
OVERVIEW OF ADULT SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Purpose of Report

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

Mental Health

2. The implementation of the Amendments 2007 to the Mental Health Act 1983 was successfully put into place on 3rd November 2008. All Approved Social Workers were transitionally trained to Approved Mental Health Practitioner status and there is an ongoing cycle of training under the auspices of the consortium with UNAN.

Learning Disabilities

7. All NHS campus sites have now been closed and the properties have all been transferred to independent provider Dimensions. This was completed in November and was successfully project managed 18 months ahead of the Department of Health schedule for closure.
8. The tender process for learning disability day opportunities has been advertised and the stage 2 evaluation process will commence on the 15 December. There is an expert panel which will decide on the awarding of the tender and an experienced learning disability carer is part of the panel and has received relevant briefings to enable the process to be meaningful.
9. The Action Plan following the Autism Visioning Day has been completed and will be presented to the North East Consortium on Autism.
10. The Making a Difference Group is evolving into a Peoples Parliament at the request and enthusiasm of the service users. This has been facilitated by the Valuing People Now Co-ordinator (nominations were put forward and a formal election week took place on 1 December 2008). This is an exciting initiative and will endeavour to give people with a learning disability strong and influential voices not only in Darlington but within other local authority areas.
11. The development of a Pathway across a range of organisations has been developed and actions to consider how individuals make choices for employment is becoming exciting and embedded. There is a will to develop social enterprises and micro enterprises in terms of people with a learning disability having ownership and sustainable paid employment and we are working with Business North East in formulating achievable businesses owned by service users themselves. To date the service has facilitated the employment of 12 people, this is an increase of 10 over the past few months.

Substance Misuse

12. The Darlington Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy 2008/2011 was launched in September 2008. The aim of the strategy is to make Darlington a safe and healthy place to live by encouraging the safe consumption of alcohol, reducing alcohol related crime and disorder, and improving the health of the people in Darlington.
13. Darlington has been selected to host the North East Alcohol Office, this it is the first of its kind in the country.
14. 42 out of 44 town centre pubs have signed up to Pub Watch, which is higher than the national average. The Alcohol Strategy Implementation Group has run multi agency targetted action weeks and a media publicity campaign plus a Summer Nights campaign to address alcohol related disorder.
15. The Community Alcohol Service will be launched in the New Year, premises have been secured and the team is multi agency in its approach to working with people to manage and reduce hazardous drinking. This service is steered by a management group who meet monthly. This group comprises senior managers from the council, DAAT, NECA and TEWV.

GOLD

16. I attend relevant meetings of GOLD members. In particular I attended a meeting on 13 January 2009 to look at plans for changing the way that GOLD works to allow it to give an even louder voice to older people by taking a more structured but also more focused and less bureaucratic approach to its work. A key proposal is for the development of a GOLD executive group who are able to represent the wider membership to the Older Person's Partnership Board. This group would be responsible for prioritising GOLD's work and helping to ensure the delivery of GOLD's actions within the Older Person's Strategy.

Older Person Partnership Board (OPPB)

17. The Older Person Partnership Board (OPPB) has now been formally set up with the Council Partnership Toolkit being utilised in respect of agreeing a Terms of Reference.
18. It highlights the need for a commitment and determination with all partners in delivering the Older Person 'Later Life Strategy', the main work of the OPPB. It will have a strategic and advisory role and will be crucial in influencing the direction of travel for older adults through the production of strategies and action plans.
19. One of the immediate tasks of the Partnership Board was to appoint a Joint Commission Lead for older people and/or an executive group. Warren Tweed has been appointed as the Joint Commission Lead for older people, and an executive group has been set up. The latter will be assigned with the task of identifying work streams in line with the overarching subheadings in the Later Life Strategy, ie 'valuing older people', and each work stream will have met and begun mapping their current position, taking stock of achievements to date and progress against the action plan. June 2009 work streams will have been set up, identifying milestones and work will have begun on working through and implementing the action plans.

Student of the Queen Elizabeth College

20. A political student from the QE College spent a day shadowing me to gain a greater understanding of local government and how it functions. This included meetings and discussions with Adult Social Care Management Team.

Councillor V Copeland
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adult Services