

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

19 December 2007

Services to Adults with Physical or Sensory Impairment

1. In 2006 the Committee was instrumental in the success of two projects which ran concurrently, the Improvement Review of Services for Adults with Physical or Sensory Impairment and the development of the action plan in response to a Commission for Social Care Inspection in December 2005. These were married in a composite approach to improving services for adults with a physical or sensory impairment. A further year on, the Committee has seen good progress in the three areas it focused upon:
 - Establishment of The North Yorkshire County Council Partnership Board, particularly with increased user involvement.
 - Embedding the social model of disability across the County through the Equalities Working Group and the introduction of the County Council Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.
 - Developing a joined up approach through the multi-agency strategy and action plan on the areas identified by CSCI for improvement.
2. As it is satisfied with the progress made to date, the Committee will leave the action plan for a further year.

Assistive Technology and Telecare

3. In February this year we received a report of a Members Task Group which examined the implementation of Telecare in North Yorkshire. At the time the Group concluded that solid progress in implementing Telecare had been made. Members had seen evidence that Telecare was moving from the margins to mainstream activity, but it was acknowledged there was still some way to go before it could be said that it was fully embedded in Directorate and partnership practice.
4. A recent update highlighted significant progress, particularly on the key themes identified by the Group: Increased partnership working; a strategic commissioning approach; improved intergration and working practices between organisations and the embedding of Telecare into mainstream and care mangement practice. These are all positive signs which the Committee was encouraged to see.

5. However, the implementation of Telecare is a rapidly changing agenda and there is more that the Committee needs to do before an assessment of our current performance can be accurately made. A follow up meeting is therefore to be arranged in January to undertake that detailed evaluation.

Direct Payments and Individualised Budgets

6. The aim of direct payments is to give more flexibility in how services are provided. Direct payments can be used in a variety of ways, such as buying special equipment, spending time away from home, going to a gym, eating out, employing a personal assistant to help with everyday tasks and so on.
7. The Committee has received a report of a working group which has analysed the challenges and barriers to take up and whether our systems and processes are easy to follow. Members matched the conclusions of the comprehensive self-assessment conducted by the Directorate against the results of direct consultation. Members of the Committee had undertaken with users and carers.
8. We decided the Directorate is performing well, but crucially has also correctly identified where areas need further attention. The action plan to address those areas is a thorough one and will result in improved awareness and improved takeup of direct payments generally.
9. Completing this part of the work is helping the Committee understand the challenges of Self Directed Care and Individualised Budgets which offer even greater opportunity for individual choice and control.
10. Planning for this new model of service is at a very early stage and the Committee looks forward to being involved in helping it to take shape.

Review of Single Assessment

11. On periodic occasions the Committee has examined various aspects of the implementation of the Single Assessment Process (SAP). Our attention turned to gauging the effectiveness of SAP implementation from the perspective of users and carers. Two consultation events have now been completed one in Easingwold, on which I have reported earlier, which was very successful and highlighted the good practice being followed. More latterly in Ripon, one to one consultation has been undertaken with residents of Sunny Lodge Extra Care Home. Again the results were positive, however some questions emerged regarding shared practice amongst partner organisations. The Committee will look into this further.
12. On the more general issue of SAP implementation across the County the Committee was pleased to hear that new priorities for the project

were being firmed up through the re-establishment of the SAP Partnership Board.

13. Generally satisfied with progress, the Committee will not return to this aspect until later in the year.

SHELAGH MARSHALL

Chairman, Care & Independence Overview & Scrutiny Committee

County Hall

Northallerton

7 December 2007

Background Documents: Nil