

APPENDIX 1

DELEGATED

AGENDA NO.

REPORT TO CABINET

17th February 2000

**REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

HOMES FOR LIFE - IMPLEMENTING OUR STRATEGY TO PROMOTE THE INDEPENDENCE OF OLDER PEOPLE IN STOCKTON ON TEES

SUMMARY

This report proposes a framework and action plan to implement a vision for older people in Stockton to promote their independence and quality of life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet Members are asked :

- a) Support, in principle, the strategy outlined in this report.
- b) Agree the development of a Project Plan.
- c) Make a decision as to closures/developments informed by a wide consultation process.
- d) Ensure that existing future service users, their carers and staff are enabled to contribute their views.

DETAIL

1. In August 1999 the Social Services Committee and Housing Committee agreed a strategy to promote independence for older people in Stockton by developing a range of community based resources to maintain people in their own homes as an alternative to residential care.
2. That report is attached as Appendix 1, and highlights that in Stockton we know:

- The number of older people is increasing;
 - People will live longer and will require increased support.
 - People value their independence for as long as possible.
3. We also know that across the Borough there is over-provision of sheltered housing, residential and nursing home beds, both in the public and independent sector. The Local Authority currently has six elderly people's homes and nine sheltered housing blocks which are difficult to let or of a poor standard. Substantial capital involvement is required to ensure they meet rising national standards and public expectations, and there remains a real cost differential with the independent sector.
 4. A range of options have been considered over the last two years leading to the development of our agreed strategy. We do not want to take a short-term, financially led approach of service reduction, closures or transfers. Our aim is to provide a best value, flexible infrastructure for older people well into the new century. This will be achieved by releasing resources tied up in institutional care, attracting new resources and developing extended care schemes to rationalise sheltered housing. This will be an incremental process requiring the detailing of short, medium and long-term objectives.
 5. A Multi Agency Implementation Steering Group has been established and has received information from a variety of other authorities, specialist consultants and providers. A Vision Statement has been produced, proposing a framework for the agreed strategy, and this attached as Appendix 2. A Project Manager has been seconded to lead the initiative and develop a Project Team, reporting to the Implementation Steering Group. This has been partly funded by the agreed corporate revenue bid.

IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

6. We now need to set out a clear action plan and timetable to implement this vision. This will require a great deal of detailed work, consultation and partnership working.
7. The impact of this initiative on those who currently use our services, our staff, and those who may use services in the future is significant, and we want to plan very carefully to minimise disruption and concerns, whilst managing the changes positively and transparently. The financial position for the authority does provide a time imperative, we cannot sustain the status quo indefinitely, so we are aiming to balance this within an inclusive, managed timetable.

8. The first step is to begin specific consultation on the closure of two elderly people homes in 2000. It is proposed that the first one would be Redhill House at Roseworth for the following reasons:

- The building requires substantial investment to meet national and local standards, and raised public expectations.
- Despite a reduction to 35 permanent beds, there are still 3 vacancies currently, with no waiting list for admission.
- There is the potential for a range of alternative use for the building.
- There is another local authority residential home in the area.
- There is potentially a viable alternative independent residential establishment very close, which could take current residents.
- It has the smallest staffing group and redeployment viable within existing service.

9. The second home proposed is Stirling House, Thornaby, for the following reasons:

- The building requires substantial investment to meet national and local standards, and raised public expectations.
- Despite a reduction from 46 to 35 permanent beds there are still 4 vacancies with no waiting list for admission.
- It has a relatively small staffing group.
- The establishment has been under-utilised for many years and has an unpopular image with elderly people.
- It has a strategic geographical position surrounded by a large car park with the potential for future developments.
- There is another local authority residential home in the area.

This will create resources to develop the first locally based resource centre, offering an increased range of community based multi-agency services.

10. Subject to Cabinet agreement we will work very closely with residents, their families, staff, Unions and our partners to offer a positive alternative for all individuals who will be directly affected by those changes. Whilst continuing to ensure the provision of direct care and also employment for current staff, work needs to be undertaken to develop new services and new partnerships.

CONCLUSIONS

11. We are at the beginning of a long, but exciting process to fundamentally change how we can support citizens in Stockton as they move towards old age.

The proposed framework and timetable requires extensive consultation and at times hard decisions, but it will deliver a modern, flexible service to meet the requirements and the challenges ahead.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As detailed in Appendix 3.

POLICY CONTENT

The vision to promote independence for older people in Stockton reflects the Community Plan policy platforms to improve health, promote the safety and well-being of the community and improve opportunities for life long learning.

Ann Baxter

Director of Social Services

Contact Officer Ann Baxter

Telephone No. 393300 and Email Address Ann.Baxter@Stockton-bc.gov.uk

Environmental Implications	None
Community Safety Implications	None
Background Papers	Social Services Committee 2nd August 1999 A Homes for Life Strategy
Education Related Item?	No
Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:	All