
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) **Response to the ‘Liberating the NHS’ White Paper** – The Committee established a Task and Finish Group to respond to the White Paper and met on a number of occasions with representatives from relevant organisations including a GP. As Chair I presented our response to Cabinet in October. One minor amendment was made at the meeting and the response on behalf of this Council was forwarded to the Secretary of State ahead of the consultation deadline.
 - (b) **Regional Health Scrutiny** – Councillor Newall attended the final evidence session in Stockton, which focussed on employment and learning opportunities for ex service leavers. Members received presentations from the Careers Transition Partnership, Armed Forces Champion Tees Valley Job Centre Plus, Finchale College and Mental Health North East. The afternoon was extremely informative and interesting and it is proposed that the next meeting of the workstream will pull together the final report and recommendations to be submitted to the Project Board in time for the December deadline.
 - (c) **Seizing the Future Oversight Delivery Board** – Members regularly attended the Seizing the Future Oversight Delivery Board until it disbanded. This has been a valuable process to assist with the monitoring and implementation of Seizing the Future which involved a major reconfiguration of acute hospital services for County Durham and Darlington. The Scrutiny Committee has been regularly updated on the progress and will continue to do so through our regular NHS briefings. The final report of the Board was presented to our recent Committee meeting and fully endorsed. The Associate Director of Marketing and Communications, County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT) thanked the Members who attended the Board meetings and emphasised that it was a very successful piece of joint working with both Overview and Scrutiny Committees in Darlington and County Durham.
 - (d) **BALANCE, North East Alcohol Office** – The Director of BALANCE recently attended our Committee meeting and introduced an extremely interesting and encouraging presentation about Balance and the work being undertaken to tackle the problem associated with alcohol misuse across the North East. We are pleased to hear that there has been a number of reductions in relation to months life lost for males; under 18’s alcohol specific hospital admissions; alcohol related recorded crimes; and alcohol related violent crimes. We were particularly interested in the ‘localism’ approach to minimum pricing of units of alcohol and surprised to learn that alcohol is 70% cheaper now than in 1980 and just how readily available it is. Balance will continue informing, educating and influencing the people of the North East about the personal and wider social impacts of alcohol misuse; promoting evidence-based best practice and innovation in order to drive cost effectiveness and efficiencies ensuring,

where appropriate, activity is done once rather than 12 times; and lobbying Government for a change in laws and regulations, especially around the price, availability and marketing of alcohol products.

- (e) **Adult Social Care, Universal Access to Information, Advice and Support** – We have recently been advised on the progress on the Strategy which supports and facilitates the universal access to information, advice and support for those people and their carers who may need adult social care support or need some support to remain independent. We are interested in how the Strategy will benefit so many older people and have requested further progress on the Strategy in March 2011.
- (f) **A framework to further develop prevention and early intervention in Darlington** – We have also considered the progress being made to continue developing a strategic framework to improve prevention and early intervention for those individuals who need or may need support to meet their adult social care needs. The framework is a key enabler with projects arising from it which will contribute to the Adult Social Care Transformation Programme and to the delivery of whole system efficiencies.
- (g) **Personalised Budgets** – We have established a Task and Finish Review Group to consider personalised budgets and work has commenced. At our first meeting we discussed with Officers personal budgets and considered best practice from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and Hartlepool Borough Council. We are holding a focus group session with service users and carers to provide Members with an opportunity of discussing the benefits, difficulties and challenges of personalised budgets.
- (h) **Learning Disabilities Day Opportunities Redesign** – Members of the Scrutiny Committee have recently been consulted on the learning disabilities day opportunities redesign. Members are aware that Darlington's current day opportunity services for people with a learning difficulty are based upon traditional models and provide some choice for people. However not all are designed to support people to gain maximum independence, and need to be remodelled and redesigned to match current need and meet future demand. The Head of Strategic Commissioning and Partnerships tabled an updated version of the six proposed options, following the outcome of the consultation. Members commented on the options which will be taken into account prior approval of cabinet in December 2010.
- (i) **End of Life Care Joint Commissioning Strategy** – We have been briefed that the Council together with NHS County Durham and Darlington and Durham County Council, are in the process of developing a Joint Commissioning Strategy to improve care for end of life / palliative care health and social care services across County Durham and Darlington over the next three years. This strategy will set the work plan for the three organisations to improve and develop services for end of life care over the next 5 years. The action plan, once it is finalised will be reviewed and updated annually.
- (j) **Good Death Charter** – Professor Edwin Pugh and Keith Aungiers delivered an interesting presentation about the work that has been undertaken in respect of end of life care, the facts and the challenges; and the public health approach to developing a North East Regional Charter. The draft charter was consulted upon for three months which has resulted in revisions and refinement. The findings of the consultation will be

(k) **Work Programme 2010/2011** – We have given consideration to the Work Programme of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2010/11 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, I have attended various briefings with Officers.

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