
SERVICE INSPECTION OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE

**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Veronica Copeland,
Adult Services Portfolio**

Responsible Director - Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the report on the outcome of the recent Service Inspection of Adult Social Care.

Summary

2. The attached report at **Appendix 1** provides full details of the assessment made by the Care Quality Commissioner (CQC) Inspectors. The focus of the inspection was Safeguarding Adults and Improved Quality of Life for Older People. CQC have assessed Darlington as performing well in supporting improved quality of life and as performing adequately in safeguarding adults. Our capacity to improve has been rated as promising. The report will be presented at the meeting by Laura Middleton, the lead Service Inspector from CQC. In response to the recommendations made in the report a draft Action Plan has been prepared and this is attached at **Appendix 2**.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the report:-
 - (a) be noted, and
 - (b) the Action Plan be performance monitored by the Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee.

Reasons

4. The recommendations are supported to enable Cabinet to receive the results of the external assessment.

**Cliff Brown
Director of Community Services**

Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

PM : Extension 2505

S17 Crime and Disorder	Good quality safeguarding procedures can contribute to crime prevention.
Health and Well Being	The quality of care and support provided contributes significantly to the health and well being agenda.
Sustainability	Not applicable.
Diversity	Adult Services are of particular relevance to older people and disabled people.
Wards Affected	All wards are affected.
Groups Affected	Adult Services are of particular relevance to older people and disabled people.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report contributes to both the 'Safer Darlington' and 'Healthy Darlington' themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
Efficiency	The Action Plan identifies areas where the Service can improve and be more efficient and effective.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. In August 2009 the Care Quality Commission undertook an inspection of specific Adult Social Care Services. The CQC Inspection Report (attached as **Appendix 1**) provides full details of how well Darlington is delivering social care. To do this the inspection team looked at how well Darlington was:-
 - (a) Safeguarding adults where circumstances made them vulnerable;
 - (b) Improving quality of life in respect of services and outcomes for older people.
6. The outcome of the inspection is that we have been assessed as performing well in supporting improved quality of life and performing adequately in safeguarding adults, whilst our capacity to improve has been rated as promising.
7. The CQC judges the performance of Councils using the following four grades: 'performing poorly', 'performing adequately', 'performing well' and 'performing excellently'.
8. The key messages for the Council included in the report are:-
 - (a) The Council is doing well to support outcomes in safeguarding adults by:
 - (i) Working in Partnership to help reduce crime and improve community safety.
 - (ii) Maintaining clear ways to report concerns and responded swiftly.
 - (iii) Having Team Managers who acted as safeguarding leads and worked pragmatically and well together to address safeguarding issues as they arose.
 - (b) The Council is doing well to support outcomes in terms of improved quality of life for older people by:
 - (i) Making the centre of Darlington attractive, accessible and pedestrianised.
 - (ii) Providing social care services which users reported very favourably on.
 - (iii) Putting a structured, inclusive review process in place.
 - (iv) Operating some good specialised services for older people.
 - (v) Having a range of dedicated social and health based programmes to encourage fitness and well-being.
 - (c) The Council and partners should improve outcomes for safeguarding adults by:-
 - (i) Developing more robust quality oversight to ensure consistent professional standards of work are achieved.
 - (ii) Extending training to a wider range of people, including those outside the social care and health sectors working regularly with vulnerable adults.
 - (iii) Giving particular focus to understanding issues and improving safeguarding for people with learning disability, both as potential victims and perpetrators.
 - (iv) Improving standards of record keeping to ensure they are an accurate representation of events, actions, decisions, monitoring and formal determination of the outcomes.

- (v) Working with the Police to ensure referrals to them are timely and appropriate, to improve the ability of the Police to respond effectively.
- (d) The Council should improve outcomes in terms of improving quality of life for older people by:-
- (i) Consulting further with older people about ways to make them feel safer.
 - (ii) Working with partners to improve peoples' independent mobility including better wheelchair provision and better public transport.
 - (iii) Improving the dissemination of information to people at the time they need it. This should include consulting with those older people and carers who prefer to access information on the Web.
 - (iv) Developing assessments and services for carers in their own right.
 - (v) Increasing the use of self-directed care, including direct payments to provide more individual and innovative solutions for both older people and carers.
- (e) The Council was doing well to ensure capacity to improve in terms of providing leadership by:
- (i) Maintaining political stability for a number of years, in a small authority which had managed within its budget.
 - (ii) Having some key plans in place.
 - (iii) Having established sound operational oversight of older people's services, with a wide range of quality mechanisms in place so that senior staff understood what was happening at the front line.
- (f) The Council was doing well in terms of commissioning and use of resources by:
- (i) Engaging well with older people and carers in developing and assessing the quality of its services.
 - (ii) Working jointly with the PCT on improving contracts around domiciliary care to reflect both their interests.
 - (iii) Working jointly with the PCT to use three year contracts with third sector providers.
 - (iv) Undertaking regular contract monitoring with a clear focus quality.
- (g) The Council should ensure capacity to improve by:
- (i) Being more realistic about its achievements and develop wider, more national benchmarking of its progress,
 - (ii) Ensuring that the Darlington Safeguarding Adults Board has senior commitment from all key agencies and that a clear programme of work is established.
 - (iii) Strengthening quality management around safeguarding so that staff across agencies have a better understanding of what works well and what needs to be improved.
 - (iv) Ensuring that Council leaders take a stronger line on modernisation to increase the pace of change.
 - (v) Developing and acting on more local performance targets, which reflect local priorities.

(h) In terms of Commissioning and use of resources the Council should:-

- (i) Improve joint working, among statutory commissioners around respective budget.
 - (ii) Improve the efficiency of the equipment service from a service user perspective.
 - (iii) Develop a more streamlined structure for consulting with the independent sector.
 - (iv) Ensure that all front line teams have plans, which feed the developmental agenda.
 - (v) Improve the quality of IT systems and support, enabling electronic communication between agencies.
9. Following receipt of the inspection report, an Action Plan has been developed to achieve and monitor progress against the findings and recommendations of the inspection. This is attached as Appendix 2.

Outcome of Consultation

10. As part of the inspection process CQC consulted with a range of key partners, service providers, service users and carers.