

Cllr Vic Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Services & Housing Key Issues Briefing Note

Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 18th January 2011

1. PUBLIC ISSUES

A Vision for Adult Social Care

Capable Communities and Active Citizens was published in December 2010. The vision promotes alignment and pooling of health and social care funding, extending the roll out of personal budgets and more breaks for carers. A new national outcomes framework for Adult Social Care was published for consultation at the same time. The framework places improving outcomes for individuals at the heart of social care and empowers citizens to hold their councils to account for the services they provide. Together these two documents aim to help us create a more personalised, preventative service. Underpinning the approach is the identification of circa £2bn nationally to support improvement in social care, including social care re-ablement. Plans for the application of these funds are now being drawn up although we are still awaiting further guidance from the DH on the NHS funding element.

The Localism Bill

The Localism Bill was introduced to Parliament on 13th December. The impact is clearly wide ranging but there are some specific implications for housing:

- Councils are required to produce a Tenancy Strategy within 12 months
- RSLs will have an option to introduce a new tenure model known as “affordable rent”
- Councils will have greater power to restrict entry to the housing waiting list
- Councils will be able to discharge their homeless duty through a private sector tenancy, including out of district.
- Tenant Services Authority to be replaced by a statutory committee of the Homes & Communities Agency. Regulator to set a tenancy standard for local landlords.

2. PERFORMANCE

Freedom from Fuel Poverty Project – Final Report

A project to relieve fuel poverty for a number of households living in hard to treat properties in B&NES was commissioned by Housing Services in August 2009. The project was funded by the South West Regional Housing Pot following a successful bidding process and is now complete. The key outcomes have been positive and include fuel bill savings of between £150 and £900 per year and CO² savings of up to 2 tonnes for each of the 18 households taking advantage of the scheme. For more details including an evaluation report of the benefits, costs and problems encountered please contact Chris Mordaunt Housing Services Manager.

Carers

The Carers Give Us a Break Demonstrator Site Project now has 347 members. 57% of members have chosen to access an organised break activity/opportunity 43% have chosen an activity of their own choice. 72% of carers rate the organised activities as very good and 28% as good. No carers have rated the organised activities as

adequate or poor. Carers are asked to rate their overall health and well being before attending an activity/break opportunity through the project and after accessing a break opportunity through the project. Carers report a significant increase in their overall health and well being following attending a break activity.

3. SERVICE DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Mulberry House & Mews

We have commissioned a new mental health support service which incorporates the development of social enterprises by people with mental health problems, and which we anticipate will become a model of excellence. The service offers medium/high need provision with a clear emphasis on recovery and inclusion, which fills a previous gap in provision, Care Co-ordinators are working with individuals to move from higher cost placements to Mulberry, and those that were ready to move on have done so to create space.

Older People's Independent Living Service

A new pilot service for older people and disabled people has been launched. Some were commissioned in November to provide the Independent Living Service to residents across B&NES, regardless of their housing status. This means that for the first time, older or disabled people living in owner-occupied or private rented homes can now take advantage of a wide range of support services that enable them to remain independent. The service has been in operation since 1 January and is already reporting positive feedback from its first customers. It takes an innovative, person centred approach and is being watched by many others in the sector wishing to include people traditionally excluded from services because they don't live in sheltered housing.

Services for Homeless People

Homelessness Services form 14% of Supporting People & Communities Funding spend in 2010/11 (£1,074,600). The planned savings target in support of the Adult Social Care & Housing Medium Term Service & Resource Plan will reduce this by only 2% to £859,680. Services commissioned through this funding include supported housing, floating support, outreach, night shelter, deposit bond scheme, community activities and training. In addition a range of services commissioned that can be accessed by homeless people as well as people with other housing and support needs contribute to the overall provision for homeless people.

Project Search Update

Project Search, which the Panel may recall is in its second year at the Royal United Hospital (see page 10. of the RUH newsletter ruh.nhs.uk/insight/winter_2010), is now also up and running in the Council. Project Search works on the basis of a partnership between a college (Norton Radstock), supported employment provider (Remploy) and an employer (in this instance B&NES Council) who run an academic year programme of work, training students via a series of work placements in a host employer organisation. Setting up the programme in the Council has been ongoing for the past year and finally six students, with moderate learning difficulties or autism, started on Monday 10th January and will have a three week induction before going into the work place in Riverside.