

Report



meeting

COUNTY COUNCIL

date

16th December 2004

agenda item number

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR SOCIAL SERVICES

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES IN SOCIAL SERVICES

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 I am pleased to present the key issues and activities as Portfolio Holder for Social Services, since my last report to Council.

2. Key Issues and Activities

2.1 Supporting People Five Year Strategy

2.1.1 The Commissioning Body of the Supporting People Partnership in Nottinghamshire, which I chair, will be considering the draft five year strategy for Supporting People in the county at its meeting on December 6th. This is a very important document which sets the basis for priorities in the spending of the Supporting People Grant. It links together with the related strategies of the County Council, Districts, Primary Care Trusts and Probation and reflects the importance of housing-related support in all our work. The Strategy has to be approved by all the organisations in the partnership and returned to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister by the end of March. It will, therefore, be coming to the County Council Cabinet in March after it has been approved by all other partners.

2.1.2 The development of this strategy has been limited by the Government's review of the funding to Supporting People. The Government has been clear that it has been concerned to contain the spending nationally on Supporting People services. At the end of November the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) announced the allocation of £1.715 billion Supporting People grant in England for 2005/06. This is a 5% reduction on the £1.805 billion for 2004/05. For Nottinghamshire, the allocation for next year is reduced by 5.26% from £27,846,560 to £26,382,139. For all Authorities, this is a cash reduction, with no inflation increase, so the real terms reduction is well over 7%.

2.1.3 The Government has previously announced that around £1.7 billion will be available for 2006/07 and 2007/08. Although the earlier commitment from the ODPM was that 3 year funding for each Authority would be announced at the same time as next year's funding, this has not yet happened. A funding formula is being worked on and early indications are that this may lead to further significant reductions for Nottinghamshire (and many other Authorities). This is a matter of great concern, as the local strategy identifies several areas of need for new or improved housing related support services, whereas this allocation gives the need to reduce services. The Commissioning Body and this Authority with its administrative lead will therefore have a challenge in using the strategy to reshape services in such a financial context.

2.2 Work of the Valuing People Learning Disability Partnership Board

2.2.1 The 4th year of the Learning Disability Partnership Board has been a busy one. Meetings are now held 6 times per year. Five service users are members, with others feeding their views via a reference group.

2.2.2 The Board has overseen the development of many key strategies including: communication, Person Centred Planning, quality assurance, day service modernisation and Health Action Plans. It is hoped that pressure from the Board will lead to the development of a dysphagia service in North Nottinghamshire. The Board has allocated some funds to set up an older carer's service, also in North Nottinghamshire.

2.2.3 Representation from partner organisations has been generally good. The role of the Partnership Board Access Officer has been universally appreciated and has enabled serious work to be undertaken in an enjoyable way. The open day we held at County Hall was a resounding success and it was great to see so many service users come to find out more about the Board.

2.3 Beacon Open Day – Services to Older People – 2nd December 2004

2.3.1 Nottinghamshire County Council was awarded Beacon status by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in April, 2004. Our Beacon year runs until the end of June 2005. The award is very much an award that recognises our history of partnership working across the county and our work directly with older people (by older people this meant people aged 50 and over).

2.3.2 The Key points of our Beacon are:

- Older people are citizens with a wide range of aspirations and needs. Through our countywide older people's partnership, we have begun to change the stereotypical view that older people are primarily recipients of health and social care services. Older people make a huge contribution to their communities.

- We have developed a strategic approach to begin to join up services that are relevant to the needs of older people, covering health, social care, transport, lifelong learning, leisure, income and social activities.

2.3.3 I chaired the Beacon Open Day as part of my role as NCC Champion for Older People and Cabinet Member for Social Services. The audience included representatives from:

- Local Authorities from the UK
- Government Departments
- The Improvement and Development Agency
- Older People from Nottinghamshire and the East Midlands
- Key partners agencies
- Elected Members of NCC and
- Senior Officers of NCC

2.3.4 The purpose of the open day was to share experience and learning from the work we have done on partnership working across the County Council Departments and with our partners in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors and older people within our communities in Nottinghamshire.

2.3.5 The day focused on some of the areas of joint work that make us different and innovative. We shared the things that have been difficult and the successes over the past two years in particular.

2.3.6 The day gave us the opportunity not only to share **our** learning but also to learn from the experience of others.

2.3.7 The day was a mixture of:

- **Presentations**

- Making a difference – looking inwards and looking outwards
- The promotion of Independence for older people – using best value as a lever for change.

- **Workshops**

- The mature workforce
- Older people are the solution and not the problem
- Involve – arts in social care
- Towards a link-age network of services
- Developing a rural third age – showcasing a rural model
- Resource centre for older people
- Developing a strategy with older people and partner agencies.

- **Market Place of initiatives**
 - Nottinghamshire Rural Community Council, including Bassetlaw Befriending project and the Retford Resource Centre for Older People
 - Older People's Forums in Nottinghamshire
 - Nottinghamshire Community Strategy
 - Senior Peer Mentoring
 - Supporting People
 - Involve arts in social care.

COUNCILLOR DICK ANTHONY
Cabinet Member for Social Services

(COMM-MISC) CC23 / VS