

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

12 OCTOBER 2011

### CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

***“THE MORE WE UNDERSTAND THE MORE WE CAN HELP”***

#### Dementia

1. Like many members of the Committee I have signed the Dementia Declaration. This is a personal commitment to do all that I can to improve the quality of life for people with Dementia, ensure they have access to services in the community and have the support they need to live well. When local users raised concern at the possible withdrawal of Day Services at Stokesley and across the County at the Hambleton Area Committee, it was without hesitation I accepted the proposal that the Scrutiny Committee look into it.
2. We heard how much local service users value these day services which are provided by the Alzheimer's Society for people with moderate to severe Dementia, jointly funded by the NHS North Yorkshire and York PCT and the County Council.
3. Recent coverage in the press had mistakenly given the impression that the PCT and the Council had agreed with the Alzheimer's Society that further closures of day centres were planned and agreed. The Committee was advised that this was not the case. These services are part of a review throughout the County. The objective is to move to a situation where an equitable service is commissioned which includes the provision of appropriate daytime activities to people at the early to moderate stages of their Dementia. For that reason no guarantees could be given that the existing pattern and provision of day services, which is unique to the Hambleton Area and Richmond could continue.
4. We heard from the two commissioners however that during this current review period existing day services will be maintained at their present level until 31 March 2012. This does mean though that the prior agreement that Bedale Day Centre be closed, will stand.
5. The Committee expressed a strong wish to be kept informed of developments because it needs to reassure itself that the reassessment of individual needs and modernisation of services is being done sympathetically, sensitively and effectively. Together with Group Spokespersons I will keep a weather eye on the continuing discussions between the PCT and the County Council about what services will be commissioned for April 2012 onwards.

### Learning Disability Strategy/Valuing Employment Now

6. A task group has completed its work in relation to Valuing Employment Now which aims to increase the employment opportunities for people with a learning disability. It came forward with proposals which have largely been taken into account in the Learning Disabilities Strategy.
7. At the same meeting we reviewed the new Vision for Social Care in North Yorkshire. Book 1, as it is known, is essentially for all people who use services. We will not be providing the same type of services to people as has been experienced in the past. There will still be an assessment of need but more people will be encouraged to do different things with Personalised Budgets and helped to choose.
8. Further Books have since been published and it is my intention that these will be considered at our forthcoming meeting. Taken together they provide a framework within which we can scrutinise how effective the authority is at supporting people to live independently in the community.

### Extra Care Housing and Regeneration Programme

9. We were pleased to see the proposal on Extra Care received a favourable response from the Executive.
10. The Committee will continue to monitor developments, but at some point intends to look at the provision of extra care residential support for people under the age of 50, especially those with long-term conditions.

### Re-ablement

11. The Committee was encouraged by the progress that has been made in implementing Re-ablement services especially in terms of outcomes and quality of service for individuals.
12. The service is clearly delivering efficiencies but it is acknowledged that more work needs to be done to increase learning disability referrals to the service and uptake of Telecare support.
13. The Committee is pleased that the rollout programme will continue, and intends to return to this topic in the middle of next year.

### Raising awareness on Welfare Benefit

14. It is important we understand the potential impact of the Coalition Government's welfare benefit reform on people we support to live

independently. On Wednesday, 5 October we will therefore examine some of the detail around changed benefits and the pattern of welfare benefits advice across the County.

#### Carer's Strategy

15. In November we will examine the impact and progress of the Carer's Strategy, focussing mainly on the relationship between personalisation and supporting carers. Reassurances will be sought regarding the support for carers who look after individuals with Dementia to ensure it is appropriate and equitable about the County.

#### Independent Care Sector Representation

16. Two voluntary sector representatives currently sit as non-voting members on the Scrutiny Committee. Their term ends with County Council elections in 2013 when an election for two further representatives will be held.
17. The Executive has supported the Committee's suggestion that the independent care sector should be similarly represented because of its key role in the local social care market, its influence in service planning and current trends in social care. Furthermore, the timing is right in view of the recent publication of the North Yorkshire Vision for Social Care, with its emphasis on partnership and plurality, i.e., broadening the market of care services.
18. The Council is asked at its meeting to support this proposal.

County Councillor Tony Hall  
Chairman  
Care and Independence Overview and Scrutiny Committee

County Hall  
Northallerton  
29 September 2011

Background Documents: None