
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIPS PORTFOLIO

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:

Healthy Darlington

Healthy Darlington Themed Group

2. The Healthy Darlington Themed group met on 24th May 2011 with good attendance from all sectors. A key item of business was to close down the Healthy Darlington Delivery Plan following a review of the actions and progress towards targets set in 2008. Progress has been positive, e.g. the interventions to tackle childhood obesity, however, the Healthy Darlington group reinforced the need to focus on “narrowing the gaps” both within Darlington and between Darlington and England.

Tobacco Control Plan

3. Smoking remains the major cause of lower life expectancy and higher cancer and heart disease rates in Darlington compared with the England average
4. The Government White Paper “A Tobacco Plan for England” was published in March 2011. The overall aims are to:
 - reduce adult smoking prevalence
 - reduce rates of regular smoking among 15 year olds
 - reduce rates of smoking through pregnancy
5. The Darlington Tobacco Control Alliance met on 23 May 2011 to develop the local Tobacco Control Action Plan.

Darlington Strategic Needs Assessment

6. A single, strategic needs assessment has been developed in 2010/2011 as a resource for strategic decision makers and commissioners of services. The Single Needs Assessment (SNA) builds on the previous Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs) published in 2008 and 2009.

The resource is on both the DBC website and PCT website, reflecting the shared responsibility to produce the tool.

Impact Assessment

7. A number of events have been held relating to the two Adult Social Care proposals to change the eligibility criteria for receipt of social care and to remove the severe disability premium disregard. The aim of these events has been to understand the potential impact of these proposed changes on individuals. Over 200 people attended these events.
8. We used some venues in extra care accommodation to ensure that we targeted those people affected by the changes. Events have also been held in the Dolphin Centre and sessions held with a number of groups within the town.
9. People have also had the opportunity to discuss impacts and concerns by telephone with staff from adult social care and also to leave their comments using the on-line forum or E-mail. This work has been supported by detailed involvement by representatives from Darlington Association on Disability and Advocacy Together with a shared aimed of drawing out impacts to provide evidence for the decision-makers.

Growing Old Living in Darlington (GOLD)

10. Improved service-user involvement is currently being planned jointly with Age UK to look at how much we engage with older people and what influence they have on the development and delivery of services. This adds value to the self-assessment of the Older People's Partnership Board which was held in May and was supported by representatives of the Department for Work and Pensions.

Fair Share

11. Projects have now been agreed, including a Bengali school, running costs for Northgate and Central Partnerships and a housing support worker for Northgate. In addition, feasibility work is currently being undertaken to investigate the possibility of purchasing a building that will provide a community asset for Northgate Partnership. This will include a business case to make sure that the building supports the long-term sustainability of the partnership and enables them to earn income.

Community Advice Partnership (CAP)

12. This partnership between Citizen Advice Bureau, Age UK and Welfare Rights saw over 10,000 clients last year and this will increase further in the coming year. An event has been held to evaluate the work so far and to put in place improvements that will increase the effectiveness of the partnership.

Darlington Together

13. Community workers are facilitating an outcome-based accountability programme which has been undertaken in Branksome and Cockerton West. This has involved working closely with the PCT and also with Branksome School. The School has been very supportive of this work and a joint plan of action building on the links that already exist in the area is being agreed. Work relating to a similar approach to alcohol issues is currently under discussion with Balance, the North East Alcohol Office and local residents.
14. International Day is due to take place later in the year and community workers are providing minimal support this year at the early planning stage as the group is now clear

about the lead partner role and are self-sufficient.

15. An initial planning meeting will take place in late June with schools, businesses, community partnership, voluntary sector, Street Scene and other local residents groups on Red Hall to look at long-term activities to resolve the problem of litter. This will not be short-term one-off litter-picks but will be based upon long-term community-based solutions. The response has been very positive to the initial invitations and further reports will track progress with this work as it is a pilot for further work across the borough.
16. A bid to NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) to develop this 'Darlington Together' approach has been submitted. Initially 20 successful councils will receive financial and non-financial support.
17. Further engagement has taken place on the Darlington Arts Enquiry Group work. As part of the 'Voices and Views' strand consultation work has taken place with artists as suggested by the Arts Council. This has been undertaken through a questionnaire and by holding events at the Arts Centre. Further engagement has been planned as stage 2 of the consultation on the vision for arts in Darlington. This builds on the first phase of consultation in March/April which engaged with over 1,400 people. The Social Enterprise Development Manager is leading on the drafting of a new vision for the arts in Darlington.

