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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 Social Care and Housing.

**Adult Social Care**

2. Joint working with representatives from the County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust (CDDFT) and colleagues from community services is continuing to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to hospital discharges and reducing delayed transfers of care. Feedback from our colleagues is that the response from the Local Authority is very positive and the working relationships are supportive in terms of achieving the desired outcome. A recent regional event facilitated by Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) and the Local Government Association (LGA) highlighted that the North East authorities perform particularly well in relation to the numbers of delayed transfers of care.
3. A recent review of professionals available to assist with discharge planning highlighted some potential duplication and opportunity for more efficient ways of working. In response to this, those professionals involved in discharge management, including Discharge Management Sisters, Social Workers, Community Matrons, Community Nursing and MacMillan Co-ordinators will now be part of a twice daily Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) which takes place within the hospital. The meetings will be used to identify the most appropriate key worker for individuals who are referred to the Discharge Management Team (usually those individuals with more complex needs) who can then co-ordinate the planning and services that are needed to facilitate a safe and timely discharge. The meetings will be held at 9.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. each day and will include discharge co-ordinator staff from the wards.
4. We know that from our recent work through the Better Care Fund initiatives, MDT working has been very positive and we are keen to use this approach wherever possible, initially we commenced with the monthly MDT's at GP practices, moving onto twice weekly MDT's within the Responsive Integrated Assessment Care Team (RIACT) service and, as mentioned above, also now twice daily MDT's within the hospital. There are plans for the hospital MDT process to be reviewed following the first six weeks of implementation and look at any areas where improvements can be made or where change is required. It is expected that this approach to joint working will ensure the assessment and support provided is appropriate to the

individual need, maintaining their independence and well-being within the community.

5. As a result of staff changes within Adult Social Care, a decision was taken to move the safeguarding adult function from the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub on a temporary basis. The safeguarding function moved on 14 December and the interim arrangements were expected to remain in place until the end of January. However, due to on-going staffing changes, it was necessary to extend the arrangements for a longer period which will now see them in place until May 2016. The function will continue to operate within a multi-agency framework and the importance of partnership working will remain a high priority.
6. Due to the sale of the Arts Centre and changes to staffing, it has been necessary to undertake a review of the Visual Impairment Service. The service had been based at Vane House and the team consisted of two staff members. Individuals would be supported by the staff in relation to a programme of rehabilitation. For some, this would mean accessing the computer and assessment facilities at Vane House. A review has been completed with various options being considered for the future delivery of the service which will support the future vision for Adult Social Care. With this in mind, it is proposed that the service will no longer be 'building based' and work with individuals will take place within the community. It is anticipated that the building will need to be vacated before the summer and work is ongoing to finalise the review, equality impact assessments and engagement with service users.
7. The Care Act implementation continues to be a high priority in relation to operational work. Changes have been made to the charging policies in respect of residential and non-residential services and plans are being made to undertake a period of consultation in respect of the proposed changes. The consultation period is expected to take place over a six week period and should be completed by April with a view to the policy taking effect from the summer of 2016, subject to Cabinet approval. The policy proposes a number of changes, including charging from the start date of non-residential support, the possibility of charging carers for support provided to them, charging for equipment that costs in excess of £1,000, and changes to benefit entitlements as well as setting out clear processes for offering deferred payments. A separate detailed report will be submitted to Cabinet for its consideration.
8. Work continues in relation to the review of the Adult Social Care Assessment and Resource Allocation System. The assessment has been drafted and shared with key stakeholders for their views. This work is also happening in conjunction with the Liquid Logic implementation to ensure the system does not require significant change after the go live date.
9. Following the closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) on 30 June 2015, work has taken place to ensure transition arrangements are in place for those individuals who received support via the fund. The fund offered eligible disabled people financial assistance to support their independence. In Darlington, the current spend is approximately £868,000. The funding transferred to local authorities on 1

July 2015, although the amount was not a ring-fenced grant and further clarity is needed regarding future funding arrangements post 2017.

