

ANGUS COUNCIL

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE – 19 NOVEMBER 2009

CARE AND REPAIR REVIEW

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

ABSTRACT: This report informs Members of the findings of the National Review of Care and Repair and outlines Angus Council Response to the National Review including local arrangement for 2010/11.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 It is recommended that Members: -

- (i) Agree Angus Council's Response;
- (ii) Agree that Care and Repair Angus must, as a condition of funding, link funding awards to the Council's Eligibility, Assessment Matrix and Prioritisation Framework;
- (iii) Agree the funding principles set out in the report.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 **What Care and Repair does: -**

2.2 Care and Repair project provides a range of property based, but personalised services to support older and disabled home owners, tenants of private landlords and crofters, to help them remain in their homes. They make it easier for people to improve and adapt their homes by helping them to decide what work is required, choose reliable tradesmen, obtain finance and oversee the work. Small repairs services may also be available.

2.3 Care and Repair does not deliver health and community care services. The 'care' element of Care and Repair activity reflects the housing contribution to community care - enabling people to live as normal a life as possible in their own home or in a homely environment to the local community - by caring for the property.

2.4 There are now 37 Care and Repair projects across Scotland sponsored by 31 local authorities. However, there are gaps in both geographical coverage and the core services that are offered, even in local authority areas with multiple projects.

2.5 Adequately funding Care and Repair services is a requirement of the Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG) that each local authority receives from the Scottish Government.

2.6 Angus is fortunate in being able to work with one of Scotland's independent Care and Repair agencies and there is a long history of close partnership working between Angus Council and Angus Care and Repair. The response to this review highlights the challenges for both agencies in an environment of tightening public sector budgets and the need to prioritise resources to those most in need. This report has also been written to tie closely to the Principles for the Scheme of Assistance. Angus Council's response is also informed by the local policy direction as set out in the review of services for older people.

2.7 **Issues Highlighted by the National Review***

- The review identified broad agreement around key aspects of Care and Repair, particularly the unique ethos and person centred approach of the property related service and around how the service is well placed to help deliver local authorities' Schemes of Assistance, coming from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006. However through dialogue with the Care and Repair movement and key stakeholders, the Scottish Government has become aware of a number of key issues that impede the development of the service. A copy of the Review has been placed in the Members Lounge.
- 2.8 Availability - Care and Repair is not able to help everyone who could benefit from its services. There is no consensus on the services overall role, the activities that should be undertaken and the client group that services are available to.
- 2.9 Funding - The most common concern is around the uncertain funding arrangements of projects and the opaqueness of the process local authorities, and sometimes managing agents, use to govern these. Funding uncertainty has been blamed for impacting on sustainability and strategic planning, and this makes planning creatively and ambitiously for the future a luxury few projects can afford.
- 2.10 Changes coming from housing legislation - This situation is particularly acute when put in the context of a radical change of legislation in the form of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 ('the Act'), with implementation of relevant parts from April 2009.
- 2.11 Adaptations - In addition, the Act has introduced a new system of adaptations for disabled people that dramatically simplifies the previous system and ensures those who need help will receive it, and more quickly. Supporting the adaptations process is a key and increasing area of work for Care and Repair projects.
- 2.12 The Disability Rights Commission (now Equality and Human Rights Commission) argues that "the ability to make adaptations which allow independent living in one's own home is of fundamental importance to the disability equality agenda". Care and Repair is ideally suited to assist local authorities deliver their duties under the Act and this review is intended to help them in that regard.
- 2.13 Wider policy agenda - Care and Repair has also attracted the attention of a range of other Scottish Government policy areas beyond just private housing policy and the potential to broaden the work of Care and Repair to help deliver these is an opportunity that this review also seeks to capture.
- 2.14 Outcomes - The unique approach of Care and Repair to people and property has a disproportionately positive impact on helping people to remain in their own home and is highly cost effective compared with alternatives such as care at home services, acute in-patient care or residential and nursing care. Yet with the overall structure of the movement limiting capacity, and outdated reporting requirements it is not possible to accurately quantify the contribution the service makes to national and local priorities. Indeed, this lack of clear evidence and ability to demonstrate the strategic "fit" with local authority and Scottish Government priorities may partly explain why the amount invested in Care and Repair projects by authorities varies considerably between areas, even taking into account differences in size and geography.
- 2.15 Demographics - The age profile across Scotland is changing. The number of older people is growing. The population aged over 65 years will grow by 21% by 2016 and by 62% by 2031, the population aged over 75 years will grow by 81% by 2031, and the population aged over 85 years will grow by 38% by 2016 and by 144% by 2031. The incidence of disability increases with age.
- 2.16 The National Review has concluded that given the opportunities arising from the Act, other opportunities and the issues raised above, it is clear that the Care and Repair movement must undergo some changes to its internal structures and in terms of its relationship with funders, if it is to be sustainable and adaptable over the long term.

