

Assessment of Day Care Services for People with Learning Disabilities

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Report of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny and Performance Panel

April 2005

Foreword by the Chair

We are pleased to present the final report of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny review on the Modernisation of Day Services for People with Learning Disabilities.

Walsall recognises the new challenges and changing face of Social Care delivery in that recent legislation has now provided a common national framework requiring Local Authorities to revise how they deliver services to ensure a person centred approach is integral. This means services should be less institutionally based with the focus being supporting individuals to raise and realise their potential and ambitions .

A working group (Modernising Services) has been gathering evidence since February 2005 and have recognised that there is a need for change. We also understand that this will be a difficult process and that there are many genuine reservations to overcome.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Scrutiny and in particular the users and carers and officers for their constructive comments during the various sessions over the last few months.

Finally, we are grateful to the Members of the Scrutiny Panel Working Group and the Scrutiny Support Team for their commitment and hard work during this exercise.



Councillor Tim Oliver

MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

Councillor Oliver (Chair)
Councillor Woodruff (Vice Chair)
Councillor Ault
Councillor McCracken
Councillor Munir
Councillor Pitt
Councillor Walker
Councillor Barton
Councillor Robertson

MEMBERS OF THE MODERNISING SERVICES WORKING GROUP

Councillor Oliver
Councillor Ault
Councillor Munir
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Councillor Woodruff

Co-opted Members

David Martin	Executive Director – Social Services
Andrew Cross	Head of Older People's Services
John Greensill	Joint Head of Learning Disability Services
Kathy McAteer	Assistant Director – Adult Services
Trish Skitt	Assistant Director PCT

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Introduction - Background

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to deliver the findings of the working group investigation into the provision of day care services for people with learning disabilities within the Borough, drawing on the views of the day care services providers and users.

2 Background

- 2.1 The working group was established by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny and Performance Panel at its first meeting on 21 July 2004 for the municipal year 2004-5 with the following terms of reference.
- a. To scrutinise all matters relating to the modernisation and redesign of services.
 - b. To scrutinise the impact of the modernisation of services on outcomes for service users and on the delivery of performance indicators and targets.
 - c. To review and scrutinise the development of partnership working in the delivery of service redesign and modernisation.
 - d. To encourage the council as a whole, its executive and other Scrutiny Committees to take into account the implications of their policies and activities on the delivery of modernised services that promote social inclusion.
 - e. To evaluate and review the effectiveness of service modernisation.
 - f. To seek and take into account the views of vulnerable adults and the local population.
 - g. To inform Overview Scrutiny Committee of its ingoing work programme.
- 2.2 At the first meeting of the Working Group on 1 November 2004, the members agreed a work programme for the municipal year 2004-5. The first priority for the Working Group was to focus on the assessment of day centre provision for people with learning disabilities, closely involving the users of the service and ensuring that they have the opportunity to influence the outcome of the process. It was the Working Group's view also that the key focus should involve the engagement of carers.
- 2.3 The aim of the assessment is to modernise the service to ensure that new Government policies and national service frameworks are adhered to.

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- 2.4 'Valuing People', a Government White Paper in 2001, set objectives:
- To enable people with learning disabilities to lead full and purposeful lives within their community and to develop a range of friendships, activities and relationships. A key action was to modernise day services by 2006.
- 2.5 In addition the agreed Walsall Learning Disability Strategy (republished 2003) set a Priority:
- To modernise day services to provide greater opportunities for individually tailored, local services.
- 2.6 The Government policies require the service to be more person centred and integrated, towards valuing people.
- 2.7 The Working Group decided to hold two workshops to enable in-depth discussions to take place about the day care service. The first was from the carers' perspective and the second from users' perspective. The first of these workshops took place on 8 February 2005.

