

30 JUNE 2008 COUNCIL
REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND ADULT SOCIAL
SERVICES

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

DAY SERVICE RE-PROVISION

Huntington Road Day Centre closed in May 2008. Currently the Yearsley Bridge Day Centre is providing a service for a small number of more severely disabled people who need access to the hydrotherapy pool. This will continue until the new pool at Oaklands is ready for use.

To enable those who used these day centres to access facilities in the community progress has been made on creating a network of Changing Places in York where disabled adults can be changed in dignity. The first was opened at Acomb Library, the second has opened in Walmgate and a further three are planned.

Working across departments with Leisure many of those who attended Yearsley and HRDC are now able to access the special facilities at Oaklands Sports Centre. Oaklands Sports Centre is the first in the country to gain the Inclusive Fitness Award.

The reprovision of day services has been a major project for the department and I would like to congratulate all staff involved for the professional manner in which they have handled this sensitive issue.

SICKNESS LEVELS

There has been a 30% reduction in the level of the FTE days lost through sickness in the department. This will have a significant impact on our ability to provide services.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The annual survey organised by CSCI, which last year covered equipment services, showed that 96% of customers were satisfied with the equipment or minor adaptation which they had requested. The customer finance team are also to be congratulated on securing £990,000 in benefits for their customers.

We now have nearly 3000 people on the Warden Call service. Telecare has enabled us to install over 250 bogus caller alarms in the homes of vulnerable residents and the £225k provided in the budget for telecare will enable more people to live at home independently.

LONG TERM COMMISSIONING PLAN FOR OLDER PEOPLE

Following the extensive consultation with older people locally and with partners, work is now underway to commission services in line with future needs. The survey confirmed that older people see alternative, accessible housing as a key to their independence as well as support for every day activities. As a first step in

implementing the findings from this survey, it has been agreed to commission an additional handyperson scheme for York through the Supporting People programme.

YORK AND NORTH YORKSHIRE PCT

Work has now started on four joint commissioning projects covering intermediate care and assistive technology, older people with mental health problems, preventative services in the community and support to people with long term health conditions. The PCT have indicated that, subject to their financial position, they will be in a position to invest in new services in 2009/10.

A new emergency card for Carers has been launched. Additionally a new partnership board covering those with a Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment will be established later this year.

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

This is a joint policy statement with health partners and signals, amongst other things, the move to personalise social services. We will be required to offer more people the chance to manage their own individual budget and to commission a range of community support services from which people can select.

COMPUTER SYSTEM REPLACEMENT

The new computer system to replace the old York specific system is now being successfully implemented in phases. There has already been a reduction in the number of paper files and administration and the second phase should see an improvement in terms of management reports and services to customers.

HOUSING

ASSET MANAGEMENT

388 properties have benefited from one or more element of the Tenants Choice programme

352 rewires
339 kitchens
251 bathrooms
135 heating systems

A further 35 heating systems were installed under the Heating Only programme making 170 planned heating systems installed in total. A further 880 boilers were replaced through reactive repairs.

In 2007/08 90% of urgent repairs were completed within Government timescales compared with 83.56% in 2006/07.

STRATEGY AND ENABLING

The Homebuy Plus scheme, developed with Golden Triangle partners, has helped 20 households in York in 07/08 to buy a home. A further 12 households have been assisted through the government Homebuy scheme.

The Golden Triangle Partnership is working up a Mortgage Rescue proposal which it is hoped will offer a flexible package of solutions from short term funding to provide a “breathing space” before homes are voluntarily sold to longer term equity loans that enable households to remain living in their home.

39 affordable family homes will be delivered on the 5th Avenue, Victoria Way, Dane Avenue, Morritt Close and Chapelfields sites and work is already underway.

A partnership with North Yorkshire and York PCT and York Housing Association has developed 8 independent living flats for adults with mental health problems.

Work is progressing on the Private Sector Renewal Strategy with the full report due in the autumn.. This will provide the base line data for future investment and help set priorities.

TENANCY SERVICES

There has been a significant improvement in the void turn round times for empty homes. In 2006/07 the void period averaged 3.55 weeks and in 2007/08 the average void time was 2.77 weeks and is the lowest level this century.

The Tenancy Enforcement team continue to provide an invaluable service in tackling the most serious issues of anti social behaviour in council accommodation. In 2007 they were directly involved in dealing with 67 cases and evicted 21 households for anti social behaviour.

Performance on rent arrears recovery continues to improve. In 2007/08 the rent collected as a % of the debit had improved to 97.86% and the arrears as a % of the debit was at 2.27%. The figure at the end of the financial year was 575k compared with 4 years ago when the debt was in the region of £1.5 million.

The department was successful in its bid for refurbishment works to be carried out for the Travellers Sites with joint funding obtained from GOYH. This work has now been completed with improvements to electric supply, pitch size and refurbishment of utility buildings at Clifton.

Regrettably a Places for Change bid, supported by all political parties and partners. submitted to CLG to provide a foyer type scheme for young homeless 16-17 year olds was unsuccessful.