

Thank you Chair.

I am the Chair of Somerset Care & Repair which includes B&NES Care and Repair. We have worked successfully on several projects in B&NES since taking on the HIA contract on 28th August 2009.

One of these contracts was the Handyperson Services & Minor Adaptations (Hospital Discharge) Extended Research Project. This was a pilot project that was tendered in 2011 under the reablement funding made available from Central Government. It was awarded to us, despite stiff opposition, in part due to the success of our HIA work within B&NES. The pilot was extended several times until the end of March 2016. After a retendering exercise it was then awarded to West of England Care and Repair.

I must stress that we have been told that B&NES has complied with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 in awarding this contract to West of England Care and Repair and that I am not challenging that decision.

I believe that, in its Scrutiny role, this panel is able to investigate the actions of this Council to ensure that this Council learns from its mistakes and thus ensure that, in future, it uses its resources more efficiently.

My concerns arise from our work on the above project which aimed to reduce the expensive and unnecessary bed blocking in Bath hospitals.

I believe that this panel should investigate three issues:

1: A pilot project is designed to evaluate a given approach to determine what worked well, what could be improved and assess the likely costs and benefits so that a proper tender document can be produced for subsequent work.

Why was there was no such evaluation for this pilot before it was retendered?

2: In 2015 we received a memo stating "I notice that you receive an annual grant from B&NES/CCG, however I have been unable to locate any further information regarding these monies."

How is it possible for B&NES to pay money to a contractor without knowing why?

3: In December last year an email was sent stating that the above contract would be extended from 31/03/2016 and when we received this we planned the use of our resources based on that extension. In February we were informed that the contract with us would be terminated.

Could this Panel provide effective guidelines for real partnership working at B&NES so that B&NES resources and the resources of their partners are used effectively?

If you would like any further information I would be happy to meet any panel members at any time. In addition, I would like to invite all of you to visit our offices in Shepton Mallet where you can see our Independent Living Showroom and hear about what we are doing to help people live independent and fulfilling lives through our HIA work and through work to return empty properties to use in the rest of Somerset. We would also be able to discuss the very successful work that we have done in B&NES. I would also be able to explain why it has taken five months to be able to present these concerns to a public meeting at B&NES.