. There are several key pieces of work underway within Learning Disabilities to modernise and develop services in Darlington. These include work on:
 - (a) Developing a Section 31 Agreement for Partnership working utilising Health Act Flexibilities, due to be implemented in April 2007.
 - (b) Project to develop a supported living model.
 - (c) Project to develop day services within Darlington.
 - (d) Consultation events with service users and carers to inform the development of a new shared commissioning strategy.

Adult Services Senior Managers

3. Maxine Naismith (Operations Manager for Learning Disability and Mental Health) and Bob Parker (Service Development and Integration Manager) started on 2 October. Warren Tweed (Operations Manager for Older and Disabled People) commenced on the 30th of October.

Integration with the PCT

4. Bob Parker is the Project Manager for the Integration Project between DBC and The PCT. The project board is established and is currently working on identifying priorities. This piece of work will include all elements of Adult Services and is expected to take 18 months to two years to complete.

Ward 52 – Darlington Memorial Hospital

5. Following informal notification, without prior consultation, of the plans to close Ward 52 at the Memorial hospital, a range of meetings have been held by The Social Affairs and Health Scrutiny Committee with Acute Trust representatives, including John Saxby, the Trust's Chief Executive, to discuss the rationale behind the closure and the potential impact on Adult Social Care Services.

As a result the closure of the ward was postponed to allow Members to receive more information on the hospital's bed capacity and the decision making process behind the plan.

Several meetings have been instigated by myself and lead officers within Adult Services with Senior Managers and John Saxby, Chief Executive, to ensure more effective communications are in place, so that future planning can be undertaken in a more integrated, whole system basis. As a result regular business meetings have been established with senior representatives from Adult Services, the PCT and The Acute Trust at which a range of issues will be discussed including the ongoing position concerning hospital bed capacity. All organisations involved feel that this will facilitate improved communications.

6. Fee Level Negotiations

Work is progressing with the independent sector to develop a model for future residential care fee levels linked to Quality Standards.

Catering in the Council's Extra Care Schemes

7. The lunch time meals at both Dalkeith House and Oban Court Extra Care housing schemes are proving very successful. Not only are they proving to be a great social event but people are also much healthier and scheme managers are reporting a reduction in the need for medication in some instances.
8. The food provided by Community Services' catering team is of high quality, a main course and pudding together with tea or coffee for £3.25 daily. Residents at each site enjoy a daily lunch and approx 60 visitors weekly regularly call in for lunch. The weekly menu is changed four times yearly to reflect the seasonal changes and in addition catering services will supply party food, buffets and catering for special events as required. The awards achieved for the meal provision include the 'Heartbeat Award' for Healthy Eating, Chartermark and ISO Quality Management System.
9. Christmas Menus has just been released to both Oban and Dalkieth. A three-course lunch with all the festive trimmings is being offered for residents, their families and friends, and where capacity allows the wider older community. The charge is only £6.50 and some of the celebrations include choir singers and nativity plays.

Engagements

10. I have undertaken the following:

- 5 October – Special SAH Scrutiny
- 16 October – Asylum Support Meeting, Newcastle
- 18-20 October – National Adult and Children’s Services Conference, Brighton
- 30 October – Chartermark Assessment, Dalkeith House
- 31 October – Adult Services Staff Meeting
- 31 October – Meeting with Age Concern
- 1 November – Meeting with Mike Ellis, Learning Disability
- 8 November – New Asylum Model Seminar
- 9 November – Meeting with NHS Trust
- 13 November – Meeting with Ken Greenfield, PCT Chair

Councillor Bryan Thistlethwaite
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adult Services