2.17 The Review wants to see:

- A service that continues to be free at the point of delivery for those who are eligible;
- A recognised and valued Care and Repair brand that reflects 'care through repair' using their unique personalised approach to people and their property;
- Awareness of the service across all areas that have people who might benefit;
- Clarity over eligibility and fair and equal access to core Care and Repair activities;
- Services agreed locally by relevant stakeholders and delivered by distinct and mature units of Care and Repair;
- Clear and sustainable funding arrangements to which projects are encouraged and empowered to supplement through additional fundraising and income-generating activities.
- A continued belief in, and demonstration of the independence of approach by the service;
- All projects being advised by relevant local stakeholders to inform the design and delivery of activities and to ensure they are always what communities need;
- Every project in a position to take charge of its own future;
- Everyone engaged in Care and Repair activity operating to updated and up to date national standards;
- An up to date national performance monitoring framework aligned to national performance standards, to measure the outcomes of Care and Repair projects;
- Clear and up to date good practice guidance, regularly updated, to help with new and existing issues;
- A Care and Repair movement that is able to represent itself coherently and authoritatively at operational and political levels in Scotland.

The following table summarises for each review Theme:

Review theme	Research recommendation	Review findings	Angus Council Response
1. National Coverage	The Scottish Government should issue a national policy statement setting out its expectations of how Care and Repair should be delivered and the minimum level of service that should be available. Current good practice guidance should be reviewed and reissued. (Recommendation 4)	It will be for the national coordinating body to decide if they wish to make such a statement and to update good practice guidance in consultation with key stakeholders.	National direction is awaited but expectations and standards will be reviewed locally as part of the annual Service Level Agreement (SLA)
2. Measuring Outcomes	A national performance monitoring framework should be introduced to measure the outcomes of Care and Repair agencies and allow them to benchmark their achievements against others. (Recommendation 12)	Agree research recommendation - to ask the national coordinating body to work with COSLA to develop this and an annual review process at local level, from which national perspective can be formed.	This is considered helpful and will be harnessed to augment existing SLA, and local practice, performance reporting arrangements
3. Links to the Scheme of Assistance	The national policy statement we are recommending should clearly set out how Care and Repair can contribute to the Scheme of Assistance. Local authorities should undertake a strategic assessment of how Care and Repair best fits with the Scheme of Assistance in their area - working jointly with Care and Repair agencies and other partners. (Recommendation 10)	While we agree with this approach, it will be for the national coordinating body to consider how best to promote the contribution of Care and Repair to Schemes of Assistance.	Local arrangements will be set out in both Angus Council's inaugural Scheme of Assistance and the forthcoming Local Housing Strategy.
4. Links to wider local priorities	All stakeholders involved in Care and Repair should work to promote and make links between the work of Care and Repair and wider health and community care objectives. Care and repair agencies need to develop their partnership working arrangements.	Agree research recommendation - good practice guidance will support this	This is agreed and it is proposed that this should be considered as part of the Housing Reporting commitments to the Community Care Health Executive Group which is a Thematic Group of the Community Planning Partnership.