Primary Evidence – Users and Carers

1 Carers Perspective

- 1.1 The carers were given the opportunity to put their views to the Work Group on the way forward to modernising the service. The points referred to below attempt to reflect and summarise those views:-
- a. Decision makers must consult users fully to enable them to understand their needs. This will necessitate carers' assessment and person centre plans being accepted as the basis for a full understanding of the users and their family needs.
 - b. Day centres should remain with more resources being provided to improve service delivery.
 - c. External assessment of day centres must take place to ensure that activities reflect the plans.
 - d. There should be integration of users with varying levels of disability to encourage the improvement of the quality of service for all involved.
 - e. Conversely, that there should be recognition of the different challenges and needs for users with varying levels of disability.
 - f. 'Care First' service should continue to be available and not be affected by a move of day care provision to local sites.
 - g. 'Links to Work' is recognised as a great success.
 - h. There must be staff continuity at day care centres with more care assistants being employed to undertake the personal care needs of users to enable day care officers to concentrate on running the centres.
 - i. The service provision must be tailored to ensure a greater degree of community integration for all users, as appropriate.
 - j. Close attention must be given to resolving the problems surrounding the change in status of users to carers and service provides which incurs large amounts of paperwork and other problems relating to direct payments; liability and the isolation of carers.

2. Users Perspective

- 2.1 The second workshop took place on 5 April 2005 and allowed the service users the opportunity to give a full account of their experiences at their centres and indicate how they would wish to see the service at the centres improved.

- 2.2 Service users felt, overall, that many aspects of the service had dramatically improved with staff being very supportive and helpful. However there was room for improvement in terms of certain needs, i.e.:-
- a. Leisure activities.
 - b. A chance to work (with the ability to earn).
 - c. Facilities for learning.
 - d. Transport.
 - e. More staff.
 - f. More contact with friends from other day care centres.
 - g. A 'quiet' room for individual use.
 - h. Service users to be involved in discussions regarding their future.
 - i. Any change in day care services should be at users pace.
 - j. Users need to be valued and treated as individuals.

3. Findings

- 3.1 The feedback from officers, carers and users demonstrated that a proposed model for day care services was beginning to emerge and issues which would restrict its improvement needed to be taken into account, such as; legal requirements, shifts in population density, lack of land, state of buildings and the increasing dependency of the client group.
- 3.2 It was recognised that due to the state of the buildings, the majority of day care service facilities would not remain on their current sites for more than 3 years and the level of capital receipt available would be a key factor.
- 3.3 Carers' assessments and person centre plans were recognised to have a vital input into the modernising agenda together with voluntary sector and other non-council agency involvement.

Stock Evidence Survey

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report was requested by the Modernising Services Work Group to include in their report to Council relating to the condition of Day Service buildings in Walsall and associated capital liabilities.

2. Brewer Street

- 2.1 This building is thought to have been constructed in the early 1960's and is typical of the construction techniques of the time. The building is single storey with a flat felted roof with external wall construction of cavity brickwork with large glazed panels.
- 2.2 Total refurbishment, repairs and upgrading work equate to a cost of £627,000. This includes a complete renewal of the roof and most windows together with remedial works to underground drainage and underpinning foundations.

3. Northgate Centre.

- 3.1 This property is believed to have been constructed in the early 1970's, purpose built as an Adult Training Centre. The roof construction is flat at various levels with some raised roof lights, external walls are cavity brickwork, the windows are generally softwood timber and the ground floor is a solid ground bearing slab.
- 3.2 The essential repair works indicate a total cost of £420,000 with a major cost associated with underpinning existing foundations and major repairs to the mechanical installations. (mechanical installations relate to central heating, water and electrical systems.)

4. Goscote Day Care Centre

- 4.1 The Goscote Centre was constructed in the late 1970's to early 1980's and was a purpose built Adult Training Centre. The property is single storey with a shallow pitched interlocking concrete tiled roof. External walls are constructed from cavity brick and blockwork with internal separating, non-load bearing walls.
- 4.2 The surveyors indicated in their report that as the newest of the three Day Care Centres, the life of the structure and finishes should be the longest, provided that a regime of systematic and effective maintenance is introduced and properly funded.

