

# NOTES

**Meeting:** 'A SENIOR MOMENT' hosted by Chippenham Area Board  
**Place:** The Need Hall, Chippenham  
**Date:** Thursday 1 December 2011  
**Start Time:** 11am  
**Finish Time:** 1pm

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Please direct any enquiries on these notes to:

Penny Bell (Democratic Services Officer), Tel: 01249 706613 or (e-mail) [penny.bell@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:penny.bell@wiltshire.gov.uk) or

Victoria Welsh (Community Area Manager), Tel 01249 706446 or (email) [victoria.welsh@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:victoria.welsh@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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## **The Panel:**

Councillor Peter Hutton – Chippenham Area Board  
Councillor John Thomson – Cabinet member for Adult Care, Communities & Housing  
Maggie Rae – Corporate Joint Director: Public Health & Wellbeing  
Alison Bell – NHS Wiltshire  
Dr Roger Bullock – Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership  
Victoria Wyper – Contracts and Commissioning Lead for Accommodation  
Nicola Gregson – Head of Commissioning: Care, Support & Accommodation  
Terence Bate – Customer Reference Group  
Alan Scotford – Talking Newspapers  
Brian Warwick – Age Equality South West (Adults)

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## **Summary of Discussions**

Councillor Peter Hutton welcomed everyone to the event and was grateful that so many people were in attendance. Councillor Hutton explained that each member of the panel would be giving a short presentation, followed by a question and answer session with all panel members. Following the question and answer session there would be plenty of time for everyone present to network and to browse the various exhibition stands.

Councillor Hutton thanked the panel members for their attendance at the event, and welcomed each of them in turn to give a short presentation. Summaries of those presentations are as follows:

### **John Thomson, Deputy Leader of Wiltshire Council and Cabinet Member responsible for Adult Care, Communities & Housing**

Councillor Thomson reported that Wiltshire was in a very strong position overall in comparison to many other local authorities in the country. Wiltshire Council was currently investing some £52 million into adult social care services, and had also managed to avoid the closure of all libraries in the county. Councillor Thomson commended the valuable work of the volunteers who had been instrumental in retaining opening hours for libraries, many of the volunteers were older, retired people, and their commitment was much appreciated.

Councillor Thomson also reported on the positive recent developments in Chippenham, including confirmation that a new and improved care facility was due to be developed on the Middlefield site.

### **Victoria Wyper, Contracts & Commissioning Lead for Accommodation, Wiltshire Council**

Victoria provided an outline of Wiltshire Council's new Older People's Accommodation Strategy and the demographic research that had been carried out by Wiltshire Council to inform the Strategy.

The new Strategy was a 10-year development strategy, modelled across two timeline options, which would modernise the way that older people's accommodation was provided. The Strategy was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 25 January 2011 and the full document was available on the Council's website.

### **Alison Bell, End of Life Care, NHS Wiltshire**

Alison talked about End of Life Care, which was a strategy to enable people to plan for their deaths and ensure they lived well until they died. It was believed that 60% people of people had the wish to die in their own homes; and in Wiltshire currently approximately 46% of people achieved this.

Although a difficult subject to approach, Alison encouraged people to talk to those close to them to discuss arrangements for the end of their lives, this could include talking to friends, families, GPs or carers. It would help to ensure that the right support and services were available to meet people's wishes and needs.

**Dr Roger Bullock, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership**

Dr Bullock explained how he was responsible for dementia care services within the NHS in Wiltshire, working closely alongside the PCTs and the local authority. Detecting dementia early was difficult as it relied upon individuals coming forward for help and support. Some of the services available included NHS memory clinics and dementia advisors, which were in place to help people to cope with dementia and determine which support services they required.