Welfare Rights

18. To date this year the service has taken on 134 new clients and 19 of the clients have been represented at appeal hearings of which 12 have been successful. This gives a success rate of 63 per cent for the year to date, which is nearly double the national average. £80,349 of additional benefits has been brought in to support clients at a time when benefit regimes are tighter.

Health Engagement

19. Work is ongoing to develop a specification for Local HealthWatch which will take forward work currently undertaken by the Local Involvement Network (LINK) but with an additional role relating to advocacy and complaints. A project team has been brought together to ensure the views of a broad range of stakeholders are represented so that HealthWatch does not duplicate existing functions but brings together a strong voice for patients and residents. This group includes representation from GP Commissioning Consortia, the Primary Care Trusts and the Patient Advice and Liaison Service.
20. LINK members are involved in the process and the aim is to broaden participation in LINK prior to the operation of HealthWatch in July 2012. The current LINK contract has been varied to include outcome measures that will support development of HealthWatch. Discussions are taking place with other authorities in neighbouring areas to identify potential savings and share best practice in procurement.
21. At a recent regional event a presentation by the Department of Health was given which highlighted the fact that statutory guidance will not be forthcoming and that the priority will be for a local service that meets the needs of local residents, designed and delivered locally. Further information is awaited concerning the link to National HealthWatch and concern was expressed to the Department of Health representative about how local HealthWatch can influence the National Commissioning Board. It is unclear at present how the National HealthWatch body, which is a sub-committee of the Care Quality Commission and Local

HealthWatch will inter-relate.

Hyper-acute Stroke Services

22. On 19th July, Cabinet received a report highlighting the consultation on hyper-acute stroke services being undertaken by NHS County Durham and Darlington. The full document can be downloaded at www.haveasay.org.uk and the consultation questionnaire is also available on that website. They are consulting on the following issues:-
 - (a) That a split-site model for delivery of hyper-acute services cannot continue.
 - (b) Move to a single site option for delivery of hyper-acute stroke services is the best model.
 - (c) Specialist care is more important than care closer to home.
 - (d) That the University Hospital, North Durham, is the preferred site for a single site.
23. Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee have agreed that their Hyper-acute Stroke Services Review Group will continue to speak to a range of groups and individuals in Darlington in relation to this issue and to use this to inform their response to the consultation. Cabinet has asked that this is also used to inform the response of the Council that Cabinet has requested the Director of People to submit prior to the 11th September deadline.

Darlington Partnership Review

24. At its meeting in March 2011 the Darlington Partnership Board agreed terms of reference for a review of the partnership with the following objectives:
 - (a) Redefine the purpose for the partnership in being the most effective response to the changed context and landscape
 - (b) Propose governance structures and accountability arrangements which are most appropriate to deliver against the redefined purpose
 - (c) Develop mechanisms for all partners to be active contributors.
25. Across the Board, Theme Groups and Executive Group, unanimous agreement has been recorded that partnership working is an essential ingredient in the new context and the Darlington Partnership is seen as having a central role to play moving forward. However whether the current theme group structure is the most effective way of delivering One Darlington: Perfectly Placed has been questioned. The Board has called for the Partnership to become more flexible and dynamic with a tighter, clearer focus.
26. A baseline report has been produced which outlines the current structure, stakeholder views of the future of the Partnership and describes some potential implications for the future vision and mission of the Partnership. This was presented to the LSP Board and discussed on June 22nd.
27. From this report a draft model will be proposed to the Board in July which will form the basis of further consultation with a final model to be proposed to the Board in September 2011. I am working closely with others in the Partnership to support this review and ensure that it results in arrangements that are best for Darlington and for the Council.

Councillor A Scott
Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Health and Partnerships