
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND PARTNERSHIP SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Health and Partnership Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

Six Months In

2. We have received a final progress report following the implications of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 from Healthwatch, Public Health, Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group and Health and Well Being Board.
3. The updates outlined whether the transitional arrangements in place were sufficient and assisted with the process, an overview of work carried out in the past six months and future ambition and further work.

Health and Social Care Delivery Plan

4. At our last meeting Officers reported the progress made to date with the Health and Social Care Delivery Plan 2013 – 2016.
5. The Health and Social Care Delivery Plan outlines the shared priorities for healthcare, social care and public health for 2013 – 2016. The plan sits underneath the Darlington's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its purpose is to focus collective action on improvements in health and social care outcomes and narrowing the gap in outcomes within Darlington, and between Darlington and the rest of England.
6. Members focused their discussions around the following three priority actions:
 - (a) Action 1 – To focus resources in areas of highest need
 - (b) Action 2- To create a sustainable health and social care economy
 - (c) Action 3- To improve the management of Long Term Conditions
7. We are holding an informal meeting to consider whether any further scrutiny work is required to be undertaken of any of the priority actions and will forward our views and comments to the Health and Well Being Board through the representatives on the Board from this Committee. We will also discuss whether further scrutiny of the Development Plan is necessary in due course.

Darlington Health Profiles 2011 and 2012

8. We have received an update report following the work the Committee carried out in respect of the Darlington Health Profile for 2011 and are disappointed that the 2012 Health Profile indicates a rise in deprivation i.e. people living in the most deprived quintile (20 per cent) in England and children living in poverty.
9. As a Scrutiny Committee, we have investigated Long Term Conditions and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease which has supported the outcomes of the Health Profiles.
10. We have been reassured by the Director of Public Health that we will receive copies of Health Profile for 2013 and look forward to receiving it in due course, to influence our future Work Programme.

Access to GP appointments Task and Finish Review Group

11. Members have embarked on a piece of work in relation to access to GP appointments following residents raising issues with a number of Councillors about being unable to get an appointment with their GP when they need them.
12. Every Member of the Scrutiny Committee was allocated a GP Practice and asked to approach the Practice to complete a series of questions. The majority of Members contacted the Practice Managers and met with them in person and discussed issues around whether there was sufficient number of appointments to meet the increased demand.
13. Members also sought public opinion at the GOLD Tea Dance with the aid of the questionnaire seeking members of the public's view on how easy it was to make appointments at their GP Practice and whether they are able to ring up and get an appointment the same day.
14. We will next meet with representatives from Healthwatch to discuss any issues they have had reported to them and two members of our Committee will attend a meeting of the GP Practice Managers to discuss their concerns and finally we will meet with representatives from Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group, before preparing our conclusions.

Winter preparedness

15. We have requested to be briefed about winter preparedness and winter planning at our next Health and Partnerships Briefing. We have asked for an overview of the joint Darlington Borough Council and County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust Winter Plan.
16. We believe that the NHS must start preparing for winter earlier than ever before, and learn from past experiences to avoid additional pressures.

Children's and Maternity Services at The Friarage Hospital

17. The consultation has been launched regarding the options for Children's and Maternity Services at the Friarage Hospital and it runs until 25 November 2013. We have already established a Task and Finish Review Group to respond to the Consultation.
18. I am meeting with representatives from North Yorkshire County Council and Richmondshire District Council, to discuss their views and to be part of any work that the Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee undertakes.
19. We know that any changes to the Friarage Hospital will impact of the Maternity Services at Darlington Memorial Hospital and we will seek assurance from them about capacity, safety and quality of services.

Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

20. At the recent meeting of Joint Committee Members considered the securing quality in health services report and progress made to date. This piece of work has focused on improving quality of acute hospitals across County Durham, Darlington and Tees Valley.
21. Following completion of phase one, phase two is underway and a feasibility study is being carried out. It has been agreed that Darlington CCG should lead the work on behalf of the five CCG's in the areas and Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby CCG is also working closely with the project due to the patient flows into the Tees Valley Area. We will monitor this work closely as we believe that the outcomes will inform the commissioning plans and contracting intentions for the 2014/15 financial year.
22. The Joint Committee also received a position statement in relation to commissioning of alcohol treatment and prevention services across the Tees Valley area. Each Council was asked to provide information about the services commissioned in relation to alcohol prevention and treatment, the level of local need, short to medium term plans/priorities and other emerging issues.

Work Programme 2013/14

23. We have given consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee for the Municipal Year 2013/14 and possible review topics and in doing so, we have taken into account the reduced resources available and ensured that, in recommending our work programme to Monitoring and Co-ordination Group, any work we undertake will have demonstrable outcomes and contribute to the work of the Council and its strategic aims and objectives.

Councillor Wendy Newall
Chair of the Health and Partnership Scrutiny Committee