

AGENDA ITEM: 5

SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

7 February 2006

SUPPORTING THE CARERS – Best Practice

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To present an article from the Local Government Chronicle – 16 February 2006 (see appendix A) which may be of interest to the panel in their consideration of information for the Support to Carers review.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The attached article details some examples of best practice for Services to Carers, from the three Councils that have achieved beacon status for the way they support carers.
3. Briefly the examples are as follows:

Tracking down hidden carers –

- asking callers to the Council's contact centre in Sunderland if they were aware of carers' week, the carers' centre and if they wanted any information, identified 41 new or 'hidden' carers and identified 60 carers who did not see themselves in that role
- drop in sessions have been arranged at a range of venues including bingo halls and supermarkets.
- Rochdale have used an initiative called 'opportunity knocks' which involves sending a team of eight people for two days every fortnight to knock on doors throughout 15 areas, to see if they can find carers and offer guidance on support, financial help, opportunities for training, employment and education. To date referrals have been made of around 12%, doubling the rate anticipated by its initial targets.

Appointing Carers' Champions

- Hertfordshire have appointed about 50 carers' champions who are a point of contact for people wishing to know more about the issues and for carers themselves. Champions are not paid for this role as they see it as part of their work

Breaks for carers

- In Sefton an emergency respite team has been running for five years. The five strong team is on duty 365 days of the year and a team member can be with a carer within an hour of them asking for help.

4. Working with the Local Carers' Centre was also seen as an important mechanism for improving councils support to carers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. That the panel considers and discusses the article, if the Chair and the panel consider it appropriate.

**COUNCILLOR CHARLES ROONEY
CHAIR OF THE SOCIAL CARE AND ADULT SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

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