
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. Consultation regarding South Park development undertaken with users, staff, elected members and local residents. All events were undertaken in February/March 2007. The service will meet the needs of adults with complex LD and physical needs, the focus of therapy and interventions will be art therapy, horticulture, sensory therapy and all related tactile interventions/opportunities. Service user group has been identified and their cares met with. This has been via care plans, PCP's and assessed needs.

Mental Health

3. A Social Care Consultant post has been established and is being advertised. It is the first of its kind at this level in the region. The postholder will have senior leadership in field of MH in a health dominated area and have responsibility to promote and champion the social care agenda.

Older Persons

4. A three year homecare strategy is being developed which will focus on recent developments in 'hospital at home' services, assistive technology, end of life care, long term conditions, mental health in old age and intermediate care. The aim is to ensure better integration between primary, secondary and social care, to reduce hospitalisation and to provide more individualised outcome focused care packages for service users, their families and carers that will prove more clinically and cost effective.
5. A successful pilot is underway with 35 service users currently using Telecare. This pilot is being monitored and evaluated and a strategy to mainstream Telecare provision is being developed. The target for March 2008 is to increase Telecare uptake by a further 68 service users. Telecare provision has the ability to reduce the number of avoidable admissions and to delay the uptake of residential/nursing care. It is giving service users increased confidence to remain at home, exercising individual choice and independence, and will very much a central role in the development of the homecare strategy.

People with Disabilities

5. Plans are moving ahead for the opening of a specially adapted flat at Oban Court for people with physical disabilities over the age of 50. There is flexibility about the usage of this flat depending on individual needs - rehabilitation, recuperation or respite care, either with the view to returning home or moving permanently into extra care. There are negotiations underway for a second flat aimed at a younger physically disabled person. It has been identified there is a gap in service provision for people in physical disability under the age of 65 who require residential/nursing care. Individuals cannot currently find suitable accommodation locally within Darlington and the situation needs to be addressed. We intend to do this through a Market Management Strategy (negotiations with local providers to secure this provision).

Wardens

8. During the last few months all Housing Wardens have received refresher training on Vulnerable Adults and as part of the Council's corporate policy, training on Safeguarding for Children. The Warden's Service team like many that work in Housing have regular contact with a broad cross section of the public and it is vital that they are aware of other corporate working issues.
9. Throughout the last year all of the Wardens have been linked to the corporate computer network and can now send and receive emails, many of the practices and procedures have been reviewed and more efficient procedures put in place, for example the monthly audit for health and safety is sent electronically as are for example updates to tenants and service user records and request for service from street scene.
10. As part of our shared working with other members of the CDRP Housing Officers are involved in the project that is looking at Doorstep Crime. This crime is particular prevalent in the older age group. We will be working together to make best use of shared resources and intelligence.

Reopening of Rosemary Court

11. The transformation of Rosemary Court into a state of the art Extracare housing scheme moved a step nearer with the builder Frank Haslam Milan announcing that they will complete work in mid September. They will then be a period of a month when the staff get familiar with the new layout, receive training in the new technology and put practices and procedures in place ready to receive the tenants. There are forty two flats in the scheme; fourteen are Hanover Housing and are specifically for people with mental health problems. (There is a service level agreement with Darlington Borough Council Housing Division to provide all services.) Darlington Housing Division has twenty four flats a small number of tenants are returning and the remainder will be let to people who need Extracare housing and there are four flats which will be used by people in need of intermediate care.
12. The Council's Adult Services team will be providing the onsite twenty four hour care, the Council's catering team will provide the lunchtime hot two course meal and cleaning is provided by the Council's cleaning services.

Engagements

8. I have undertaken the following:

- 4 June – Learning Disability Partnership Board
- 5 June – Cabinet/CMT Development Day
- 11 June – Briefing Meeting with Adult Services Managers
- 27 June - Adult Social Care Staff Briefing
- 10 July – AGM of Citizens Advice Bureau
- 12 July – Special SAH Scrutiny at Dalkeith House
- 13 July – Cabinet/CMT Development Day
- 16 July – AGM of Darlington CVS
- 17 July – Several Briefing Meetings with the Director of Community Services

Councillor Bryan Thistlethwaite
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adult Services