

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

SOCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Improving Life Chances of Disabled People Consultation

The issues raised in the consultation document are a reality in the Locality as well as on a wider scale. Areas that have been identified include specific training in disability awareness, equalities, availability of services etc to improve the ways we as a Social Services Department work with people with the whole range of impairments who come to us for assistance. Urgent areas to address by Central Government and localities is the promotion of Social Care as a career, covering the whole range of services, not just specialisms. In particular the lack of hands on care staff needs to be addressed.

The Strategy Unit will need to define more clearly the types of impairment they are referring to and recommend appropriate resources if services are expected for transitions and adults with eg ADHD, which at present are unlikely to be catered for by Social Services Departments, but could well be by Education. This is also related to the issue that Services appropriately available for children can raise expectations that these can continue into adulthood, when in fact the resources are not available.

If the Government is serious about social inclusion and integration, in schools and the wider society for all age groups the issue of financial resources to support people on an individual basis must be addressed.

The current Early Years drive is for delivery via the LEAs. The danger in this is that social care concerns are completely missed.

Recognition must be given to the fact that the area of transitions must have clear and explicit contact between Education and Social Services. This is not always the situation, due mostly to lack of capacity.

The paper discusses prevention of impairments in a very limited way. The wider causes, such as pollution and other factors over which individuals have no control must be considered and appropriate action taken.

In relation to employment issues, recognition must be given to the fact that in a very rural area, employment opportunities are extremely limited for the broader workforce. This is further exacerbated for disabled people by the poor transport infrastructure. Poor transport generally has a major impact on social inclusion for all. Rurality is a key factor in lack of carers to fulfill Direct Payment requirements.

In general we agree the issues raised in the consultation document. However it must be recognised that the majority of solutions to the issues raised will have financial implications. There is concern that, while we recognise the barriers and solutions, any vision and policy design must be realistic and achievable. There should also be a legislative requirement and incentive for different stakeholders to work together to

improve the life chances of disabled people.

The building block for "a vision for the future" have been identified in various local consultations with disabled people. To make the vision a reality it needs to be most effectively articulated through an NSF. This would result in the respective roles and responsibilities of stakeholders being determined and ensure close working and local action.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy Cocker".

JUDY COCKER
Principal Officer Strategy and Performance