



COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 28 SEPTEMBER 2011

POSITION STATEMENT BY THE LEAD MEMBER FOR ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Reforming Adult Social Care

The fact that more and more people are living longer in old age or with a disability is something we should all celebrate. The reality that those additional years can often feel more of a burden than a joy is something we can help rectify.

The reform of adult social care presents huge challenges but the current alignment of conditions for lasting positive change creates a real opportunity. The Government's 'Vision for adult social care: capable communities and active citizens' has attained wide spread consensus. We also have through the work of the Law Commission an outlook of consolidated legislation and a simpler legal framework. With the recommendations of the Dilnott Commission, we have realistic options for future funding of care and support albeit in a uniquely challenging financial climate.

The recent announcement of an engagement exercise on the future of adult social care together with the work of the NHS Future Forum 2 on integration maintains the momentum for reform. It is important that Leicestershire County Council is actively engaged in this process and that it aligns with the exciting work we are undertaking with NHS organisations to deliver the aspirations of the Health and Social Care Bill.

Older People's Listening Month: September

Older People are a real asset to our society and September is the month that we celebrate their achievements. A huge number of events have taken place right across the County in a real partnership between many organisations and thousands of older people themselves. This shows the tremendous energy that older people have and their willingness to contribute to achieving better health for all and fulfilling the aspirations behind this year's theme of independence, wellbeing and community.

'Touching Minds'

I was privileged to attend an event on the 22 September 2011 to launch a new resource created by artists to support adults with dementia, people with learning disabilities and children with additional needs. Contributions were

made by the Leader of the County Council and the Right Honorable Stephen Dorrell MP. Both of them recognised the great value of the creative arts to engage people with disabilities. Touching Minds grew out of a partnership between Heritage and Arts, Adult Social Care, the artistic community and academic institutions. We should be rightly proud of this sort of innovation in Leicestershire.

Multi Access Centres (MACs)

MACs are a partnership project run by Leicestershire's Library Services and Adult Learning Services. The MAC project provides a pathway to employment through information advice and guidance and learning, as well as providing access to a range of other services such as support into voluntary work. MACs are currently funded through the East Midlands Development Agency.

MACs target people who are long term unemployed and vulnerable people. The service is delivered through the County's 54 Libraries and its original target was to support 400 unemployed people per year on their journey to work. Since its launch in July 2010, the MAC project has supported over 1,600 unemployed people with over 600 people being referred to the Adult Learning Service for training. Over a quarter of people supported come from recognised areas of deprivation. The project proportionately reaches more people from ethnic minority communities than the County average, and over half of those who have a declared disability have either a learning disability or mental ill health.

Heritage Events

I attended the recent re-enactment at Bosworth Battlefield over the weekend of the 20/21 August 2011. Once again, we achieved a record turn out and delivered a fantastic spectacle for all those who came along. I also attended the Miners Gala at Snibston Discovery Park on 17 September, which again resulted in fantastic attendance and a great family day out.

I would like to thank all members of staff and volunteers who contributed to the success of these events which enhance the reputation of our heritage attractions in the County.