**Nicola Gregson, Head of Commissioning: Care, Support & Accommodation, Wiltshire Council**

Nicola outlined the details of Wiltshire Council's Help to Live at Home Strategy; a strategy designed to support older people and to better meet their needs, enabling them to continue to live in their own homes for longer. Working with the Reference Group, the Council had taken the time to talk to the older people to get a clearer picture of the support and services they required. Wiltshire Council had also recently commissioned a single provider to look after all care services in the Chippenham area, resulting in a more streamlined and efficient service.

**Terence Bate, Customer Reference Group**

Terence explained how the Reference Group had been working very closely with Wiltshire Council's Cabinet on care and support services for the elderly, and was pleased to be able to have an input into Wiltshire Council's strategies. The Reference Group also provided support to older people in a number of other ways, including visiting older people in their own homes or in care homes to engage with them and provide additional support.

**Alan Scotford, Talking Newspapers**

Alan outlined a local service called 'Talking Newspapers', which was a service whereby a group of volunteers made audio recordings of articles from the local newspapers, which could then be distributed free of charge to the elderly or anyone with sight or mobility problems. This vital service helped to keep vulnerable people up to date with what was happening in their local area.

**Maggie Rae, Corporate Joint Director: Public Health & Wellbeing**

Maggie stated that she was pleased to see so many people attending such a worthwhile event. The health and wellbeing of the older population was very important, and people were living longer which made care and support services for the elderly even more poignant.

Following the presentations from the guest speakers, a question and answer session was held; main points arising included:

- To compliment the 'Talking Newspapers' service, it was noted that the local libraries also had a 'Books on Wheels' service.
- Thanks were extended to Royal Mail for delivering books free of charge to those in need.
- The Town Council and Wiltshire Council in partnership were both responsible for the economic wellbeing of Chippenham town centre. Internet shopping and out-of-town

shopping all impacted on the High Street, but Chippenham Vision was looking into the issues and potential solutions in more detail, and it was felt that we needed to change and adapt in order to improve our town centre economies.

- It was noted that decent and clean public toilets were vital to the success of a town centre, and it was thought that Chippenham was lacking in this area. It was suggested that partnerships with local businesses could be the solution.
- In response to the point above, it was also noted that all new libraries and campus buildings contained personal care suites, including the Olympiad.
- Concern was raised that street furniture originating from high street retailers, was a hazard to pedestrians, particularly those with sight problems. It was suggested that local town councils should work with the local Chamber of Commerce to address these issues, without having a detrimental effect on the retailers' abilities to advertise their businesses in these difficult economic times. It was also suggested that such concerns could be submitted via the Area Board's Community Issues System.
- It was noted that the Citizen's Advice Bureau could offer financial help with electricity bills to elderly people who were in receipt of pension credit.
- Some concern was expressed at the number of carers who could not speak fluent English, and also the inconsistency in home carers. The new Help to Live at Home Strategy and single-provider were designed to eradicate these problems and so any individual cases would be looked into.
- The Council's new contract with Medequip was a five-year contract with the option to extend it by another two years. This would allow the company time to establish itself and would offer consistency for the users.

### **Brian Warwick, Age Equality South West (Adults)**

Brian gave a final presentation as Chairman of Age Equality South West. He explained how the organisation was there to represent and support older people, and improve quality of life. He acknowledged that there were some issues with care for the elderly, but Age Equality wished to work with people to resolve any issues.

Brian thanked Councillor Hutton and his team for inviting him along and for putting together such a valuable event for the older people of the Chippenham area.

To conclude the session, a number of exhibition stands were available offering information, advice and support and the ability to network with each other.

Councillor Hutton thanked all of the guest speakers for their valuable and informative contributions, and also paid thanks to the exhibitors for giving up their time, and to all the people who had attended the event.

Councillor Hutton also thanked the officers involved in putting together the event, particularly the Chippenham Community Area Manager, Victoria Welsh.

Councillor Hutton encouraged people to attend meetings of the Chippenham Area Board, where more issues were dealt with concerning the health and wellbeing of people living in the Chippenham Community Area.