

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

<b>1. Meeting:</b>	<b>ADULT SERVICES AND HEALTH SCRUTINY PANEL</b>
<b>2. Date:</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> July 2010</b>
<b>3. Title:</b>	<b>Assistive Technology Review Update</b>
<b>4. Programme Area:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's</b>

### **5. Summary**

Rotherham, along with other councils, received a Preventative Technology Grant (PTG) for a total of £441,948 from the Department of Health for 2006-08. It was in the form of a specific formula grant with no conditions attached.

The grant is designed to help councils and partners to address the challenges of an ageing society with increased expectations such as the right to have choice about services, control over delivery and the right to be able to live independently at home with dignity for life. Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel agreed to undertake a review of how Rotherham met these aims.

Since the review was initiated, Neighbourhood and Adult Services Directorate has extended the period for the use of the Assistive Technology Grant in general, and specifically, the Preventative Technology Grant. The last of the grant was due to be spent by March 2010.

This report details the evidence gathered to date. Although the review group has received information about the 'roll out' of assistive technology in the Borough, there are a number of outstanding issues that require further exploration prior to the review's conclusion. The Panel is asked to reconvene the review group with a view to reporting its findings and recommendations after the summer recess.

### **6. Recommendations**

- A final interview day is held by the working group to get the current position of RMBC and NHS partnership on Assistive Technology
- The review group visits the Smart Flat set up at Grafton House.

## **7. Proposals and details**

### **7.1 The role of Assistive Technology**

Older and vulnerable people in our society wish to be in greater control of the way in which they live their life and manage their own risks. Assistive Technology, it is claimed, can provide some of the solutions to the challenges faced by older and vulnerable people and also by public services in providing responsive services to meet these expectations. It can provide people with suitably effective choices to help them to remain independent and prevent them from early and unnecessary admission to hospital or residential care.

Assistive Technology provides support for residents who are frail or at risk of falling, hypothermia, the consequences of forgetfulness such as fires and floods, or wandering. Concerns for older people's safety about these issues often leads to an admission to residential care, but many of these admissions could be avoided in a way that also affords security and dignity.

### **7.2 The Use of Assistive Technology in Rotherham**

Recent findings from the Inspection of Adult Social Care by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) indicate that the council provides a good use of assistive technology to promote the safety and well-being of people in their own homes through the Rothercare service.

Recent Funding for Assistive Technology Equipment in Rotherham came primarily from the previous government's Preventative Technology Grant (PTG). The grant is designed to help councils and partners to address the challenges of an ageing society with increased expectations such as the right to have choice about services, control over delivery and the right to be able to live independently at home with dignity for life.

Rotherham received a total of £441,948 Preventative Technology Grant (PTG) from the Department of Health under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. The Grant was made up of £165,327 for 2006-07 and £276,621 for 2007-08 and was in the form of a specific formula grant with no conditions attached.

Through the grant, the Government expected councils to invest in 'telecare' to help support individuals with the aim to help an additional 160,000 older people [nationally] to live at home with safety and security and to reduce the number of avoidable admissions to residential/nursing care and hospital. The Care Improvement Partnership anticipated that 884 possible users could benefit from the grant based on £500 per user.

### **7.2 The previous government anticipated the following outcomes from the PTG.**

- Reduce need for residential/nursing care

- Unlock resources and redirect them elsewhere
- Increase choice and independence for service users
- Reduce burden on carers – giving more personal freedom.
- Contribute to care and support for people with long term health conditions
- Reduce acute hospital admissions
- Reduce accidents and falls in the home
- Support hospital discharge/intermediate care
- Contribute to the development of a range of preventative services
- Help those who wish to die at home to do so with dignity
- Increased user re-assurance, fewer risk-averse policies, responsive to lifestyles
- Contribute to wider health, housing and social care policy agenda

Neighbourhood and Adult Services (NAS) recruited a specific project manager to deliver the assistive technology project using PTG funding. This has since been absorbed within the new Rothercare Direct structure. The initial duration of the project of 2006-8 was extended, with the final funding from the Assistive Technology Grant to be spent by March 2010.

### 7.3 Good Practice

- Sunderland CC has reduced the number of people admitted to residential care from 110 per 10,000 to less than 80 per 10,000 by using Assistive Technology.
- Leicester has saved “around 144 unnecessary hospital admissions, saving around £259,000,” from fitting Assistive Technology units.
- Staffordshire CC assessed a sample of 20 dementia patients whose homes were fitted with Assistive Technology and recognised a saving of up to £3,000 per year in some cases by being more effectively able to tailor care packages to individual needs.
- In West Lothian it is estimated that Assistive Technology saved over 3,000 NHS bed nights over a year for a trial of 400 people, and to have halved delayed discharge rates locally (from 4.3 per 1000 older people per year to 2.1)
- North Yorkshire County Council is rolling out assistive technologies across its county and working with the local district local authorities,

which are running call centres to support this mainstream activity. In the first year of the programme, it calculated that it saved just over £1 million that would otherwise have been spent on domiciliary or residential care for the recipients.

- *Blackpool Council's* Vitaline service is one the country's most advanced 24-hour monitoring and response centres and provides care, reassurance and protection to thousands of residents. Specialist equipment has been installed in homes to monitor vital signs such as blood pressure levels, weight, oxygen saturation and blood sugar monitoring. The service has seen a 75% reduction in hospital admissions, 43% reduction in Community Matron visits and a 85% reduction in GP contacts.

#### 7.4 Issues emerging from the review:

- Prior to the receipt of the PTG there was no overarching strategy in place in Rotherham. However, since Rothercare was established there have been various assistive technology projects utilising a range of grant monies. As part of the evidence gathering Members may wish to explore the evaluation of the assistive technology project and specifically Preventative Technology Grant funding, to establish whether the aims of the project have been met and whether value for money has been achieved.
- As part of the *Joint Commissioning Strategy* between Rotherham MBC and Rotherham PCT a joint strategy for Assistive Technology was drafted in 2007. However, the protocol does not appear to have been finalised.
- It has been reported that a property at Grafton House Smart Flat has been supplied with a suite of assistive technology devices. As service users use this facility they evaluate which pieces of technology meet their specific needs. It is suggested that Members may wish to visit this facility to see how this works in practice.
- £130,000 expenditure was ear-marked on assistive technology for the 3<sup>rd</sup> sector so that they can identify 500 new clients for free Rothercare trials previously unknown to NAS. Members may wish to explore the impact of this initiative.
- The 'Just Checking' system monitors customer's lifestyle through discreet sensors whilst the service user remains in their own home. This technology is primarily targeted at service users with dementia with carers remotely monitoring, via the internet. Approval was given to 'rolling out' this system in Rotherham. However, Members may wish to explore the scheme's implementation and impact.

## **8. Finance**

The final report will contain a further breakdown of the costs attached to the Assistive Technology Project and associated grants.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Until there is clarity about how Rotherham's PTG grant has been spent and the resulting impact, it is difficult to establish whether assistive technology can reduce hospital admissions and contribute to care and support for people with long term health conditions.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

National Indicator 136 'People supported to live independently through social services,' replaces Rotherham's first LAA set from 2006 (which expired as a measure on 31st March 2009). This provides a high-level indicator that signals the importance of cost-effective, evidence-based, innovative approaches to supporting people to live independently in the community.

The policy framework has shifted with the formation of the coalition government. It is suggested that the review group examines how the Government's programme addresses assistive technology.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Our Health, Our Care, Our Say White Paper.  
The Wanless Social Care Review of Older People's Services.

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