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**OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken by the Social Affairs and Health Scrutiny Committee:-
  - (a) **Sensory Impairment Centre – Visit** – Members of the Committee enjoyed a visit to the new Sensory Impairment Centre at Vane House, prior to its official opening on 13th April, 2004, where they were given a demonstration of a variety of equipment available to assist those with a visual or hearing impairment.
  - (b) **Overview of County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust** – In our last meeting of the Municipal Year, we met with John Saxby, Chief Executive, and Tony Wolfe, Non-Executive Director, of County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, who updated us on the work of the Trust. This presentation was most informative and the Committee looks forward to meeting the Chief Executives of all the Trusts again over the coming Municipal Year.
  - (c) **Commission for Racial Equality Code of Practice in Rented Housing – Best Value Performance Indicator 164** – Members continue to receive updates and monitor the number of racial incidents reported to the Housing Division.
  - (d) **National Service Framework for Older People and GOLD Project Team** – It is pleasing to report the progress made in relation to the National Service Framework for Older People and the Growing Older Living in Darlington Integrated Strategy for Older People. The Committee will now receive six monthly updates on the achievement of the standards. A number of members also participated in the GOLD 2nd year anniversary celebrations held on 6th April, 2004.
  - (e) **Play Areas for Disabled Children Review Group – North Lodge Park Play Areas Refurbishment** – Following an update on the refurbishment of North Lodge Park to include an accessible play area, Members of the original Review Group have met with the Assistant Director of Community Services and the Environmental Services Operations Manager to discuss the consultation carried out by the Review Group and its recommendations, and will be involved in the progress of the refurbishment through representation on the Steering Group.
  - (f) **Review Groups** – Progress is being made by the Nursing Mothers Review Group and the Delayed Discharge Task and Finish Review Group, and following an interim report from the Community Pharmacy Task and Finish Review Group, this Review will reconvene later in the year, once the details of the new pharmacy contract have been finalised.

The Oral Healthcare of Children in Darlington Review Group has submitted its final report and suggested a future review topic on health eating, diet and obesity in children for the Committee to consider.

- (g) Richardson Hospital Redevelopment Proposals** – We have also considered the options available for the redevelopment of the Richardson Hospital and were invited to attend a public meeting on 14th April, 2004 to discuss the proposals further.
- (h) Choosing Health Consultation** – At a special meeting of the Committee, we were informed of the Department of Health’s Choosing Health Consultation and have been invited to consider a number of questions aimed at individuals, communities and organisations. Members will feed their comments into an event dedicated to the consideration of this consultation on 21st May, 2004 and look forward to the issue of the White Paper later in the year.
- (i) Patient and Public Involvement in Health** – We have also had a productive meeting with representatives from the Patient and Public Involvement Forums from the PCT, Acute and Priority Services Trust, and the North East Ambulance Service Trust and have developed arrangements for sharing information and will now meet on a six monthly basis.
- (j) Transport Review Group** – A special meeting has been held to scope this major review and the Committee has split into two groups to look at access to both social care and health settings. We have also co-opted members from the Acute Trust and PCT Patient Forums onto the Review and look forward to reporting our progress in the new Municipal Year.

**Councillor Mrs. Marian Swift**  
**Chair of Social Affairs and Health Scrutiny Committee**