4.3 The surveyors indicated that they considered that this building and its site offer the greatest potential, and best value for the services provided.

4.4 Total estimated cost of repairs indicated was £101,000 with further estimated refurbishment and alteration works costing £236,000.

5. Summary of surveyors report

5.1 Of the three buildings, Goscote Day Care Centre offers most options for continued future use. In particular, its method of construction offers opportunities for internal reconfiguration to meet current and future service use and needs.

5.2 In contrast, Brewer Street and Northgate suffer from particular problems which could limit the life of the buildings without substantial capital investment.

5.3 In both buildings there are concerns that the properties are suffering from foundation movement which will require further detailed investigations.

5.4 In relation to the Northgate centre, the surveyors report that the foundation movement appears to be progressive and that from the random nature of the cracking it would appear that the whole building has suffered from movement in varying degrees.

5.5 The surveyors report that although foundation movement has, and is, taking place, there is a present no significant risk of catastrophic structural failure.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Subject to the detailed consultation which will be taking place with service users and family carers, it is unlikely that recommendations will be made to extend the lives of Brewer Street and Northgate centres. Consideration will be required of the effectiveness of the substantial capital investment required.

6.2 However, the Goscote centre may warrant further investigation. In our planning we know that there will be a need to provide specialist services, very often for people with physical and sensory disabilities. A consideration could be that the Goscote centre might usefully be considered as a potential base for a specialist integrated service centre.

Background Papers

Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century - Chapter 7: Housing, fulfilling lives and employment, pp 76-79

1. Fulfilling Lives

- 1.1 Government Objective: To enable people with learning disabilities to lead full and purposeful lives within their community and to develop a range of friendships, activities and relationships.

2. Problems and Challenges


- 2.1 At present many people with learning disabilities do not take part in community activities or participate in wider social networks with non-disabled people. Few have friends apart from those paid to be with them, their close family, or other people with learning disabilities with whom they live. Being part of the local community benefits everyone. This chapter sets out the action the Government will take to help promote social inclusion for people with learning disabilities.

3. Key Actions – Fulfilling Lives

- Five year programme to modernise day services by 2006 – priority for the Learning Disability Development Fund.
- Learning and Skills Council to ensure equal access to education.
- Action to outlaw discrimination against people with learning disabilities on public transport.
- Leisure plans to incorporate the needs of people with learning disabilities.
- New initiatives to improve services for parents with a learning disability
- Improved disability awareness training for Department of Social Security staff administering Disability Living Allowance.

4. Modernising Day Services

- 4.1 For decades, services for people with learning disabilities have been heavily reliant on large, often institutional, day centres. These have provided much needed respite for families, but they have made a limited contribution to promoting social inclusion or independence for people with learning disabilities. People with learning disabilities attending them have not had opportunities to develop individual interests or the skills and experience they need in order to move into employment.

