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**OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS PORTFOLIO**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the main areas of work under my Health and Partnerships Portfolio were as follows:

**Public Health**

2. Since my last report, further collaborative work has been conducted with local authorities in the Tees Valley for shared public health capacity. A focus of the Tees Valley Shared Public Health Services has been on supporting Darlington Borough Council with a review and refresh of the Strategic Single Needs Assessment for 2013. The purpose of the SNA is to provide information, technical data and analysis by a range of partners to inform commissioning decisions.
3. The “Be Clear on Cancer” campaign ran in the summer and was supported in Darlington. It aimed to make people aware of the symptoms of lung cancer and encourage them to visit their GP if they had a cough for three weeks or more. As Chair of The Darlington Tobacco Alliance, I support actions in our borough to help people have an early diagnosis and improve our cancer survival rates.
4. Since my last report the government has made a statement on alcohol strategy, not taking forward the introduction of a Minimum Unit Price (MUP) for alcohol. Balance, the North East Alcohol Office shared the disappointment of the public health community that MUP is not being taken forward at this point.
5. Public Health England will undertake a scientific review of the available evidence to inform the government whether to implement or not. The Government also decided to postpone its final decision on standardised packaging for cigarettes.
6. A national campaign is underway to increase uptake rates of Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccination via GP practices. Darlington has seen a measles outbreak earlier in the year and as Portfolio lead for Health I am supporting key managers that vaccination is critical in preventing the spread of measles and protecting the health of our population

**Health and Well-Being Board**

7. The Health and Well Being Board will meet four times a year. All Board meetings are held in the Town Hall and are open to the public with papers published on the Council’s website.

8. The Board has produced a Health and Wellbeing Strategy and an underpinning Health and Social Care Delivery Plan which sets out three key actions:
  - To focus resources in areas of highest need
  - To create a sustainable health and social care economy
  - To improve the management of Long Term Conditions
9. As well as managing delivery of the strategy and delivery plan the Board has also had an oversight of key pieces of work around:
  - Francis Report
  - Health Protection
  - Darlington Healthwatch arrangements
  - Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group Commissioning Intentions
  - Health and Well Being Strategy
  - Securing Quality in Health Services
  - Safeguarding both for Adults and Children
10. A Provider Forum event was held in June which saw key members of the Health and Wellbeing Board present information to, and answer questions from, a range of providers of health and social care services across the Borough. This event was the catalyst to what will be an ongoing dialogue with providers about meeting the needs of the Borough with regard to health and social care services.

### **Darlington Partnership**

11. The Good Friends initiative which is delivering the Partnership's action priority is progressing at great speed. Good Friends will establish a network of informal volunteers across Darlington, who will keep a watchful eye on their older 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. They would make brief contact to check up on vulnerable people who live nearby but would escalate the contact during known difficult times e.g. cold weather or when alerted to a specific problem.
12. Two key posts have been filled and both will be in post before September. The Adult Safeguarding Board has been consulted on appropriate safeguarding for the scheme and the Adult Safeguarding business manager is giving support and advice. The scheme will be launched with a series of events culminating in a grand launch on October 1<sup>st</sup> which is Older People's day.

### **Welfare Rights**

13. 21 new enquiries were opened during June and 27 enquiries were closed. The current caseload within the team stands at 69 cases.
14. The potential impact of the welfare reforms are not yet clear for individuals, however the potential for the need for support at Appeal is likely to increase, particularly in relation to DLA reassessments that will take place over the next few years.

15. During June, £25, 771 was secured in additional benefits for a number of individuals. This makes £97,094 for the first quarter. This is down on last years first quarter which was £116, 539.

## Healthwatch

16. Healthwatch can be contacted at its office in Evolution and by telephone on (01325) 380145 or 07525247723 and the website is now live on [www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchdarlington.co.uk) and there is a Freephone Information and Signposting service which can be accessed on 0808 801 0383.
17. The organisation has identified the need to go out to talk to the community and has programmed in outreach activity as set out below:

Venue	Day	Time
Salvation Army, Thompson Street East	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month	10:00 – 11:30
Maidendale House, Burnside Road, Firthmoor	2 <sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month	11:00 – 11:30
Cockerton Library, The Green, Cockerton	1 <sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month	15:00 – 17:00
Redhall Community Centre, Headingly Crescent	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month	9:00 – 10:30

18. Healthwatch facilitated a joint event on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2013 which was attended by over 120 people, including patients/residents and representatives from the public, private and voluntary sector. The information from the workshops will help to inform the work of Healthwatch in the future and will also be valuable for commissioners of health and social care services.
19. The NHS Complaints advocacy service is also working out of the Local Healthwatch office which gives a truly seamless service. Clients can, however, be seen at other venues at their request. It is important that complaints' information is used to inform policy and practice; for this reason a joint meeting has been set up with health colleagues, Healthwatch and the local authority to look at complaints on a quarterly basis to ensure recurring issues are addressed.
20. Performance information is reviewed monthly and five cases were closed in June, 11 cases are on-going and one new case was opened.

**Councillor A Scott**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Health and Partnerships**