

Update on Independent Living

Portfolio	Community
Ward(s) Affected:	n/a

Purpose

To provide a progress report on independent living in the borough.

Background

1. The Council provides a range of Community Services (Day Care, Community Alarm / Tele care, Meals at Home, Community Transport and Home adaptations) to older and vulnerable people living within the Borough; with the overall aim of being to enable individuals to remain at home independently and safely for as long as possible.

Current Position

2. Windle Valley Centre
 - a. A Saturday Club has been running as a pilot in the Windle Valley Centre since 20th February 2014. The club offers stimulating activities; advice; friendship; and light refreshments for older people and their carers. The club is self-financing with approximately 20 people attending every Saturday between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.
 - b. A well-being centre has been built as an extension to the Windle Valley Centre, with funding from Surrey County Council. The centre was formally opened by the RT Hon Michael Gove MP on 17th July 2015. It provides an information and advice service to carers and the cared for. The organisations which currently hold sessions in the centre include the Alzheimer's Society; Citizens Advice Bureau; Sight for Surrey; Surrey Heath Veterans; Surrey County Council – Drop in for carers; Surrey County Council - Personal Budget Information & Advice; Carers Support; Age UK; and Smart Care.
 - c. A dementia garden has been constructed in the grounds of the Windle Valley Centre. Funding for the garden was secured last year from a public voting competition run by keysafe company, Supra. The garden was formally opened by the Mayor of Surrey Heath on 17th September 2015.
 - d. The Windle Valley centre continues to provide its core 5-days a week day care services. The centre provides up to 50 day care places per day with 25 places funded by Surrey County Council for which the Council receives income of £94,000 per year.

3. Community Transport

- a. The Community Transport fleet consists of seven minibus of between 9 and 16 seats. All vehicles are fully accessible via a passenger lift and are able to accommodate passengers wishing to travel seated in their wheelchair.
- b. The planning of community transport services and scheduling of community transport vehicles is undertaken by Runnymede Borough Council on behalf of Surrey Heath, for which there is a Service Level Agreement. Bookings are now taken from 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday. The arrangement with Runnymede has also meant SHBC has benefited by the sharing of staff with Runnymede drivers supporting service delivery in Surrey Heath Borough in times of staff sickness, additional commitments etc.
- c. Though improved scheduling we are reducing the amount of “down time” for vehicles and increasing the numbers of passenger journeys. In Q1 of 2015/2016 we had 8,232 booked passenger journeys compared with 7,542 for the previous year. An increase of 9.16%.
- d. There are a number of potential opportunities being investigated to develop the Community Transport service further, to increase the range of services on offer and to increase patronage and income.

4. Community Alarms and Tele care

- a. The Community Alarm and Tele care Services provides a range of equipment designed to help an individual feel safe and secure at home.
- b. As of 31st March 2015 there were 850 community alarm customers compared to 669 customers the previous year. This represents an increase of 25%.

5. Meals at Home

- a. The Meals at Home service operates 365 days a year and provides around 800 meals per week, supporting around 236 customers. In addition hot meals are delivered to third party organisations, including a daily delivery to Disability Initiative and Accent Peerless' once monthly lunch club.
- b. The team continued delivering meals throughout the Christmas period with a free meal delivered on Christmas day to 36 customers in the Borough.
- c. The numbers of customers have increased from 200 last year to 236 this year which represents an increase of 18%.

6. Home Improvement Agency

- a. The Council operates a Home Improvement Agency which assists disabled and frail individual maintain their independence in their home. The agency comprises of a case worker; technical; and administration officer. The case worker works with the client and adult social care to determine how the client's needs can be met and how this can be funded. The technical officer writes the schedules of work; obtains tenders for the work; and instructs, supervises and pays the builder.
- b. As at 31st March 2015 the agency dealt with 176 grant enquiries and approved 109 grants at a total value of £633,000. In addition it supervised the completion of work totalling £585,000. The Surrey Heath Clinical Commissioning Group has this year contributed £300,000 from the Better Care Fund towards the Council's Capital Programme for the deliver Disabled Facilities Grants. The average cost of work is £6,000 and generally relates to bathroom adaptations; stairlifts and through floor lifts.
- c. It is mandatory for the Council to approve Disabled Facility Grants provided certain criteria are met.

Resource Implications

7. The council subsidises the services for Independent Living by £804,000. The aim is to increase the numbers receiving the services while at the same reducing the Council's subsidy. This can be done by increasing efficiency, reducing expenditure and increasing income.

Recommendation

8. It is recommended that the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee notes:
 - a. the wide range of services provided by the council to promote independent living;
 - b. the opening of the wellbeing centre at the Windle Valley centre;
 - c. the increased number of customers receiving the Community Alarm and Meals at Home services;
 - d. the number of properties which have been adapted to meet the needs of disabled and frail residents;
 - e. the aim to increase the numbers of people receiving these valuable services while at the same time decreasing the Council's subsidy.

Annexes: Nil

Background Papers: Nil

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