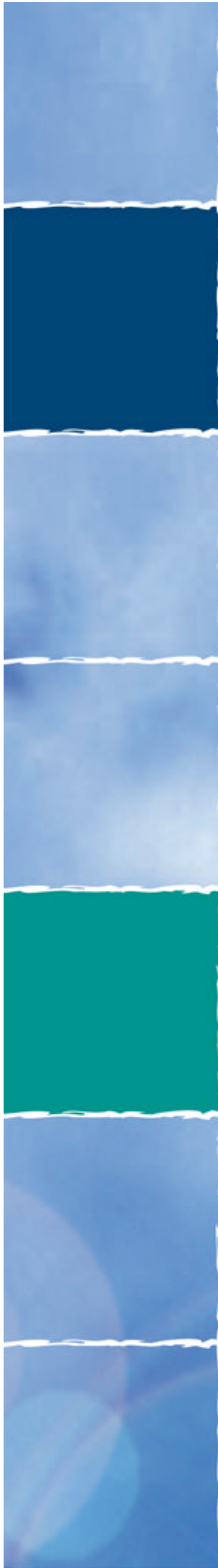
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- 4.2 Local councils currently spend over £300 million a year on day services of which more than 80% goes on over 60,000 day centre places that often focus on large, group activities. The most severely disabled people often receive the poorest service and the particular cultural needs of people from minority ethnic communities are too often not addressed.
- 4.3 Some local councils have done much to modernise their day services, but overall progress has been too slow. The barriers standing in the way of change include:
- Difficulties in releasing resources tied up in buildings and staff;
 - Slow development of links with other services (including supported employment) and support in the wider community;
 - Tension between providing respite for families and fulfilling opportunities for the person;
 - Slow progress in introducing person-centred approaches to planning.
- 4.4 The Government wishes to see a greater emphasis on individualised and flexible services which will:
- Support people in developing their capacity to do what they want;
 - Help people develop social skills and the capacity to form friendships and relationships with a wider range of people;
 - Enable people to develop skills and enhance their employability;
 - Help communities welcome people with learning disabilities.
- 4.5 These problems will be addressed through a five year programme to support local councils in modernising their day services. Our aim will be to ensure that the resources currently committed to day centres are focused on providing people with learning disabilities with new opportunities to lead full and purposeful lives. Securing the active involvement of people with learning disabilities and their families in redesigning services will be essential to the success of the programme. The Government recognises that, for many families, day centres have provided essential respite from the day to day demands of caring. The services that replace them must result in improvements for both users and their families. The needs of people with profound or complex disabilities will be carefully considered as part of the modernisation programme.
- 4.6 Modernising day services will involve developing and strengthening links with local supported employment schemes, and with providers of further and community education and training for disabled people. The Government recognises the

need to strengthen these relationships further at national level.

- 4.7 Day services should be modernised by 2006. Learning Disability Partnership Boards will be required to draw up modernisation programmes by 2002 for achieving this. Plans will address the future role of existing large day centres. The introduction of person-centred planning for people using day centres will be a key element for achieving this. People using them should be an early priority for person-centred planning.
- 4.8 Modernising day centres will be one of the priority areas for the Learning Disability Development Fund, in order to provide bridging finance to support change. The Implementation Support Team will give early priority to supporting day service modernisation.

5. Education and Lifelong Learning

- 5.1 Many people with learning disabilities make use of further education provision, Local Education Authority adult and community education and adult work-based training opportunities to develop and extend their skills. They need to have the same access as other people to opportunities for education and lifelong learning.
- 5.2 We recognise the importance of meeting the learning needs of people with learning disabilities through a person-centred approach. Young people in particular should not be sent to further education colleges because there is a lack of suitable provision either in updated training facilities or in supported employment. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 gives the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) specific responsibility to have regard to the needs of young people and adults with learning disabilities when securing post-16 education and training. The LSC is required to:
- Make arrangements to ensure that young people and adults with learning disabilities have access to provision which meets their needs and, where appropriate, to additional support;
 - Build equality of opportunity into its policies, programmes and actions, working closely with key equality organisations including the Disability Rights Commission;
 - Have regard to the needs of learners with learning difficulties when providing work experience.
- 5.3 The Department for Education and Employment will be working with Skill, the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, to prepare a statement of good practice on the practical steps institutions should take to enable students to gain access to suitable places and successful work experience there.

