

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

18 July 2007

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

Direct Payments and Individualised Budgets

1. The Working Group appointed to look at the key features of Direct Payments, our level of service and planning for the introduction of Individualised Payments, submitted its first report to the Committee.
2. The aim of Direct Payments is to give more flexibility on how services are provided. Used in a variety of ways, such as buying special equipment, spending time away from home, going to a gym, eating out and employing a personal assistant to help with every day tasks and so on they can make an enormous difference to people's lives.
3. Now a mandatory responsibility rather than an option, it is a key indicator of a local authority's performance. We found that take-up figures have increased significantly from last year. However it is probable that other authorities have similarly improved which would mean we remain in the lower quartile. The appointment of a dedicated project officer is helping to maintain and build upon that improved performance and there is every reason to believe the numbers within the County will accelerate.
4. The group has agreed to analyse the challenges and barriers to take-up including a study of whether our systems and processes are as easy to use. This assessment will also involve direct consultation with carers and users.
5. This background will help Members understand the challenges of Self-Directed Care and Individualised Budgets which offer even greater opportunity for individual choice and control. Planning for this new model of services is at a very early stage, and the group looks forward to being involved from the outset.

POPPS Project

6. A Working Group met to consider the Partnership for Older People's Project. One of nineteen first wave pilots across the County, the County Council is testing innovative preventative models with older people over the next two years. The next step for Members is to meet the consultants who are leading on the evaluation.

Older People's Strategy

7. The introduction of the Our Future Lives policy was overseen by a Members' Group with the involvement of key representatives from the voluntary sector, older people's groups in particular. As part of its monitoring and review, the Committee decided to consult Area Committees. The information at these meetings was tailored to reflect local activity. In the main, discussion

focussed on Adult and Social Care issues and developments such as extra care housing. However, bearing in mind the idea behind the strategy is to foster and develop greater corporate and strategic support for older people's issues, it was pleasing to note there has been considerable debate about what all directorates and agencies can do.

8. A view will now be reached on what have been the most telling and important outcomes and compile a statement of how the County Council is doing.

Delivered Meals Service

9. It is right that that the Delivered Meals Service is reflected in the new Strategic Commissioning Strategy. The concept of meals with care is an exciting development and Members welcomed the proposed pilot of such an approach in the Scarborough/Ryedale area. We will examine the progress of this service and the potential for rolling it out to the rest of the county.

SHELAGH MARSHALL

Chairman, Care and Independence Overview & Scrutiny Committee

**County Hall
NORTHALLERTON**

9 July 2007