

ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

8th November, 2011

PRESENT – Councillor Thistlethwaite (in the Chair), Councillors Harman, Hutchinson, D. Jones, Kelley, Knowles, Lister, Maddison and York. (9)

APOLOGIES – Councillors Donoghue and L. Haszeldine. (2)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Pauline Mitchell, Assistant Director – Adult Social Care and Housing, Ann Workman, Head of Adult Social Care, Elaine O’Brien, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Partnership, Mark Humble, Strategic Commissioning Manager Learning Disability within Services for People; Miriam Davidson, Director of Public Health NHS County Durham and Darlington and Catherine Parker.

AH1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR – RESOLVED – That Councillor Thistlethwaite be appointed Chair of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2011/12.

AH2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR – RESOLVED – That Councillor Maddison be appointed Vice Chair of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2011/12.

AH3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AH4. MINUTES - Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of the former Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee held on 13th September, 2011.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

AH5. (1) CHANGING ROLE OF SCRUTINY – (a) Overview of Adult Social Care – Elaine O’Brien, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Partnership gave an overview on Adult Social Care and highlighted that the strategic vision for Adult Social Care was to deliver a personalised customer and carer journey that would promote independence, choice and wellbeing, working in partnership and commissioning services for maximum impact and value for money. Members were informed of the Adult Social Care Customer Journey and the ongoing work of the Strategic Commissioning Team in relation to the reviewing and redesigning of support and care services, commissioning for quality and best value for money and contract monitoring and performance management and also the make-up and role of the Joint Strategic Commissioning Group.

(b) Learning Disability Strategy – The Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) consulting with Members on the draft Learning Disability Strategy 2012 – 2015 that had been developed in partnership with County Durham and Darlington NHS and looked to both identify a common framework under which specialist commissioning for children, young people and adults with a learning disability and their families and carers would take place and a model for supporting people to get the support that they required through their own resources and universal services.

Mark Humble, Strategic Commissioning Manager presented the report and highlighted that this was the first multi-agency, all age strategy for children, young people and adults with a learning disability and their families and carers and explained that the strategy was built around the

delivery of eleven broad outcomes that had been developed through the Children and Young Peoples Plan and the Valuing People Partnership Board, which would be delivered through a range of emerging action plans. Particular reference was also made in relation to the key outcome of the strategy which was to ensure some commissioning consistency across Services for People and Durham and Darlington NHS.

Ann Workman, Head of Adult Social Care also gave a presentation on the Learning Disability Life Stage Model that has been developed and has provided an opportunity to improve planning for transition from Children's services to Adults and it was reported that this was unique nationally. The achievements to date were highlighted and it was reported that a new management structure and Team Managers had been put in place and staff were settling in well, that a range of work had been undertaken with staff in relation to caseloads, team development sessions and person centred planning ethos, and that staff had moved from Upperthorpe into the accommodation at Harewood House, which was felt to be extremely positive in terms of establishing the service and bringing staff together, and that further work would be undertaken with Management and staff from Tees, Esk and Wear Valley Foundation Trust to ensure that strong joint working was undertaken.

Discussion ensued on people aged over 60 years with a learning disability, the transition from childhood to adults, personal budgets, the review of day services and the possibility of establishing a task and finish review group on the Learning Disability Strategy and feed the Committee's recommendations/views into the Cabinet meeting scheduled to be held in February.

(c) Update on the Mental Health Strategy and changes to Day Services – Catherine Parker, gave an informative update on Mental Health in Darlington and the new Mental Health Strategy 'No Health without Mental Health' which was published in February, 2011 and superseded 'New Horizons: a shared vision for mental health'. The strategy was aimed at all ages from infants through to older people and sets out six shared objectives to improve mental health and well-being, and to improve outcomes for people with mental health problems through high quality services resulting in fewer people suffering from avoidable harm and experiencing stigma and discrimination, which supports the Governments aims of achieving parity of esteem between physical and mental health. It was highlighted that in Darlington a lot of work had been undertaken on the previous strategy and that a draft action plan was in place with many achievements already made, and the intention was to link this to the six key outcomes, which would be led by the Mental Health Partnership Board.

