

Executive Member for Housing & Adult Social Services – Report to Council

There is an annual assessment of **adult social care** by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) . Their report on 2008/9 was published in December 2009. It was a pleasing culmination of the improvement plan approved under the leadership of the previous Executive member Sue Galloway as well as the hard work of the staff and management team that CQC announced that Adult Social Services were “Performing Well” – the second highest rating.

The 3 new Portfolios within Adult Social Services which were in place from the 1st November 2008 provide suitable headings for the Adult Social Care section of my report. Referring to the changes in management structure in its recently published report, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) noted that the department had achieved stronger alignment of senior roles to the changes it needs to make.” Good progress has been achieved in each of these portfolio areas.

Commissioning and Partnerships

There have been a number of specific improvements in stakeholder involvement.

A new Mental Health Modernisation Partnership Board has met for the first time in December. This new Board will have a wider membership and remit than our previous Board, which had no representation from users and carers or the voluntary sector. The Board will bring together commissioners, providers, clinicians and users carers and voluntary sector, to identify priorities for change and improvement, drive the delivery of the local and national strategies, and recommend actions and business cases to commissioning partners. The first annual ‘Open meeting’ of the Board will have been held on January 29th

Valuing People Partnership Board now has an advocacy service to support ‘self advocates’ (customers) and carers groups to feed in ideas, responses and issues to the Task Groups and the main Board. A graphic artist, and use of video recording is helping make information from the Board meetings more accessible. Task groups mean more stakeholders are involved in the detail of the Board’s work. The Board has recently funded a new Specialist Nurse post to be based in York Hospital, to help improve care for people with Learning Disabilities within the hospital.

The Council has funded the CVS to support the development of a User Led Organisation, to lead a **Centre for Independent Living** (CIL)in York. The organisation is now formally constituted and undergoing registration as a charity. It has already begun to take on work within the city. A CIL will give anyone with a disability the opportunity to access advice information and support from a user led perspective, and it harnesses the skills knowledge and experience of those who live with a disability to help others, and to inform agencies in their planning and service development.

The Carers Forum, which was developed in the same way, goes from strength to strength, and is making a real difference in helping to identify carers and to give them a voice.

Older Citizens Advocacy York was assisted in its application for lottery funding to continue its advocacy role for older people in York, and announced at its AGM in July 2009 that the bid had been successful.

All three of the top priorities for older people emerging from the consultation undertaken with the help of voluntary sector partners for the long term commissioning plan for older people, and championed by my predecessor Sue Galloway, have now been implemented.. There are three new services:

- a **signposting and information service**, offering a single point of contact for help for anyone over 50, and this has been provided by Age Concern since last Spring.
- A **handypersons scheme** which offers help with small repairs and household maintenance tasks for vulnerable people. This has been provided by Yorkshire Housing since last Spring and is funded by Supporting People programme and so is free to those on low incomes
- A **footcare service**, which has been given 'start up' funding by the Council and the local GP commissioning group (York Health Group). This service will be provided by Age Concern and was launched in January

The opportunities for **people with learning disabilities** to live more independently are increasing, with new support and accommodation commissioned for people previously living in residential care homes and in long stay hospitals. An additional 52 people have benefited from these programmes, moving from residential or hospital care to supported living accommodation, 19 of these from residential care homes in York.

Assessment and Personalisation

Personalisation is the opportunity for individuals to decide for themselves how to spend the money allocated for their care and to have the option of an individual budget to meet their care needs. It is central to the Government's transformation agenda.

There has been a project plan in place for some time for individuals to be able to take the option of a self-directed support package and an individual budget. The project plan has been coming to fruition steadily through the year and there are currently in excess of 680 people in York receiving a direct payment, which is 11% of adult social care customer population - one of the highest percentage in the region and on course to achieve the Government target of 30% by March 2011.

There is a duty of care to all adults "whose independence and wellbeing is at risk due to abuse or neglect." This is the essence of the department's **safeguarding** work, where there have been significant improvements in the safeguarding systems within the Council.

A new Board was put in place in November 2008 and has a new set of governance arrangements reporting through to the Safer York Partnership Board.

The number of referrals that have been received by the newly formed Initial Assessment and Safeguarding Team (IAST) has increased by over 82% to September 2009 as opposed to the previous year. This trend of assessments appears to be continuing, an indication that there is increasing awareness of the need to report rather than necessarily pointing to an increase in safeguarding incidents.

The Annual Performance Assessment of adult social care by the Care Quality Commission, concluded that the Council was performing "well" on the criterion "promoting dignity and respect" which largely relates to the safeguarding area of the council's work.

The area of Assessment & Personalisation is responsible for most of the national **performance indicators and measurements** within the Directorate and it is pleasing to note that the main indicators were proving particularly challenging are continuing to improve.

These include

- the timeliness of social care assessments (this measures the percentage of people who receive a social care assessment within 28 days) has improved from an outturn in 08/09 of 67% to over 79% this year.
- Carers assessments and reviews have increased significantly since 08/09 (over 4% improvement)

General reviews will have increased significantly since 08/09 (over 6% improvement)

Service Delivery and Transformation

Following the first phase of finding alternative provision for the users of **Yearsley Bridge**, which closed in May 2008, and the opening of the new Hydrotherapy pool at Energise Leisure Centre (formerly Oaklands Leisure Centre) on the 14th December, an end is in sight for the continuing use of the outdated hydrotherapy pool at Yearsley Bridge.

Hydrotherapy is a therapeutic form of exercise in water enabling mobility and movement which might otherwise be restricted. The new pool provides a safe and user-friendly environment for customers with physical and learning disabilities who may be unable to use mainstream swimming pools.

