

**COUNCIL**  
**16 MAY 2024**

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**OVERVIEW OF ADULTS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Adults Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

**Social Care Reform - Update**

2. Members were advised that there was no further update in relation to Darlington subsequent to the last meeting, however we were informed that Adult Services at Durham County Council had now received their inspection date from the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which will be in May 2024, and that Adult Services at Northumberland County Council and Gateshead Council had been contacted by the CQC for their self-assessment, with an inspection anticipated in September/October 2024.

**Council Plan 2024-27 – Draft for Consultation**

3. The Committee received the draft Council Plan for consideration, and heard that that the Council Plan outlined the long-term ambitions for Darlington and the priorities the Council sought to deliver over the forthcoming three years (2024-2027). We were informed that the Plan gave strategic direction to the Council, defined priorities and shaped delivery, whilst providing clarity to residents, businesses and stakeholders on the Council's values, what the Council identified as important and what the Council would do. In introducing the report, the Portfolio Holder for Adults Services outlined the key aims for the 'Living Well' priority within the Plan.
4. Members entered into discussion on the plans and strategies that underpin the Council Plan, and we were keen that any such plans and strategies relevant to this Scrutiny Committee would be presented to us at an appropriate stage. We also wanted to further understand what performance measures were being drafted to enable Scrutiny to effectively examine the work being undertaken to achieve the priorities identified within the Council Plan.
5. More specifically, Members of the Committee wanted to see more work undertaken to analyse the provider market and high cost care packages, and we were interested to learn more about the support being offered around mental health. More generally, we sought clarification on how the consultation had been publicised more widely, and requested greater focus on improving the lives of the elderly and encouraging healthier lifestyles, both in terms of diet and physical wellbeing.

**Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Review – Final Report**

6. The final report of the Review of Adult Social Care during the Covid Pandemic Task and Finish Group, which had been established by this Scrutiny Committee on 20 April 2021, was presented to the Committee. The Task and Finish Group had been established to

ascertain how Adult Social Care services had coped during the Covid pandemic, discover how service users and their families felt about the services provided and identify any changes needed in relation to future waves of coronavirus and associated restrictions or lockdowns, or any other future disease outbreak response.

7. Councillor Holroyd, who chaired the Task and Finish Group, attended this meeting of the Scrutiny Committee and provided a detailed presentation which outlined the work of the Task and Finish Group, highlighting the methodology of the work undertaken, a summary of the findings, and the recommendations of the Group.

**Councillor Helen Crumbie**  
**Chair of Adults Scrutiny Committee**