

Council: 27 June 2006

Administration Policy Item: Cllr. Fiona Bulmer

Council notes both the challenges presented by increasing demands on social services, especially from an ageing population, and the progress that has been made in meeting these challenges and in delivering on the council's key priority of supporting the vulnerable.

Council understands that the number of people receiving direct payments, which allow them more choice and control over the care they receive, has almost doubled in the past four years. Council supports the work being carried out by Adult Social Services to increase this number further and to explore innovative ways of extending the choices available to those who receive care from social services.

Council further notes the growing role of technology in helping vulnerable people to remain in their own homes. It welcomes the start of the *Telecare* project in Barnet that is providing a range of equipment to more than 1800 households in Barnet with a projected increase of 145 within the next year.

Council believes that there is now increasing range of options for older people in Barnet need of care ranging from support in their own homes, extra care sheltered housing schemes and the modernised residential homes for those in greatest need.

Council calls for work to continue to increase choice, promote independent living and greater use of technology to support the most vulnerable in our community.

Council therefore urges Cabinet to develop a pilot scheme for individualised budgets in Barnet that will devolve budgets to care recipients so that they can take full control of their care and maximise their independence and choice over their own lives.