

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

20 February 2008

Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES)

1. Over recent years the Committee has maintained a watching brief over progress in developing an integrated community equipment service across the County. As demand for equipment continues to grow to support the care of individuals in their own homes and enable independent living, it is recognised that the current service model continues to be under pressure to meet increased demand and changing expectations. A more stable ICES model for the whole County is needed and the Committee was therefore pleased to see an action plan which has the following objectives:
 - Clarify governance arrangements
 - Clarify management responsibilities for the service
 - Develop systems to increase efficiency
 - Support development of more effective procurement equipment and standardised stock catalogue
 - Ensure short-term investment to address critical issues
 - Develop an objective plan for investment based upon an equitable split of resources across the County
 - Consider the impact of staff restructure and develop a detailed plan to ensure delivery of service improvement
 - Develop and implement a plan to bring Telecare provision into the system
 - Explore the feasibility for the potential service models available to address a number of current issues across the County.
2. The future therefore for equipment services is brighter than it has been for some time. This is critical because the impact of current and future social care and health policies is anticipated to continue to increase the demand for equipment.
3. The key development as far as the Committee was concerned is the piloting of an outline retail model. This proposes long-term development of the market for disability equipment to the extent that 80% of the equipment will be provided direct from retailers following assessment and prescription by health or local authority staff. This is an exciting development and the Committee has asked to be involved and advised as appropriate.

Centres for Independent Living (CIL)

4. The Government has committed social services authorities that by 2010 each locality will have a user lead organisation modelled on existing Centres for Independent Living. A CIL is a grass roots organisation providing innovative services which allow people to gain choice and control over their lives and achieve full participation in society. Whilst they vary in what they provide, typically they include advice over direct payment support schemes, advocacy and disability equality training.
5. Although they provide support for disabled people in the widest sense, including physical and/or sensory impairment, learning disabilities and mental health problems and to people of all ages, the impetus has tended to come from working age adults with physical and sensory impairment
6. The County is at a very early stage in development and discussions are continuing with representatives of disabled groups in the County. In keeping with the philosophy of CILs the Committee aims to start a project on this topic by receiving a presentation and listening to the views of disability action groups and disability organisations throughout the County.

Access to Services Programme

7. Having received a report of the progress of implementing the Access to Services Agenda the Committee was pleased to appoint representatives to serve on a working group which will undertake a post-implementation review of where we are with the Customer Service Centre and where we are planning to go with developments in face to face contact. The Committee is keen that its interest in respect of social care referrals is properly reflected in the group's scope and terms of reference.

Direct Payments and Individualised Budgets

8. The Committee considered the final report of the Chairman, which reiterated Member confidence that the Directorate is making good progress in improving Direct Payment uptake. It is good that this part of the work has been completed because we will be in a better position to understand the challenges of self-directed care and individualised budgets which offer yet greater opportunity for individual choice and control in people's lives. While planning for this early model is at an early stage the Committee looks forward to being involved and has organised a workshop and seminar for all members of the Committee and interested groups.

Telecare

9. Having completed a report sometime ago on the progress of implementing Telecare across the County, the Task Group returned to the key themes it had identified during the course of its work. All the indications are that together with partners we are quite well ahead of other authorities in the implementation of Telecare. Particularly important for Members was the incorporation of Telecare into the North Yorkshire County Council Commissioning Strategy and Local Agreement. We believe this secures the

future of Telecare within the authority and embeds Telecare into mainstream activity. Signs of culture change within the authority as a result of training and promotional events are quite evident. All the pieces are now in place in terms of care pathways, protocols and operating procedures. From this we concluded that staff are making the cultural change needed and can now customise individual care plans and packages.

10. The Group also saw that every opportunity was being taken to gather and disseminate best practice across the County. Champions for Telecare within the Directorate and at strategic level were having an impact and the inclusion within the Local Area Agreement of specific stretch targets relating to Telecare ensures that efforts were being made on all fronts.
11. Towards the end of the year the group will reconvene to examine Telecare in residential care settings and how we manage the change from a dedicated separate budget for Telecare to it being mainstreamed within Directorate budgets.

Older People's Strategy

12. The Committee has agreed a process whereby we evaluate the continuing impact the Older People's Strategy has in people's lives and in the community. A programme involving Area Committee consultation and more intensive assessment has been agreed. Members will see a greater emphasis on local activity and more involvement of older people's groups in the preparation and presentation of information at Area Committee meetings.

SHELAGH MARSHALL

Chairman, Care & Independence Overview & Scrutiny Committee

County Hall

NORTHALLERTON

8 February 2008

Background Documents: Nil