

# York Older People's Assembly



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14 June 2012

Kathy Clark  
Adults Children's and Education  
City of York Council  
10-12 George Hudson Street  
YORK

Dear Kathy,

York Older People's Assembly welcomes the opportunity to be consulted on the proposed changes to eligibility criteria for Social Care Support. The proposals has been discussed at a full meeting of the Executive Committee on Monday 11 June and clarification has been sought on a number of issues at the Older People's Partnership Board on the 12 June.

In general terms we are disappointed that the Council is proposing to restrict future eligibility to those assessed as being in substantial or critical need. We have consistently argued, supported by extensive research evidence nationally, that low level interventions at modest cost have sustained older people's independence for longer and reduced demand on expensive secondary care in hospital. The recent Joint Strategic Needs Assessment places great emphasis on **prevention** as a theme running through many of its 25 recommendations.

We believe that unless resources are shifted from secondary care into Social Care Support that these proposals whilst being dictated by budgetary pressures on the Council will be entirely counter productive. We urge that immediate negotiations be entered into with the Primary Care Trust the Vale of York Commissioning Group and York NHS Foundation Trust to establish a transfer of resources in the way suggested.

Notwithstanding the above we would want to make the following comments:

- Your absolute assurance that all older people referred to the City Council will continue to be entitled to an initial assessment.
- That the provision of Telecare to existing and potential customers is unaffected by the proposals.
- We seek clarification of the situation where a “care package” consists of elements some of which fall within the substantial or critical category but also include elements which are classified as moderate.

Whilst noting that it is the intention to invest an additional £150k in voluntary sector services we would highlight that currently there are no voluntary sector providers known to us who could provide personal care where that is deemed appropriate. Age (UK) in particular is focussed on providing domestic or practical support to older people.

The priorities identified in the extensive survey conducted in May 2008 relate to “help with shopping and other domestic tasks” and “gardening services” beyond those already adopted as part of the commissioning plans to assist older people to live independently.

Some concerns have been expressed about the voluntary sector being able to respond effectively to more widely scattered village communities falling within the City of York boundaries where instances of support may be isolated or infrequent.

We are reassured that all those currently in the moderate category will be subject of personal contact with them, their carers or relatives before any changes to service provision is put in place.

I am copying this response to Age Concern (UK) and the relevant Cabinet Member.

Yours sincerely,

Bob Towner  
Vice Chair

c.c. Age UK  
Cllr T. Simpson Laing