

## SCRUTINY REVIEW OF REABLEMENT SERVICE

### Summary

The fourth evidence-gathering session for the Committee's review of Reablement Service will consider feedback from the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) delivery partner, Peopletoo in relation to the findings of its review of local reablement provision as part of the ongoing SBC *Powering Our Future*-related work.

### Detail

1. In January 2024, SBC announced plans to improve outcomes for residents via a new *Powering Our Future* programme.

<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/12669/Council-sets-out-Powering-our-Future-plans-to-improve-outcomes-for-residents>

2. The *Powering Our Future* initiative involved a range of transformation reviews, one of which focused on supporting people to live independently. As part of this work, the Council were exploring what reablement services need to provide to support a broader range of people from local communities and have sought to understand:
  - Who / what is the optimum population SBC could expand its reablement service to?
  - What is the most efficient model to deliver the new service?
  - What size / type of reablement service would be needed to make a positive impact on people with a learning disability / autism / mental health needs?
  - What would be the most effective method of delivering the service to people with a learning disability / autism / mental health needs?
  - How can SBC ensure people receive the right packages of support at the point of hospital discharge?
3. In 2024, SBC commissioned Peopletoo (<https://peopletoo.co.uk/>) to assist the Council in assessing the impact of current ways of working and analyse the best model for continuing to support people to maximise their independence. Peopletoo have recently completed their work and have been invited to share their findings with the Committee.

A presentation has been prepared and is attached. Representatives from Peopletoo are scheduled to be in attendance to provide a summary and address any subsequent Member comments / questions.

4. In related matters, the recently published County Durham Care Partnership newsletter for winter 2024-2025 includes an update on reablement services in that area.

[https://www.cdcarepartnership.co.uk/application/files/7117/3634/4616/CDCP\\_Partnership\\_Newsletter\\_Winter\\_25.pdf](https://www.cdcarepartnership.co.uk/application/files/7117/3634/4616/CDCP_Partnership_Newsletter_Winter_25.pdf)

This followed an evaluation of the current reablement service in County Durham which was carried out by Peopletoo – see the following pages:



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## Reablement Update

Colleagues in the Integrated Strategic Commissioning Team have been developing a new model for reablement after identifying that the current service needed modernising and increased capacity.

Reablement is a short-term service that helps people regain their independence and confidence after an illness, injury, or hospital stay. Often this involves a type of care that helps people relearn how to do daily activities, like cooking meals and washing.

An evaluation of the current reablement service in County Durham was carried out by Peopletoo, an independent organisation that specialised in supporting health and care organisations to design and implement services. This work included a period of system-wide engagement, which included service users, operational teams, hospital discharge teams, commissioners, providers, therapists and community services. Following this a proposal for a new reablement service has been developed by the Integrated Strategic Commissioning Team based on all the findings.

The new model will be introduced with a phased approach from January and will run through to the end of March 2026. This will allow the new service to be developed incrementally over a period of time, with engagement with stakeholders and service users as needed.

### Key elements

The new model consists of eight key elements, with the first being the adoption of a zoned approach to service delivery. This focusses on three zoned areas where demand has exceeded the current provider capacity:

- Peterlee and Seaham,
- Barnard Castle and Teesdale
- Chester le Street and Sacriston

The aim is to increase capacity by establishing one new provider of reablement per zone with approaches made to existing providers of support and assistance to people in their own homes (domiciliary care) in these zones. Currently all reablement across County Durham is provided by the Human Support Group (HSG). With new providers and additional capacity in place across these 3 zones from 6 January 2025 HSG will continue to provide reablement for the rest of the zones in the county. Weekly mobilisation meetings have been held to drive the work forward.

Support will be made available to help the new providers transition into provision of reablement care as needed, with additional training and support through the County Durham Care Academy and professionals working in this area.







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**Outcome based** - the second element of the new model is to move towards outcome-based commissioning rather than time and task and with the ability to flex up and down packages. This means trialling a new approach paying per reablement episode and closely tracking key performance indicators. We have co-produced a 'goal plan' for provider staff to use to track service user progress.

**Out of hours support** - the third element will introduce a move to the referrals for reablement only in office hours. Generally, the out of hours element of the reablement service sees low levels of activity disproportionate to the costs of running an out of hours service. In the new service model this process has been simplified with the Short Term Assistance Service (STAS) being expanded to cover any non-complex, out of hours care at home. This change in arrangements has now been implemented.

**Trusted Assessment** - the fourth element will see the introduction of trusted assessment for non-complex equipment requirements, such as a commodes or shower stools, which will help reduce unnecessary handoffs to health and social care professionals for additional assessments. Reablement staff will be able to order simpler pieces of equipment directly from Medequip as a Trusted Assessor.

**Greater use of Technology** - the new model will see technology enabled care embedded into Reablement. This includes activities of daily living monitoring system that can help social care professionals complete objective and evidence-based assessments. This will help people to receive the right level of care and support at the end of the reablement episode. Work on the tender documentation is underway.

**Wraparound therapy support** – the new model will include further development of wraparound therapy support for reablement at home. Some early conversations have taken place with CDDFT to look at how best to embed additional therapy support during reablement.

**Wider support** – work to strengthening support available following reablement support and improved methods for referring into other services, such as VCS, Social prescribing link workers, Wellbeing for Life. Building this resilience help prevent people returning to reablement.

To implement the new reablement model a multi-agency reablement steering group has been set up and a Provider Forum for those providing reablement services will also be established once the services go live.

## New providers visit the Independent Living House

Three of the new providers of reablement, Dale Care, Supportive and Embracing Care met staff from the Equipment Advice Service and adult care staff at the Independent Living House in Spennymoor.

The providers were able to view some of the equipment that can help people with disabilities or mobility issues as part of their reablement support.

Pictured above left to right: Hazel Bainbridge (Dale Care), Hayley Haswell (Embracing Care), Marie Tempest (Durham County Council), Kim Proud (Embracing Care).

5. A copy of the agreed scope and plan for the Committee's review is included for information.

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