
OVERVIEW OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

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. Day Opportunities for Older Adults - a tender process is now underway for a new framework contract for day support including people with mild to moderate dementia.
3. The Council is receiving £25k (non- recurrent) through the national dementia strategy for support in Memory Services. A two day Rapid Improvement Workshop run through the Dementia Collaborative reviewed what is available in Darlington with the Voluntary Sector, Health and Social Care Providers and GOLD. The outcome is an agreement to pilot a Dementia Advisor role with the funding, with an agreed process on how this person will be accessed and developed. The Third Sector organisations are also collaborating on the development of Dementia Cafes.
4. The Darlington Dementia Collaborative came to an end in December, and a celebration event was held on 29 November to showcase the collaborative successes. This type of work will carry on with a number of officers being trained in LEAN methodology and supported by Chief Officers.
5. Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council and Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council successfully bid for £60,000 to explore further ways of making efficiencies in the Adult Social Care budgets. The funds will be used to explore how the three authorities can collaborate to deliver savings from joint commissioning, the potential for a streamlined structure, common processes and systems and potentially a reduced accommodation portfolio.
6. Cabinet considered and approved the changes required in order to implement the Government's reform programme for the Blue Badge parking scheme for disabled people. The reforms came into force on 1st January, 2012, which meant that no local authority was able to produce disabled parking badges themselves, but now authorised these to be issued from the new nationally operated Blue badge Improvement Service. The operation of the new arrangements for Blue Badge parking and for disabled parking enforcement will be reviewed during 2012 in consultation with disabled people.

Adult Social Care -Operational Developments

7. Modernising Day Opportunities for People with a Learning Disability - work continues regarding Learning Disability In-House services, reviews are progressing well regarding

the six remaining Day Services, Short Break Stay and Supported Living Services

8. Intermediate Care and Reablement - following the success of the creation of the single point of access at Hundens Lane, plans are progressing very well with regard to the potential co location of Local Authority and Health staff. This will create a multi disciplinary team who deal with Reablement and Intermediate Care, accommodation is being considered at Hundens Lane. Agreement has also been reached for a jointly funded Intermediate Care Co-ordinator, this Manager will have responsibility for staff from across Darlington Borough Council and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. The creation of the single team will ensure that the pathway and experience for individuals is very positive and will include Enablement, Reablement, Lifeline Services, Assistive Technology, Equipment and Intermediate Care. This model also gives access to the wider health services based at Hundens Lane; this includes Therapists and Falls Services.
9. Changes to Eligibility Criteria - the changes to Eligibility Criteria came into place on 5th December 2011, staff have all undertaken training regarding Eligibility Criteria and are working well through the changes. The Severe Disability Premium Disregard was also implemented on 5th December 2011.
10. Self Directed Support - there has been an increase in the number of people receiving a personal budget, the current figure is 37 per cent, a robust action plan is now in place with clear milestones and regular updates will be given regarding progress.

Safeguarding Adults

11. Following the sad death of a lady during the Summer we remain in the Executive Strategy process with regard to a local care home managed by a National provider. The details of this case have been presented to a Sub-Committee of the Adult Safeguarding Board who have recommended that a Serious Case Review is undertaken. Recent meetings have been held with Senior Representatives from the provider which have included the Inspector from the Care Quality Commission and we are optimistic regarding the work being undertaken by the provider within the Darlington area.
12. Positive conclusions have now been reached with regard to two other Executive Strategies with two others remaining within the process.
13. Development work is progressing well with regard to the Safeguarding process within the Intake Team. The Team will be using the regionally agreed thresholds for assisting in decision making regarding Safeguarding Alerts.
14. I attended the Foundation Trust Governing Council on 14th December where I asked questions in relation to the standards of care of the elderly within the Trust's hospitals.

Housing Services

Homelessness Transition Fund

15. A successful bid has been made for Homelessness Transition Fund to support the work of First Stop Darlington with the No Second Night Out policy. The £241,000 grant funding received over three years will enhance the assertive outreach service and will help First Stop work with some very vulnerable and complex people who are well known to many of the statutory and voluntary services. The bid which was supported by the Council, PCT and

NECA who are also funding a specialist mental health post for 10 hours a week. The funding will provide a key support in helping all organisations working with homeless people.

Warm Homes Healthy People

16. The Council in partnership with Age UK Limited and Durham and Darlington PCT have been successful in an application for funding to the Department of Health to help support vulnerable local people during the difficult winter months. The Council secured £31k of funding to provide assistance to vulnerable and elderly residents of Darlington between December 2011 and March 2012. The support will include energy and safety advice on keeping warm during the winter months, provision and delivery of essential supplies when it is unsafe to leave their homes, community transport provided by volunteers to transport vulnerable residents to and from hospital or health centres for appointments, clearing driveways and footpaths of snow, and befriending vulnerable residents through a trained network of volunteers to remove any feeling of isolation. The service complements the HEAT Project work already provided by Age UK with funding from the Council and PCT.

New Affordable Homes

17. The Homes and Communities Agency has recently confirmed that grant funding totalling almost £5m is to be made available to a range of Housing Providers across eleven sites to provide 241 homes in Darlington. There will be a mixture of shared ownership and affordable rented properties of varying sizes. This will make a significant difference to those families and individuals waiting often in difficult circumstances to access affordable homes.

Housing Retrofit Programme 2013 – 2016

18. Cabinet considered and approved the Housing Retrofit Programme 2013 – 2016, where this Council will participate in a new partnership with City of Newcastle Council and other local authority partners and Registered Providers in the North East region, to deliver a pioneering housing retrofit programme, to improve the energy efficiency and insulation levels of homes in Darlington across all sectors.
19. I visited Skerne Park along with Councillor Cyndi Hughes to visit the regeneration project and talked to tenants in relation to the improvements.
20. I also attended a number of budget consultation events where I answered questions in relation to Adult Social Care and Housing.

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