

ADULTS AND HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

15th January, 2013

PRESENT – Councillor Thistlethwaite (in the Chair); Councillors Harman, Hutchinson, B. Jones, Mrs D. Jones, Kelley, Knowles, Lister and S. Richmond (9)

APOLOGIES – Councillor York (1)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Copeland.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Pauline Mitchell, Assistant Director – Housing and Building Services, Ann Workman, Head of Adult Social Care and Elaine O’Brien, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Health Partner.

(NOTE – The Committee held short period of silence in memory of Councillor Jackie Maddison, who was the Vice-Chair of this Scrutiny Committee).

AH39. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

AH40. MINUTES – Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 6th November, 2013.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as correct records.

AH41. WORK PROGRAMME – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the current Municipal Year.

The submitted report outlined those areas where this Scrutiny Committee had previously identified it would like to focus its work over the next Municipal Year and also emphasised that the work programme was a rolling programme and any Member of this Scrutiny could request an item to be included provided that a Quad of Aims had been submitted to the Scrutiny Committee prior to ensure that it contributed to the strategic aims of the Council.

The Chair updated Members on the current position in relation to the work some Members of this Scrutiny Committee were undertaking in relation to Nutrition in Care Homes and Safeguarding Adults and reported that the outcomes of both of these pieces of work would be reported back to this Scrutiny Committee in due course.

RESOLVED – That the current status of the Work Programme be noted.

AH42. EXTRA CARE HOUSING STRATEGY – The Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting Members' views on proposals for the future of extra care housing in Darlington which was currently being consulted on.

It was reported that the Extra Care Housing Strategy, which had been developed as one of the actions within the recently approved Darlington Housing Strategy 2012/17, set out the vision for the future of extra care and addressed some of the key challenges in developing a future model and delivery Plan.

Particular reference was made to the current extra care provision which had been provided for by the Council for the last eight years and which combined a mix of housing, care and support for adults, the various funding elements which supported the service; and the need to review the provision to ensure that the changing needs and expectations of tenants was met and that the service was cost effective to the Council.

Discussion ensued on the budgetary pressures around adult social care and the need for Members to better understand those pressures, trends in relation to care costs over the last few years; the various care packages currently available together with the financial implications of each of those packages to this Council; the Impact Assessment being undertaken with tenants on the possible use of an alternative provider for the care and support delivery; and the need to maintain continuity of care and independence wherever possible.

RESOLVED – (a) That a further report be submitted to the next meeting of this Scrutiny Committee scheduled to be held on 12 March 2013, outlining the results of the consultation and the Equality Impact Assessment.

(b) That the above report also include further information on the numbers involved and the cost of the various care packages available to enable Members to better understand the various services provided and the pressures on the adult social care budget.

AH43. NEW CONTRACT FOR DOMICILIARY CARE – The Director of People submitted a report (previously circulated) advising Members of a forthcoming tender exercise for this Council's contracts for its domiciliary care which were due to expire on 30 September 2013.

Particular reference was made to the current contractual agreements which had worked successfully for a number of years and it was reported that the partnership working with the providers had been positive, however, as part of the commissioning process, a review of the current contract had highlighted two areas for improvement which would be included in the new framework specification. It was also reported that Cabinet would be considering a proposal for the two separate contracts to be consolidated into one, which, it was anticipated, meet the needs of adults with more complex care needs and achieve a saving for this Council.

RESOLVED – That the report be received.