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- 5.4 In addition, the Government has announced that £172 million in the post-16 sector (Further Education, Higher Education, Adult Education and the Youth Service) will be used over the period 2002/03 to 2003/04 to improve accessibility for disabled students and adult learners in England. The new Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit, based in the Department for Education and Employment, will oversee literacy and numeracy developments at national and regional level and act as a catalyst to initiate action by others to improve people's basic skills. The Unit is funding a £1.5 million project to develop ways of improving literacy and numeracy among people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 5.5 The Learning and Skills Act 2000 also established Local Learning Partnerships which will have a key role to promote learning and ensure it meets the needs of local communities. These Partnerships will ensure:
- effective consultative mechanisms are in place so that the views of people with learning disabilities are heard by providers and the LSC;
 - The content of and access to local learning provision meet the needs of people with learning disabilities.
- 5.6 The Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill currently before Parliament will remove the current exemption of education from disability rights legislation and give people with disabilities new rights in Local Education Authority (LEA) adult and community education, further education, higher education institutions and LEA youth service provision. It aims to ensure that disabled students, including those with learning disabilities, are not treated less favourably than non-disabled students. Post-16 institutions will have to make reasonable adjustments to their premises to ensure that disabled students are not put at a substantial disadvantage to their peers. The Bill will make it unlawful for institutions to discriminate against disabled people not only in the way they carry out their main business – the provision of education – but also in arranging admissions and providing wider services, such as accommodation, welfare services, and careers advice.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), “*Valuing People* – much achieved, more to do”, A summary report of inspections carried out during 2003/2004 of 12 councils’ social care services for people with learning disabilities

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Valuing People – much achieved, more to do



*'Our aim will be to ensure that the resources currently committed to day centres are focused on providing people with learning disabilities with new opportunities to lead full and purposeful lives.'*¹⁰

Day services

Day activities are still important for most adults with learning disabilities but day services have seen big changes as councils have been working to make their day services better by 2006 in line with *Valuing People*.

- All councils had started to change their day services but many councils still used the old, big day centres as bases from which people moved to other activities.
- In some places services hadn't planned for more staff as people were being supported to do more outside of centres. This meant that staff left working in the centres were less able to do creative and useful activities with people with high support needs.
- Many councils were supporting day activities that meet the cultural needs of people from minority ethnic communities. But an important question was whether all these services should be separate from those that everyone else uses. Most of the examples of good services were separate from other services and often new.

10. *Valuing People*, page 77.


- Many day services staff were trying hard to work in different ways as day services change.
- Family carers almost always didn't want big day services to be closed or go through big changes. These centres were often seen as safe places where people could stay in touch with their friends. Councils had had to work closely with people with learning disabilities, staff and families because people were worried about the changes. In the end, some councils had to take action which many families did not agree with.

Even though there were these problems, many people with learning disabilities were getting more choices and, often, more local services. Inspectors thought that most councils were doing a good job with the changes to day services.

Conclusions

1 Conclusions of the Report

- 1.1 The following are observations by members of the Work Group, to accompany the reports and submissions produced by officers, carers and users of the service.
- 1.2 The report is to be seen against a context of the major changes and improvements which have been made within the services to people with learning disabilities over recent years, including the role of the Learning Disability Partnership Board and joint working between Social Care and Health – as recognised with recent external inspection reports.
- 1.3 The primary evidence we considered in relation to the future of day services were:
 - Information provided by officers from the Learning Disability Service.
 - The views of an invited group of carers, including representatives from the Walsall Carers' Centre.
 - The views from an invited group of people with learning disabilities living in Walsall, including users of the service and the Making our Choice group.
 - A stock condition survey of the current day centre buildings.
- 1.4 Two vital background papers are:
 - Valuing People priorities, as represented in the Walsall Learning Disability strategy with priority of 'modernising day services to provide greater opportunities for individually tailored local services - that are person centred and to enable people to lead full and purposeful lives.
 - The independently commissioned report on the state of current buildings, which suggests that the majority of day care services and facilities will not be able to remain on the current sites for more than a further three years
- 1.5 It was clear to us that despite the fact that the above information has been well established within the public domain for some time, this remains a controversial issue for a significant number of people - including in particular from amongst our family carers. In addition it should be said that evidence presented to us also indicated that people from all groups saw opportunities for improving the quality and choice available within the service.

