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**OVERVIEW OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform and update Members on progress within Adult Social Care and Housing since the last meeting of Council. The following are the main areas of work under the Portfolio for Adult Services and Housing.

**Adult Social Care –Strategic Commissioning**

2. **Darlington Community Support Network** - A workshop for the third sector and community groups was held on 27<sup>th</sup> February to initiate formal development of a network to support older people and vulnerable people within the community.
3. **Low Level Supported Discharge Scheme** - The pilot with the Red Cross has produced its first performance report indicating that 68 people have benefitted from it and the majority of people have improved with the support and have welcomed the scheme. This is funded through additional social care funding and is not an assessed for service. I have also participated in a video that has been produced by the British Red Cross to demonstrate the work of volunteers and the kind of services that they work in.
4. **Winter Pressure Funding** - This short term funding has been allocated to intensive packages of care to support earlier hospital discharge and additional care management and re-ablement staff. It has also been used to increase capacity in the low level supported discharge scheme.
5. **Review of Carers Services** - This has been carried out to achieve efficiencies in the Council, we are working with the health commissioners on a more joined up approach to ensure carers continue to be identified and supported.

**Adult Social Care -Operational Developments**

6. **Changes to Eligibility Criteria** – Cabinet has revoked its decision made on 22nd November, 2011 in relation to the eligibility criteria and agreed that the packages of those individuals who were affected by the implementation of the policy, and want to return to the previous package, be immediately reinstated, and also agreed that the Director of People be authorised to proceed to consult on a proposal to amend the eligibility criteria with all service users except those in receipt of residential care packages. Operational staff will be undertaking a desktop exercise over a 16 week period following the recent legal advice. Extra staff will be employed to support existing staff to complete this critical work, this is potentially in respect of 1200 cases. Each operational team will have an action plan and an overall plan will ensure that the target date for completion is adhered to.

7. **Self Directed Support** - The percentage of people in Darlington who now have a personal budget, is just under 40 per cent. Staff are following the action plan and regular updates will be given regarding the progress.
8. **Intermediate Care and Reablement** - Work is progressing well to move the Council's Reablement Team to be based at Hundens Lane with their Health colleagues from Intermediate Care. Agreement has been reached for a jointly funded Manager for Intermediate Care/Reablement and we hope to have this person in post by 1st April 2012. This will allow the staff move to take place and for the further development of the service.
9. **Learning Disability In-House Provision** - Work is progressing in terms of the in-house provision for learning disability services. Reviews are being undertaken across Supported Living and Day Services.
10. **Implementation of Carestore – Release of Capital Funds** – Cabinet has agreed the release of £30,623 of Supported Capital Expenditure funding for Improving Information Management in Adult and Children’s Social Care by implementing the Carestore Project.
11. **Transport for Adult Social Care Service Users** – The proposed Adult Social Care Policy for the provision for Adult Social Care Transport for Adult Social Care service users was recently considered and approved by Cabinet.

### **Safeguarding Adults**

12. **Safeguarding Adults Process** - The new process within the Intake Team is being implemented, this approach uses the regionally agreed thresholds for decision making at the point of the alert being received by Darlington Borough Council. This is in its early stages of development.
13. **Serious Case Review** - Work has begun on the Serious Case Review with all of the partner agencies who had involvement in this sad case being represented. The case has been submitted by the Police to the Crown Prosecution Service.
14. **Executive Strategy** - We remain in Executive Strategy with a Local Provider, this is multi agency work including the Provider, Care Quality Commission, Police, Health, Ambulance Service and the Local Authority. The provider has a robust action plan and this will be monitored over the next few weeks prior to a decision being made to reinstate admissions.

### **Housing Services**

15. As part of the Council's Transformation agenda, officers in Housing Services, Building Services, Customer Services and members of the Tenants Board, conducted a review of the responsive repair service. The aim of the review was to streamline the service from a customer’s perspective and deliver efficiencies in the working practices of Customer Services and Building Services, which will then lead to substantial financial efficiencies to Housing Services.

16. **Beadnell Close Heating Systems** - Newly built Council homes at Beadnell Close have had ongoing difficulties with inefficient heating and we have been providing financial contributions towards the heating costs. We are determined to resolve this issue and it seems the likely issue lies with the size of the water cylinder that the Council was advised to install. A larger water cylinder is therefore being installed in one of the properties for a trial period to ensure it solves the problem. Provided this works successfully all properties will have the larger cylinders fitted. Meanwhile we are continuing to support residents and keep them updated until the situation is resolved.
17. Cabinet has recently approved the release of funding for the annual Housing Investment Programme 2012/13 to support the enable works and projects identified.
18. A number of practical measures have recently been implemented to achieve this aim. These measures include:-
  - (a) A text is sent to all tenants the day before their repair appointment to help reduce the number of failed appointments.
  - (b) Officers across the three services can view each others repair IT packages. This has resulted in less 'back office' enquiries regarding the current status of works.
  - (c) Training has been delivered to Customer Services Centre staff to improve repair diagnosis, to identify rechargeable repairs and those which are the tenant's responsibility, as well as the ability to amend appointment times.
  - (d) A number of Schedule of Rates codes have been created to improve initial repair diagnosis.
  - (e) The procedure for recording warranties for gas boilers and electric showers has been reviewed and this will result in warranties being strictly enforced.
  - (f) Performance framework has been developed to measure the effectiveness of changes introduced.

**Councillor V Copeland**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adult Social Care and Housing**