	(Recommendation 11)		
5. Quality of Service Provision	The National Standards for Care and Repair should be reviewed for relevance and updated if necessary. A simple accreditation system should be established to allow Care and Repair projects to demonstrate that they operate to the National Standards. (Recommendation 7)	Agree with this approach but implementation needs to be done in consultation with COSLA and linked to broader capacity building efforts.	Agreed and any assistance will be given to the review.
6. Core Care and Repair Services	The Scottish Government (or an agent acting on its behalf) should consult with Care and Repair stakeholders to identify and agree core services that all Care and Repair agencies should provide. These should be incorporated within the National Standards. (Recommendation 2)	Agree need for some degree of harmony. To use revised good practice guidance and any national policy statement from the national coordinating body to build consensus on what services should be in all areas and how these can be made available to users. To clarify OT issues in good practice guidance and make links between core services and proposed Care and Repair brand.	Agreed, any local issues to be raised and addressed as part of response to recommendation 4.
7. Core Care and Repair Client Group	The Scottish Government (or an agent acting on its behalf) should consult with Care and Repair stakeholders to identify and agree the core client groups that all Care and Repair agencies should provide services to. These should be incorporated within the National Standards. (Recommendation 3)	Agree research recommendation. We will ask that national coordinating body to work with COSLA and Care and Repair projects to build consensus.	Agreed and will be considered as part of SLA and the Council's prioritisation of funding.

8. Prioritising Access to Services	Care and Repair agencies should establish transparent methods of prioritising their services in consultation with others, taking account of the resources available to them. (Recommendation 6)	Agree research recommendation. In addition, also propose that the approach agreed between the Care and Repair project and the local authority is reflected in their section 72 statement.	As per response to recommendation 7.
9. Funding Care and Repair	The Scottish Government should enter into discussions with COSLA with a view to directly funding Care and Repair agencies to provide core services for an interim period of three years to allow them to develop through a transitional phase. Thereafter funding should be the responsibility of local authorities and other local partners. (Recommendation 5)	Disagree with research recommendation. Existing funding arrangements better as more capable of reflecting local need - but needs further work with COSLA to make work on the ground. This includes agreeing good practice guidance on income generation and social enterprise activity, help with managing procurement legislation, asking stakeholders to consider the current number and size of projects, and promoting the development of a skills and training framework for project staff.	Angus Council to agree to adequately fund Care and Repair within the context of national and local budgeting and delivery of satisfactory outcomes to priority groups.
10. Constitutional Models	Care and Repair agencies should review their constitutional and governance structures on a periodic basis in close consultation with key stakeholders to identify whether they are fit for purpose. Additional guidance in this area would be beneficial. (Recommendation 9)	Agree research recommendation. In addition recommend that all projects become self-governing i.e. become self-standing charities with their own boards (although this can still mean being part of a larger organisation), and that advisory group functions are made clear.	Noted
11. The Care and Repair Brand	The concept of a Care and Repair brand which could be used by agencies providing core services to an accredited standard should be explored. (Recommendation 8)	Agree research recommendation. In addition propose links between the brand and core services, core client groups, revised national standards and proposed national performance standards. Also propose concept of brand affiliations and national coordinating body as steward of the	Noted

		brand on behalf of Ministers.	
12. Terminology to describe Care and Repair	Organisations delivering Care and Repair should be consulted about adopting the term 'Care and Repair agency' to describe themselves. (Recommendation 1)	Agree that alternative to 'project' is needed but in view of concerns about implications of 'agency' we propose 'offices'.	Noted
13. National Support and Coordination	The Scottish Government should work with stakeholders to establish a national organisation with a remit to support the development of Care and Repair agencies across Scotland and advise on issues of policy. (Recommendation 13)	An enhanced national organisation is central to our ambition for the future of Care and Repair. After initial exploration with the Forum Board we have recommended substantial changes.	Noted

2.18 **Funding Care and Repair**

2.19 **Funding context - PSHG funding**

Private Sector Housing Grant (PSHG), which funds work by local authorities to private housing, was introduced in 2003-04. PSHG is the primary source of funding for Care and Repair and this has until recently been administered by Communities Scotland. Since the merger of Communities Scotland into the core Scottish Government in 2008 these functions have transferred to the Housing and Regeneration Directorate but otherwise have not changed.