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- 1.6 It is our conclusion that for progress to be made, the agenda will need to move from uncertainty and the perceived threat of unspecific change toward to a much clearer strategy built up from the individual needs of both current and potential users of daytime support services
- 1.7 To this end, we believe that:
- The Learning Disability Service needs to be clearer and transparent in its proposed strategy with regard to the timescales and future of current buildings.
 - There should be individual consultation and assessment with all users of the current service - and their family carers - in order to produce a fuller picture of the real needs, demands and aspirations for future services. This would need to be prioritised in line with strategic plans as above.
 - There needs to be greater partnership work with service users and family carers, to be open and positive in relation to both ideas and fears about change. It would seem that the service has faced a number of staffing and other constraints, which have contributed to the lack of clarity and progress in moving forward this agenda. However this now means that the stage must be reached where it can be demonstrated that there can be real delivery of both consultation and alternative services.
 - There needs to be specified recognition of the request from the users of the service to be able to retain and expand on their existing circle of friends, for both social activities and personal support. This was a common complaint and it was clear that people saw their social contact being under threat due to changes to the current familiar institutional environment.
- 1.8 Family carers showed us a heartfelt commitment to this issue, and real fears that change would bring less security and quality in delivery to the people they care for. There were also mixed messages as to opinions on integrated services within the wider community, if this is to become a reality there will need to be practical reassurance that new ways of working will maintain safety whilst improving opportunities for experiential learning and development.
- 1.9 No case was made to us that the status quo - or re-establishment of the current system - is a realistic option in terms of national policy or capital finance.
- 1.10 However we would also acknowledge that there is obvious negative perception of change, which can only be effectively

countered by evidence of positive improvements in quality and actual delivery of new services. There was no indication within the presentations to us that there is the capacity to "twin track" new and traditional services, which further emphasises the issues of person-centred planning and involvement of family carers in assessment of needs. Alongside several positive messages of increased self-esteem and opportunity, we were also quoted several examples of (alleged) poor practice which would certainly not convince anyone as to the best way forward.

1.11 In summary:

- We accept the need for change, as outlined in 'Valuing People' and associated policies.
- We acknowledge that the current building stock is not fit for the future.
- We recognise that there are real worries and concerns as to change.
- We believe that it is vital that work is prioritised to involve a person centred approach to development, including both potential users of the service and their families.
- There must be clear demonstration of the quality and effectiveness of proposed new ways of working and how this is to be practically achieved in Walsall.
- Day services must be seen as a partnership between the Learning Disability service, users and carers.

1.12 We would wish to see regular updates brought to the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee to monitor progress, successes and problems.

Councillor Oliver
Councillor Ault



Recommendation

1. The Modernising Services Working Group recommends that the Health and Social Care Scrutiny and Performance Panel:
 - Accept the need for change, as outlined in 'Valuing People' and associated policies.
 - Acknowledge that the current building stock is not fit for the future.
 - Recognise that there are real worries and concerns as to change.
 - Understand that it is vital that work is prioritised to involve a person centred approach to development, including both potential users of the service and their families.
 - Appreciate that there must be clear demonstration of the quality and effectiveness of proposed new ways of working and how this is to be practically achieved in Walsall.
 - Endorse the view that Day Services must be seen as a partnership between the Learning Disability service, users and carers.
 - Require regular updates to monitor progress, successes and problems.
2. Further, the Modernising Services Working Group recommends that the Health and Social Care Scrutiny and Performance Panel refer the findings of this report to Council.

Glossary

Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century - Chapter 7: Housing, fulfilling lives and employment, pp 76-79

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), "*Valuing People* – much achieved, more to do", A summary report of inspections carried out during 2003/2004 of 12 councils' social care services for people with learning disabilities

Stock Evidence Survey - The information in this report is derived from surveys undertaken in January 2004 by the Partridge Viner Craddock Group (PVC Group), supported by Frank Haywood & Associates, Osborne Clewett Partnership Ltd and Greenway and Partners Ltd.

Minutes of the Modernising Services Working Group, Monday 1 November, 2004

Minutes of the Modernising Services Working Group, Wednesday 2 February, 2005

Minutes of the Modernising Services Working Group, Tuesday 8 February, 2005

Minutes of the Modernising Services Working Group, Friday 15 April, 2005