The final transfer from the Newbridge day centre at Yearsley has been made possible by the development of individual day service packages for the majority of the customers which are ready to start from this month.

A newly expanded site at Pine Trees will provide day service for four people.

The **Warden Call service** provided over 2000 individual pieces of call system and telecare equipment during 2009. There are now 579 customers with telecare equipment and a further 93 customers with bogus caller buttons. Smoke Detectors and Carbon monoxide detectors are also offered.

Warden Call are working with both the Safer York Partnership and the Fire Service to promote and respond to home safety issues. If someone has experienced a bogus caller they will be offered a visit from a Community Safety Officer. Fire risk assessments will include consideration of telecare.

We also provide individually tailored packages for more vulnerable customers to address specific risks such as

- Epilepsy sensor
- Fall detector
- Medication dispenser.
- Chair sensor
- Bed sensor.
- Automatic lamp switch – linked to bed sensor
- Enuresis sensor
- Pressure mats
- Temperature extremes sensor
- Motion sensors
- Property exit sensor

Currently approximately 50 people receive a personalised package.

There are also six 'Just Checking' kits. These provide lifestyle monitoring – bringing together a range of information about when someone is active in the home which has been very useful in assessing the needs of people experiencing dementia.

The **Care Quality Commission** has inspected our elderly persons homes and the Care service (formerly known as the EMI and High Dependency Home Care Services) during 2009. Whilst these reports are not yet published by CQC the results show that 2 of our elderly persons homes moved up from adequate to good which now means that there is 1 excellent rated EPH, 6 are rated as good, and 2 as adequate. The Care service has moved up from adequate to now be rated as good.

Housing Services in York received an “excellent 4 out of 4” CPA rating for the financial year 2007/08, which was announced in March 2009 and continues to provide evidence of excellence.

We are leading the development a sub-regional choice-based letting scheme which will bring together 7 local authorities under a single housing register and allocations policy.

We have successfully bid for funding to build the first council houses for York for almost 15 years (21 new family homes will be built: nine two-bed homes and 12 three -bed homes on council-owned land off Lilbourne Drive in Clifton). The properties will be built to the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5, and is one of only a hand full of developments in the country that is being built to this high standard.

Housing Services has set up the innovative YorHome social lettings agency which provides a combination of services so that private landlords can let homes as quickly, efficiently and trouble free as possible to customers who are in housing need and supported by the councils Housing Options Team. This supports the drive to reduce the numbers of tenants in temporary accommodation.

In September 2008 we introduced a new way of dealing with housing advice and homeless application. The new Housing Options Team, working in conjunction with the temporary accommodation team have been working hard to reduce the numbers of applicants living in temporary accommodation. At the beginning of the financial year there was 167 households living in temporary accommodation, with a year end target of 121. At the end of December 2009 the number of households living in temporary accommodation had reduced to 75, well in excess of our year end target.

Significant work has been undertaken in improving the time it takes to re-let empty homes. The average void period is 20 days.(20.08 in November 2009) and rent loss due to voids is down from 1.07% in 2007/08 to 0.33% in September 2009. The reduction in void period means that applicants are re-housed quicker, properties are empty for a shorter period, often resulting in less vandalism & anti-social behaviour which can be associated with empty homes.

We are on target to achieve and exceed the governments decent homes standard, improving properties to the "York Standard" by the end of 2010. During this financial year approximately 246 homes will receive full Tenants Choice modernisation (new kitchen, bathroom, re-wire & central heating), 400 homes will benefit from new central heating & 60 homes (in blocks of flats) will be re-rendered.

As part of the partnership work with the Golden Triangle we have successfully completed a scheme at Fifth Avenue to encourage tenants who are under occupying our own stock to down-sizing to a new built property with an RSL partner, freeing up much needed family homes.

We are leading a national trial with two major paint manufacturers testing new external water based gloss paints on our housing stock.

These have clearly been challenging times for housing, as well in relation to the economic downturn. Housing completions are down resulting in less affordable housing been achieved through the planning system. Nevertheless there have been some notable developments of affordable housing. Last November the Leader officially opened Poppleton Gate House, a York Housing Association project which replaced a building divided into flats with a larger number of mixed flats (14) and town houses (5).

Progress has been maintained in the Discus development, where old Discus bungalows on 3 sites are being replaced by new bungalows and, on the St Ann's site, an extra care facility. Former tenants of the old bungalows have

been able to have a say and keep an eye on developments and have had a choice of styles and materials for the finishing of their new homes. The first homes at St Ann's Court are being handed over to residents this month. There is an event on February 1st to allow interested parties to visit the properties before the residents move in, to which I am sure all members would be welcome to attend.

Work has been proceeding to address fuel poverty through Warm Front and Hot Spots schemes. Over 600 homes have benefited from Energy efficiency grants, funded through both the regional private sector funding and the councils own capital programme.

We have been involved in various measures, through the Golden Triangle Partnership, to address the particular needs of York, and to assist new buyers into the market and to avoid repossessions through the Home Save Mortgage Rescue Scheme. Although the latter has not had the take-up that was expected, 6 homes are expected to have benefited under the scheme within York.

Measures to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping have been enhanced by excellent provision of accommodation and support at Arclight and the new Peasholme Resettlement Centre, the latter opened in November 2009. Following the rejection of a "Places for Change" bid for funding to provide youth accommodation at Ordnance Lane, the outcome of a further bid is awaited. There are also plans to provide a transition to the hoped for new accommodation at Ordnance Lane by bringing together the presently scattered accommodation for young homeless people in York into a single building.