2.20 Adequately funding Care and Repair services is a requirement of the PSHG Offer of Grant that each local authority agrees to, in exchange for PSHG funding from the Scottish Government. Up to and including 2008-09 this was identifiable as a discreet amount within each local authority grant allocation. With the changes brought about by the introduction of the historic Concordat between the Scottish Government and local authorities, and the commitment to local authorities by Ministers to progressively remove ring-fencing around funding streams, the administration and controls around PSHG have been consequently simplified.

2.21 From 2010/11, PSHG will cease to exist as a separate ring-fenced funding stream, although as a result of an agreement sought by and agreed with COSLA, PSHG will be separately identified within the overall block grant paid by the Scottish Government to each authority annually. The local authority has discretion about how it uses its block grant. This arrangement will continue until 2013/14.

2.22 **Funding Principles for 2010/11**

Members are asked to note that following the National Review and the planned further work it is too early to indicate whether or not there should be any substantial long-term changes to the local funding arrangements currently in place. Angus Council currently provides adequate funding from a variety of Council sources and subject to the annual budget process it is recommended that Care and Repair funding is organised in a similar manner to that of 2009/10 within the context of the transparent use of the PSHG as set out in the National Review and agreement with COSLA.

2.23 Finally Members are asked to note that Care and Repair have been able to deliver planned service levels efficiently within previously agreed budgets and subsequent additional funding. This has resulted in a one off position whereby Care and Repair have indicated that it is possible for them to deliver services in the remainder of 2009/10 and 2010/11 within existing budgets allowing any accrued efficiencies to be recycled into improvements and adaptations budget of the Private Sector Housing Grant. This position is only possible as a result of the close working relationship between Angus Council and Angus Care and Repair and the fact that both organisations are committed to serving those most in need of support. It is therefore proposed to maintain the budget levels and to manage the efficiencies through variations to payment schedules. Full details of this will be provided in future reports setting out how Private Sector Housing Grant will be utilised following agreement of the Angus Council 2010/11 budget.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no direct negative financial implication arising from this report and a full breakdown of the use of the Private Sector Housing Grant and Care and Repair will be brought to Committee following the detailed deliberations of the budget process.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no human rights implications for the Council arising directly from the information contained within this report.

5. SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT

5.1 This report contributes to the following local outcomes contained within the Single Outcome Agreement for Angus:

- Good quality housing is available throughout Angus.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Executive the Director of Corporate Services the Head of Finance, the Head of Law and Administration and the Director of Social Work and Health has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The issues dealt with in this report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An [equalities impact assessment](#) is not required.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The positive impact that Care and Repair services have made, nationally and locally, is highlighted as part of this report. Angus has a strong tradition of providing high quality services to those in need and ensuring that those services meet the identified need and contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of independent living. Angus Care and Repair have and continue to play a significant part in that delivery.

8.2 The response to this National Review and the proposed arrangements set out for 2010/11 and the proposed role for Care and Repair in the Scheme of Assistance demonstrates the continued commitment to independent living in Angus and the alignment of both policy and financial resources to community based solutions and promoting and supporting high quality independent solutions for those with an assessed need.

8.3 Angus can be proud of the significant contribution made by Angus Care and Repair and this report sets out Angus Council's continued corporate and outline financial support. Whilst there are undoubted future financial challenges ahead for Angus Council and Angus Care and Repair in relation to providing and proving best value in the arena of equipment and adaptations, it is clear that working together Angus Council and Angus Care and Repair are more than capable of positively responding to those challenges. Ultimately the final response to this review will be shaped by the specific needs of the people of Angus.

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NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extend in preparing the above report are:

- National review of Care and Repair

Hsg/NS/AMcK