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

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Social Affairs and Health Scrutiny Committee has undertaken: -
  - (a) **Haematology Inpatient Services in Darlington** – Following the decision of the County Durham and Darlington Acute Hospital Trust to close the Haematology Inpatient Services at Darlington Memorial Hospital and move them to Bishop Auckland General Hospital, the Committee held a Special meeting on 16th February 2007 to discuss the report of Dr Stephen Singleton, Medical Director Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority, which formed the basis of the decision. There was press and public attendance at the meeting and a full public discussion was had. The Committee has agreed to adjourn the meeting and reconvene at a later date to allow for full consideration of the evidence.
  - (b) **Annual Health Checks** – Work continues in the annual health check process, which looks at the performance of NHS Trusts across the Healthcare Commission’s 24 core standards, Members of the Committee have split into four separate groups and agreed some common standards in relation to patient focus, accessible and responsive care and public health to inform our contribution to each Trusts final declaration of compliance for 2006/07. Councillor Copeland and myself attended a briefing event in Newcastle, hosted by the Healthcare Commission, where we received guidance on submitting our commentaries. The final commentaries will be agreed at a Special meeting of the Committee on 5th April 2007.
  - (c) **Stroke Symptoms Task and Finish Review Group** – The Committee received a report from the Stroke Symptoms Task and Finish Review Group, updating Members of the Committee on progress made to date. A further meeting of the Stroke Symptoms Task and Finish Review Group has been arranged on Monday, 26th February 2007, when the Group will meet with a representative from The Stroke Association and the Director of Public Health, Darlington PCT.
  - (d) **Mental Health and Well Being Review Group** – The Review Group consists of the full compliment of Members of the Committee and following the initial meeting with Director of Public Health and Mental Health NSF Lead, Darlington PCT and Director of Nursing, Psychology and Allied Health Professionals, Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Hospitals Trust and Darlington Borough Council Mental Health professionals, it was agreed to establish a Steering Group with three Members to meet regularly to with Officers to develop this piece of work. As a result, the Committee has received a report from the Steering Group on the progress to date. The next step is for all Members to undertake visits to a variety of organisations such as Carers Support, Advocacy Together, Community mental Health Teams, MIND, etc to research further into the services provided in Darlington. Members will report back their findings to the

Committee's meeting on 20th March 2007.

- (e) **Visit to Newton Lane, Darlington** – Councillors Copeland, Flowers and Johnson, represented the Committee and recently visited the short break facility at 93 Newton Lane, Darlington. Members praised the staff for their hard work and were very impressed by the facilities available for people requiring a short break. The information gathered will inform the Committee when it considers the new learning disability facilities in the South Park, later in the year.
- (f) **Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee** – Councillor Copeland and myself represented the Committee at the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee meeting 1st February 2007. The Joint Scrutiny has agreed to invite representatives of the PCT's across the Tees Valley and the Strategic Health Authority to its 5th March 2007 meeting to discuss the White Paper.
- (g) **Darlington PCT Nursing Strategy Task and Finish Review Group** – The Committee was consulted on the Darlington PCT Nursing Strategy and established a Task and Finish Review Group to consider the Strategy in more detail. The Task and Finish Group met with Linda Bailes, Head of Nursing Darlington PCT, and discussed the working document, the following recommendations were made; that further evidence of patients and partners involvement in the consultation should be included in the Strategy; that the document as a whole should be more reader and user friendly; that the colour of the pie chart in relation to Work Force Planning should be reviewed; that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be listed as a consultee, and, that in future, the Committee should be consulted at an earlier stage. The Group also expressed concerns as to the Recruitment and Retention section, of the Strategy, as to how realistic the detailed aspirations were and whether they were achievable. Members welcomed the Strategy and are looking forward to receiving the Financial Summary document, as requested.
- (h) **A breastfeeding Friendly Town Strategy** – The Committee received an update from the Infant Feeding Co-Ordinator on the recommendations of Committee following its Breastfeeding Review. The Committee welcomed the progress of the Breast Feeding Accreditation Scheme and looked forward to receiving further updates.
- (i) **Tees, Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust Durham, Foundation Trust Application** – Councillors Copeland and Mrs. Scott received a briefing from Harry Cronin, Director of Nursing, Psychology and Allied Health Professionals, regarding the Trusts application to become a Foundation Trust. The Director is keen to involve the Committee at an early stage of the process and will attend the Committee's next meeting on 20th March 2007 to provide with Members an initial briefing. The full public consultation will begin in June 2007.
- (j) **Service Planning and Monitoring** – The Committee received an overview of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and the linkages between Scrutiny Work Plans and the Corporate Plan, the Community Strategy and Service Plans. Members also received a demonstration of Performance Plus, the Council's computerised performance management system.

- (k) **Work Programme 2006/2007** – We have given consideration to the Work Programme of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2006/07 and in doing so examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan for particular areas of interest and concern. We continually add to our Work Programme and monitor ongoing items.

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

Since the last meeting of Council, I have attended the following meetings: -

- Annual Health Check Priority Trust Task Group – 19th January 2007.
- Annual Health Check NEAS Task Group – 19th January 2007.
- Members Training – Adults Services fitting into Community Services – 24th January 2007.
- Briefing with Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services – 30th January 2007.
- Briefing with Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services & Councillor Bryan Thistlewaite, Cabinet Member for Community and Public Services – 30th January 2007.
- Mental Health Steering Group – 30th January 2007.
- Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Committee – 1st February 2007.
- Darlington PCT, Nursing Strategy Task & Finish Review Group – 5th February 2007.
- Annual Health Check Briefing event, Newcastle – 6th February 2007.
- Darlington Assembly – Opportunity in Ageing – 7th February 2007.
- Health Scrutiny Support Programme Training – Foundation Trusts – 13th February 2007.
- Annual Health Check PCT Task Group – 14th February 2007.
- Meeting with a member of the public interested in the Mental Health Review – 15th February 2007.
- Briefing with Democratic and Legal Services – 15th February 2007.
- Stroke Symptoms Task & Finish Review Group – 26th February 2007.
- Briefing with Chief Executive of County Durham & Darlington Acute Hospital NHS Trust – 27th February 2007.