10. The national transfer strategy was that all ILF recipients were reviewed in the light of their Council's eligibility criteria, which is different from the ILF criteria, and then decisions made regarding continuation of support. It is expected that some individuals may have a reduction in support. A recommendation to Cabinet will propose that the transfer of funding for the financial year 2016/17 and going forward goes into the baseline budget for adult social care and ex-ILF fund users are reassessed annually, as are all other social care users who meet the eligibility criteria. Following the reassessment their care and support the package will be changed accordingly if needed.
11. Work is ongoing currently within Adult Social Care to review the performance management framework. Whilst there are a number of performance indicators that must be reported on as part of the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, the service is keen to ensure it has additional performance monitoring in place to assist with the day-to day-management and oversight of the business and to ensure appropriate quality assurance mechanisms are in place. This work is linked to the implementation of Liquid Logic as the new system needs to be able to meet our requirements and support the service in its operational delivery. A workshop has taken place with Members of the Adults and Housing Scrutiny Committee to provide an overview of the work undertaken to date and the proposals for future performance monitoring.

## **Housing Services**

12. Solar PV installations have recently been completed to around 350 Council owned dwellings on various estates at no cost to the Council or our tenants. This has been achieved by leasing the roofs, on a 20 year lease, which includes free maintenance undertaken by the installation companies. The benefits include increasing energy efficiency of properties and reducing the Council's carbon emissions. Benefits to the tenants include reduced electricity bills (up to 50 per cent saving) which, in turn, provide tenants with more disposable income to be re-invested into the local economy and support our work in helping to alleviate fuel poverty. The potential savings to tenants are estimated to be an average saving of £270 per annum. Due to the Government suspending new applications for Feed-In Tariff (FiT), and the reduction in the tariff, it is no longer financially feasible to carry on with scheme but it has been hugely successful in the short time the scheme was available.
13. Many of our tenants have been impacted by the Welfare Reforms and are experiencing financial hardship and fuel poverty. It is not surprising therefore that energy efficiency is now an increasingly high priority for them and our housing capital programme reflects this. The Solar PV installations therefore complement and supplement the annual programmes of energy efficiency measures. For 2015/16 these include :-
  - (a) £1.3million on central heating upgrades including new condensing boilers;

- (b) £1.1million on new double glazed windows and replacement of old timber external doors with new composite doors; and
  - (c) £250,000 on new PVC doors at various locations
14. The current Housing Asset Management database, Arc Asset, was purchased in the mid 2000's when it was the primary partner of Orchard (the system used by Housing Services to deliver the responsive repairs process). Arc Asset is no longer the primary partner of Orchard and has very limited interfaces with Orchard, as well as very limited functionality. This has resulted in manual processes being used to capture changes to property attributes as a result of responsive repairs and there is no automated interface in place. A number of manual processes were implemented, however, due to the manual nature of this work; the range of repairs which are translated in the asset management database is limited, meaning many changes in property attributes are not captured. As a result, Housing Services is unable to implement electronic stock condition surveys. This has limited the data held to inform future investment plans. We have therefore successfully procured a new Asset Management system from Orchard. Implementation commenced in March 2016 and is expected to be fully functional by the end of the year. The Asset Management Database will be a tool which informs the short, medium and long term business plan by maintaining an accurate record of all property attributes, their condition and estimated remaining life. This will also incorporate Asbestos and Corporate Landlord information. The system will enable electronic Stock Condition Surveys to be carried out and supports mobilisation leading to increased efficiency and an improved customer experience.
15. A new style Members training session in respect of Housing Services was held recently and proved very successful with good attendance rates and positive feedback. Various housing officers were available to provide briefings on a 1-1 basis and at ward level on the following issues :-
- (a) Lifeline Services and Assistive Technology;
  - (b) Housing Options;
  - (c) Asset Management;
  - (d) Housing Management, including Housing Plus and Furnished Tenancies;
  - (e) Customer Engagement; and
  - (f) Income Management
16. I have also attended :-
- (a) the Growing Old in Darlington Annual General Meeting;
  - (b) the Adult's Safeguarding Board;
  - (c) the Ageing Well Task and Finish Group sponsored by ANEC; and
  - (d) the Regional Forces Champion Meeting.

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