

HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10th January, 2012

PRESENT – Councillor Newall (in the Chair); Donoghue, Francis, Macnab, Nutt, E. A Richmond, S. Richmond, H. Scott and J. Taylor. (9)

APOLOGIES – Councillor I. Haszeldine and Regan. (2)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Elizabeth Davison, Assistant Director – Finance and Chris Sivers, Assistant Director – Development and Commissioning.

EXTERNAL REPRESENTATIVES – Tom Hunt, Commercial Director, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust.

HP22. DECLARATION OF INTEREST – Councillor Newall and Councillor Macnab both declared personal interest in respect of the proposal relating to the Welfare Rights team, due to their membership on the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Board.

HP23. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP FINAL REPORT – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) presenting the outcome and findings of the Task and Finish Review Group established by the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise those saving proposals contained within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which were under the remit of Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee. The Chair introduced the report and reminded Members of the earlier meetings held to discuss the budget proposals.

Discussion ensued about the Welfare Rights Services provided by the Council, Age UK and Darlington Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB). The Assistant Director – Development and Commissioning commented that work was underway to work on the entire pathway of support available from across all providers and that working together was a possibility.

RESOLVED – That the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee endorse the conclusions and following recommendations of the Medium Term Financial Plan Review Group and be submitted to the Special meeting of Resources Scrutiny committee on 26th January 2012:

- (a) That the Officers be thanked for the attendance at meetings;
- (b) That the proposal in relation to the fundamental review of Social Capital, Equalities and Talking together Budget be supported.
- (c) That the proposal in relation to the reduction in the Welfare Rights Service be reluctantly supported, however, if anything could be done to keep the service, every effort should be made by Officers.
- (d) That Officers to pursue the availability of PCT funding to continue to fund the Welfare Rights post until it ceases to be in existence.