
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. **Commissioning for Resilience** – the Service for People Programme is working on predicative and financial modelling and this has been presented to the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board as a possible joint venture. The aim is to manage the Council budget against growing demand and financial pressures whilst creating community systems to support people.
3. **Learning Disabilities-** The review of Nubeck Nursery is now complete and the proposal is to close the service by the end of 2012. The process for this will be in consultation with service users, carers and staff.
4. **Residential Care Contract** - The current Framework Agreement ends in March 2013. Regular meetings with care home providers are being held and include Health colleagues. A recent decision by the Primary Care Trust should ensure that the care home providers receive more equitable funding for people with Continuing Health Care needs. Providers have been consulted, through questionnaire, regarding the approach to measuring quality standards. The responses have been returned and collated. A cost of care analysis is also in draft format and presented to providers as the basis for negotiation. A Cabinet report will be presented in the autumn.
5. **Direct Payments Service** – this service is in procurement due to the expiry of the current contract.

Adult Social Care -Operational Developments

6. The Responsive Integrated Assessment Care Team (RIACT) is established with Darlington Borough Council staff now settled into Hundens Lane with their health colleagues. A date will be set in the very near future for a formal launch of the service. Early feedback is very positive regarding the model.
7. Following the successful appointment of Christine Forsyth to the jointly funded RIACT Managers post Kal Guram has been appointed to the temporary Intake Team Manager post.
8. Work is underway on the structure within Adults with some changes implemented as from the 1st July. The functions of the Adult operational teams will continue to be Intake, Reablement, Learning Disability Life Stages Model, Mental Health and Adult Assessment and Care Management.

9. Eligibility Criteria - The Draft Eligibility Criteria Policy is being consulted on from the 19 June through to 31 July, 2012. Prior to consultation, two focus groups were held and were attended by local user led organisations and individuals who use our services. The focus groups discussed the proposed policy and looked in detail at the draft self assessment questionnaire. Detailed work has been undertaken on the draft assessment document and the feedback from the focus groups was very positive.
10. Self Directed Support - 995 adults and 79 carers were provided with a personal budget during April 2011 to March 2012, with a further 98 adults and 7 carers being provided with a personal budget since April 2012. At year end this equated to 42.54%.

Safeguarding Adults

11. We have successfully concluded two of the Executive Strategies involving local care home providers, the work of all of the agencies (Care Quality Commission, Police, Health, Care Providers and Darlington Borough Council staff) has been successful in these cases. Lessons that have been identified from these strategies will be shared across the agencies and with the provider forum in order that we can share learning.
12. We remain in Executive Strategy in relation to one other local provider and this work will continue until we are satisfied that the service is safe.
13. The Serious Case Review work is well underway with Authors from each of the agencies involved preparing reports reflecting their involvement in the case. This matter is still being considered by the Crown Prosecution Service and we will receive notification at some point if criminal proceedings are to be implemented.

Growing Older Living in Darlington (GOLD)

14. GOLD have been busy preparing for the Jubilee Tea Dance that took place on 18 July. Members of GOLD have been busy fund-raising for this event through grant applications and individual fundraising activities. This will ensure that the event provides a good with opportunities to have fun and at the same time access information about a range of voluntary groups and healthy lifestyles.
15. Last year, volunteers from the GOLD membership trained and took part in the Gold Standards Framework evaluations of six care homes in Darlington. A number of volunteers are going through the training to enable this work to continue in the current year. This is very valuable work that will support the continued improvement of care in Darlington and helping to cement good working relationships between volunteers, the Local Authority and service providers.

Housing Services

16. **Parkside** - In 2009 the Parkside estate was identified as part of our Asset Management and Business Plan as becoming due for investment. Under normal circumstances this would have been in the form of new heating, rewire and new kitchens and bathrooms. There were however signs that something different was needed. The estate is quite small with approximately 270 Council owned dwellings which included, 156, one bedroom flats which over the past 10 to 15 years had been let to younger people. There had been an increase in voids which were proving difficult to let and the area had seen an increase in anti

social behaviour. The majority of the gardens had high and poorly maintained privet hedges which added to a poor visual impact.

17. The Residents Association carried out a survey to see what concerned residents and this identified a list of issues around the individual property, the environment and the transient nature of the residents. It was agreed that we would pilot the conversion of two flats into a three bedroomed house. This was successful and, following further resident consultation, funding was identified for the regeneration of the area.
18. At a total scheme cost of £3.3million, sixty six flats have been converted into thirty three much needed family houses, giving a better balance to the estate. All of the remaining Council properties have had new kitchens, bathrooms, front doors, insulation and heating and been rewired as necessary. Externally new render, guttering and fencing has been provided and where possible off street parking provided.
19. It is pleasing to report that since January 2012 there has been no anti social behaviour reported, the turnover of the flats has reduced significantly and the number of bids for empty flats has been as high as 50. Some of the tenants of Parkside were so pleased with the improvements they gave a short presentation at the recent Tenant Board Annual General Meeting about how the area had been successfully regenerated and was now a popular place to live.
20. **Benefit Fraud** – A number of successful prosecutions by Darlington Borough Council’s Revenues and Benefits team have recently been publicised in the local press. These include the following cases:
 - (a) Lea Omerod failed to declare a second job working an additional 16 hours per week. She was sentenced to a 2 year Conditional Discharge at Teesside Crown Court, and ordered to pay £300 costs.
 - (b) Alison York said that she was a lone parent, when she was living with her husband who was in employment, and also failed to declare that she owned an additional 3 properties that she rented out. She was sentenced at Newton Aycliffe Magistrates’ Court to complete 50 hours of unpaid work and pay £196 in costs.
 - (c) Sarah Hoehne failed to declare she had returned to full time work and was sentenced at Darlington Magistrates’ Court to a 3 year Conditional Discharge and ordered to pay £30 costs.
 - (d) Lindsey North failed to declare that she was living with her partner who was in employment over a period of several years at addresses in Darlington, Stockton on Tees and Hambleton. The prosecution was brought on behalf of ourselves, the DWP and Hambleton District Council. She was sentenced at Teesside Crown Court to a 12 month community order with supervision from the probation service and a requirement to undertake 30 days unpaid work.
 - (e) Kevin Sievers failed to declare savings of over £80,000. He received a 2 year conditional discharge at Darlington Magistrates’ Court and ordered to pay £186 costs.
21. All of the above were also ordered to repay the overpaid benefit in full to the Council.

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