
OVERVIEW OF HEALTH AND WELL BEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee has undertaken: -
 - (a) **County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust – Seizing the Future** – The lead Members of the Scrutiny Committee continue to attend the Seizing the Future Delivery Oversight Board, along with colleagues from Durham County Council and other NHS Partners and brief the Scrutiny Committee at regular intervals. The Committee have received a formal update from the Oversight Board which outlined the transport arrangements and the delivery progress of Seizing the Future since March 2009. The report highlighted the implementation of the major changes which went live from 1st October 2009. The Oversight Board will now concentrate on overseeing the delivery of the remainder of the milestones in Seizing the Future, including ensuring that all obligations to the stakeholders are met.
 - (b) **Healthy Darlington Themed Group Update** – The Locality Director of Public Health, as Chair of the Healthy Darlington Theme Group gave Members a verbal update from the Healthy Darlington Group and the Healthy Darlington Business Group. The Group considered a report responding to the economic pressures effecting Darlington, with a particular emphasis on worklessness. Members of the Committee are interested to receive the report and look forward to further work of the Healthy Darlington Group to address the issues.
 - (c) **Stroke Services update** – Members received two reports on stroke services at their last meeting, the first report from NHS County Durham provided an update the Stroke Strategy Review Group 2009/10. The report outlined the background to the launch of the National Stroke Strategy and the progress since the last report in January 2009 on the Stroke Clinical Action Team, which oversees the delivery of County Durham and Darlington PCT's Stroke Care Review. Members are disappointed that unfortunately the investment allocation to improve access to Stroke Rehabilitation capacity is yet to be confirmed, although, Members have been reassured that NHS County Durham are still very committed to improving stroke services. The second report was produced by the Executive Director of Operations and Business, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust, the report provided background to seizing the future in connection with the provision of stroke services. The report highlighted the National Stroke Strategy as a key driver, together with the 'five demands for action' framework which demonstrates how the planned changes under seizing the future will improve the care the Trust will offer. With regards to the Stroke Unit at Darlington Memorial Hospital, Members were pleased to note that Ward 52 had been newly refurbished into the dedicated stroke unit, with eight beds in total and fully trained nursing staff, specifically trained in stroke care. It was explained that the beds within the unit would be prioritised for stroke patients, although, where there is spare capacity, some beds

may be used to care for acutely ill patients to ensure all patients get the best care available. Members look forward to visiting the Stroke Unit at the earliest convenience.

- (d) **Planning for Winter Pressures** – Members have been reassured that although we are currently experiencing a pandemic flu outbreak the forecast is for a sustained period of sickness, rather than a major surge of sickness. The Executive Director of Operations and Business, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust said that the Trust are experiencing lots of pressures from flu like symptoms, which was likely to continue throughout the winter months. The Assistant Director Public Protection reported that Darlington Borough Council are implementing its Pandemic Influenza Plan to respond to a pandemic and are working with partner organisations to ensure that essential services would be maintained in the event of a pandemic. The Locality Director of Public Health reported that vaccinations against swine flu are being delivered to hospitals and GPs and that key front line health and social care staff would be vaccinated together with vulnerable groups, on a priority basis, once received.
- (e) **Quality Innovation Productivity Prevention (QIPP) Overview** – The Director of Partnerships and Services delivered a PowerPoint presentation in respect of Quality Innovation Productivity Prevention (QIPP). The presentation outlined NHS County Durham and NHS Darlington intention to refresh of the five years Strategic Plan. Members noted that QIPP was everything the PCTs are already doing in relation to value for money, especially in the current economic down turn. The local NHS has to make planning assumptions for future provisions of services, which would be difficult given the current economic climate. This, coupled with potential zero funding growth from 2011 and increased pressures from, for example, increasing ageing population, NICE drugs and guidelines and inflation, meant an anticipated £200m funding gap in real terms for County Durham and Darlington. The challenge is to ensure that this is managed positively to ensure high quality, patient focussed, innovative and efficient services and to continue to focus on improving health and reducing health inequalities. The scale of the challenge was noted by Members and engagement will continue with provides, partners, patients and the general public.
- (f) **Special Meeting – Serious Case Review** – The Committee held a special meeting in August 2009 to consider the outcome of the Serious Case Review; as a result the Committee received an update report at their October meeting. The report appended the Action Plan, was signed off by the Darlington Safeguarding Board on 28th September 2009. Members were pleased to note that the three outstanding actions identified at 11th August 2009 meeting, have been confirmed as completed by partner agencies. Members' are particularly interested in the discharge letter process and felt reassured by Officers that the processes are now more robust following the Serious Case Review.
- (g) **Specialised Commissioning** – At a recent Committee meeting, Members received a briefing on specialised commissioning arrangements in place across the North East Region and nationally from the Director of Partnerships and Services, NHS County Durham. The report appended an introduction to specialised services and how commissioning of specialised services are organised, together with the National and North East Region Groups and Teams in place.

- (h) **Supporting People Review of Services for People who are Homeless or at Risk of Homelessness and Young Parents** – Members received the decisions made by Cabinet in relation to the Supporting People Review of services for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and young parents. The objectives of the review were explained and the outcome included an increase in the number of units of floating support, preventative services and a more diverse range of accommodation services. Particular reference was made to the recent decision of the Salvation Army withdrawing from the tendering process for accommodation they currently provide for homeless men in Darlington until the end of March 2010.
 - (i) **Regional Health Scrutiny** – Health Scrutiny Support Officers across the North East Region have been discussing applying for a bid to the Supporting Scrutiny - Health Inequalities Scrutiny Programme run by the Centre of Public Scrutiny. It is proposed that regionally all 12 Local Authorities apply for funding to undertake a scrutiny review on an issue that is cross cutting across all the diverse communities within our region. If successful funds would be allocated and support would be received from a consultant to assist with some in depth scrutiny. 11 out of the 12 Authorities have signed up to this in principle and the subject matter proposed is health needs of ex-servicemen (both physically and mentally). I as Chair of this Scrutiny Committee will attend the Member meeting, due to be arranged in December together with all the Health Scrutiny Chair across the region to support the proposals on behalf of Darlington. It is anticipated that a review of this nature will be cost neutral to us as an Authority and that individual Authorities will undertake its own piece of work to feed into the overall review, which will be managed by a Project Board. A project of this nature is the first of its kind, as nationally, proactive health scrutiny has not been undertaken on a regional basis before. I look forward to being part of this pioneering project.
 - (j) **Work Programme 2009/2010** – We have given consideration to the Work Programme of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2009/10 and possible review topics. We have examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan, in order to identify areas of particular interest or concern and I have extended an open invitation for the inclusion of additional items on the Committee’s Work Programme.
2. Since the last meeting of Council, the Chair of the Committee has attended various briefings with Officers.

Councillor Marian Swift
Chair of the Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee