
OVERVIEW OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform and update Members on progress within Adult Social Care and Housing since the last meeting of Council. The following are the main areas of work under the Portfolio for Adult Social Care and Housing.

Adult Social Care –Strategic Commissioning

2. The two annual learning disability Department of Health returns, the Health self-assessment and the Partnership Board Return, have, following consultation, been combined into a single document. The three key themes of the new self-assessment are, staying healthy, being safe and living well. The self-assessment includes information on compliance, data and individual local stories. The completed assessment is to be returned by the end of November 2013 and agreed through the Health and Wellbeing Board.
3. The annual Autism self-assessment has also been updated and needs to be returned by the end of September 2013. This self-assessment asks each Council area, including the Clinical Commissioning Group to assess its progress in delivering the outcomes from the 2011 national Autism Strategy, “fulfilling and rewarding lives”. There is a requirement that the self-assessment will be agreed through the Health and Wellbeing Board.
4. Following the events at Winterbourne View Hospital, NHS England and ADASS asked that each local authority area complete a stock take on progress in delivering the key actions of the final report into Winterbourne view. This was completed and returned by the end of June as required. The next key milestone is that each area will need to have a joined up plan in place to meet the needs of people with complex support needs by April 2014. Work is underway with key partners to ensure that the plan is completed and agreed within the required timescales.
5. Work is underway to update the current residential contracts for people with a learning disability, a mental health problem and a physical and sensory impairment. The new agreement will be a single standardised service specification that sets out the outcomes expected and a banded rate.
6. The detailed Business Case for the delivery of the new short term intervention model being developed by “Peopletoo”, to deliver a single service model across Darlington and County Durham, will shortly be completed and submitted for approval for the pilot to commence in October.

Adult Social Care – Operational Developments

7. Safeguarding - Work is on-going with regard to three complex safeguarding investigations. It is likely that there will be media attention following a September court appearance of a member of staff from a private institution in the Borough.
8. Peer Review - Adult Social Care will be subject to a Peer Review in November, 2013. The Peer Review will be undertaken by a team, which will include a Lead Peer who could be a Director from one of the North East Authorities, a Member Peer, a Senior Officer Peer and a Local Government Association Challenge Manager. The Peer Review is over a 3 day period and a range of sessions will be held with key Members, Officers and external partners.
9. Safeguarding Adults Board – Mike Vening has been appointed as the new independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board. The Chair will take up post on 1st September, 2013. The Board are also delighted to welcome a lead GP for Safeguarding Adults, Dr. James Carlton.

Housing Services

10. Pets Policy – Formal consultation has begun on proposed changes to the Pets Policy to allow tenants living in sheltered housing and properties with communal entrances to keep a cat or a dog. This follows on from a detailed consultation with tenants living in these types of properties. Tenants in five sheltered schemes and one Extra Care scheme strongly opposed any change while in other developments there was generally a positive response. There will be no change to the policy in the sheltered and Extra Care schemes that opposed the change. We are also taking the opportunity to update the policy with a requirement for cats and dogs to be micro chipped. This will be a legal requirement from April 2016 for dogs. We are working with the Dogs Trust on a series of local events at which free micro chipping will be on offer as well as advice on pet welfare.
11. Extra Care - Review of the Meals Service - As part of the general review of Extra Care, a specific review is being conducted of the meals service in the three Council schemes. Consultation has taken place with tenants and an analysis of the way meals are delivered by other providers has been conducted including Mayflower Court which is run by Hanover Housing Association. As a result, the Council tested out changes to the service during August at Rosemary Court. This included some changes in meal times and a more varied menu. As an example, Tuesday has been themed as “Eating around the world” when the main meal will be available at 4:30 pm and will focus on the cuisine of a particular country and will include music, quizzes and films. The views of tenants have been sought throughout this trial and this will help to produce a final set of proposals for change. In general, feedback to the changes has been very positive.
12. The Capital Works Programme is progressing well with over 100 properties in various rural locations benefitting from internal planned maintenance work including new kitchens and bathrooms. Old inefficient boilers have been removed in around 60 properties at Red Hall and replaced with A rated boilers. Where appropriate, loft insulation has been topped up to the maximum recommended level. Work is also

now completed to all of the Council flats in the North Road area where new energy efficient external composite doors have been fitted and heating provided in the lobbies to address condensation issues.

13. I have looked at the services we offer to homeless people, and we provide a range of services depending on the circumstances of the individual. These include:
- (a) Temporary accommodation in bed and breakfast, crash pads or privately leased property.
 - (b) Permanent accommodation.
 - (c) Homeless prevention funding to assist with the payment of a Bond, rent in advance or paying off rent arrears to maintain a tenancy.
 - (d) Mediation Service with landlords/family.
 - (e) Tenancy Support for vulnerable people or people with complex, chaotic lifestyles.
 - (f) Advice and support to access private sector accommodation.
 - (g) Signposting to appropriate agencies.

GOLD

14. The annual Tea Dance was held in the market place on 14 August and was, as in previous years, an overwhelming success. Over 500 people attended throughout the day, dancing to music provided by a big band and everyone received a cream tea. A large number of organisations also attended to provide information and advice to the public on a wide range of services available for the over 50's.
15. The Full of Life Day (part of UK Older People's Day) is being held on 1 October. This will be the third year running that this event has taken place. Planning for the day is currently underway and further information on the activities being held on the day will be available soon. This year the event will be used to launch the 'Good Friends scheme'. The scheme will establish a network of 'good friends' across Darlington, who will keep a watchful eye on their elderly and vulnerable neighbours, providing support and friendship and assisting them with a range of issues which, if left unaddressed, could compromise their ability to live safely and well independently.
16. I have also attended :-
- (a) the launch of the Warm up North Scheme;
 - (b) a meeting of the Adult Safeguarding Board;
 - (c) the GOLD Tea Dance;
 - (d) a meeting for Lead Members for Adult Social Care; and
 - (e) a meeting of the Health and Well Being Board.

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