During the presentation the Committee were updated on recent changes to the current social care day service provision, which previously had three block contracts that met day service needs for adults and older people but had recently moved to a framework agreement with six providers and that an implementation plan was underway to support the transfer to new providers where appropriate and assessing people for new eligible social care day opportunities. It was highlighted that individuals now had a personal budget to either buy the commissioned support or a direct payment to arrange their own support and that plans were in place to develop further preventative services in partnership with the PCT and the third sector.

As part of the presentation the commissioning intentions in relation to health were highlighted which were the development of autism diagnosis and assessment services, re-commissioning of out of area placements, expansion of psychological therapies, delivery of dementia strategy, alignment of mental health staff to General Practitioner practices, the development of the personality disorder pathway and ensuring contract targets reflect 'No Health Without Mental Health'.

Members raised a number of questions in relation to the definition of the Personality Disorder Pathway, personal budgets and direct payments and relevant officers responded to the questions raised, and the Chair highlighted that he had requested a briefing paper from the Assistant Director – Adult Social Care and Housing on personal budgets and an update on the recommendations from the former Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee’s task and finish group.

(d) Update on Older People’s Strategy – Elaine O’Brien, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Partnership gave a presentation on Darlington’s Older Persons Later Life Strategy 2010-2013, which was designed to ensure that the Council and its partners pursue policies and modify services that take into account of, and respond to, the specific needs of older people. As part of the strategy it was highlighted that an Older Persons Partnership Board had been established which oversees strategies and actions plans and also identifies outcomes by which outcomes were measured and reports to the Healthy Darlington Group. The seven key objectives of the strategy were highlighted and achievements that had been made on the objectives so far.

Miriam Davidson, Director for Public Health NHS County Durham and Darlington reported that the 2009/10 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health focussed on ‘Keeping Older People Healthy’ and that there was an audit on the recommendations from that report that this Scrutiny Committee may want to be involved in.

Discussion ensued on developing services for appropriate age groups as it was felt that some resources may have been targeted at the wrong age bracket and also as people were living a lot longer.

(e) Operational Update Across All Service Areas – Members also received an update on the operation of Adult Social Care and it was explained to them the reasons why the service/model needed to change. As part of the update Members were informed of the new model that was in place from the restructure, which included three teams, Intake, Reablement and Long Term Complex Case Work and their remits.

RESOLVED – That the content of the presentations be noted and thanks of this Scrutiny Committee be extended to all officers for the informative and interesting presentations.

(2) WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12 – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) for members to consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the current Municipal Year and to develop the Terms of Reference for those topics. In considering areas to include on the work programme, Members were reminded of the need to take into account the reduced resources available within the Authority and the need to ensure that any work undertaken had demonstrable outcomes and contributed to the work of the Council and its strategic aims and objectives.

References were made in relation to the need for further information on Personal Budgets as there was concern that this Authority were not meeting targets and would like to examine the action plan that was in place and also receive an update on the recommendation from the task and finish group established by the former Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee on Personal Budgets, the need to examine the role of carers and the suggestion of a joint piece of work with Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee as they were also looking at young carers.

Discussion also ensued on the other potential pieces of work in relation to the new Housing Strategy, the Autism Agenda, Safeguarding Adults and the recommendation from the Director of Public's Health report. It was also suggested that at the next meeting of this Scrutiny Committee members receive an update on Housing Services.

RESOLVED – (a) That an update on Housing Services be included on this Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the next ordinary meeting.

(b) That it be recommended to the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group that the following areas of work be included on the work programme of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of this Municipal Year 2011/12 :-

(a) Personal Budgets;

(b) Role of Carers;

(c) Audit of recommendations from the Director of Public Health's report 2009/10.

(3) REVIEW GROUPS AND TASK AND FINISH REVIEWS – Discussion ensued on the draft terms of reference for the Housing Benefit Reform task and finish review group and suggestions were made in relation to this being a review group rather than a task and finish review group so members were able to raise general awareness of the impacts of the reforms to the Housing Benefit scheme and also monitor the effects of the implementation. It was also suggested that a briefing session for all members be arranged to ensure that all members were aware of the reforms and would be able to include information and guidance to residents in their newsletters or at Ward Surgeries.

RESOLVED – That a briefing session be arranged for all Members on the Benefit Reforms.