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**OVERVIEW OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform and update Members on progress within Adult Social Care and Housing since the last meeting of Council. The following are the main areas of work under the Portfolio for Adult Social Care and Housing.

**Adult Social Care –Strategic Commissioning**

2. Following the submission of the Annual Learning Disability Self-Assessment, a validation meeting was arranged with NHS England. The meeting, which was held on 7 March 2014, involved some scrutiny of the Darlington submission. We will receive formal feedback on the self - assessment and the allocation of a final overall assessment rating. A small team of people from Darlington attended the meeting, which included health and social care staff, providers and disabled people.
3. Following the validation meeting, the Learning Disability Network subsequently looked at developing a local improvement plan to address identified areas of need.
4. The new single working age adults residential contract went out to tender on 10 March 2014. Progress will be reported in the next overview.
5. The Shared Lives Tender was not awarded. The current contract has been extended to allow an impact assessment to be undertaken with the three individuals currently supported through the contract. Negotiations are also taking place with the existing provider on a new model of funding the service that includes accessing housing benefit, personal contribution and a Council contribution. The current model is fully funded by Adult Social Care.
6. On 29 January 2014, there was an event to which more than 30 local social care and health providers were in attendance. The main focus of the event was to engage with providers about the Council's commitment to work in greater partnership with providers using a developing model of co production. The event was facilitated by the organisation Inclusion North.
7. At the same event, progress on the Darlington Market Position Statement was shared with providers and through a table top exercise they were asked to identify what they, as providers, would require from a Market Position Statement. It is expected that the development of the Market Position statement will help commissioners and providers to work together to identify the most effective and

cost-efficient services.

## **Adult Social Care – Operational Developments**

8. Following the Adult Social Care Peer Challenge in November 2013 we have now received the final report. The scope of the Peer Challenge was a focus on the following areas :-
  - (a) Vision, Strategy and Leadership
  - (b) Resource and Workforce Management
  - (c) Service Delivery and Effective Practice
  
9. Commissioning and Working Together were also covered. The Peer Challenge Team gave very positive feedback and made recommendations for action and consideration in four specific areas :-
  - (a) Develop and agree a consistent and clear understanding of the best way to discharge its Adult Safeguarding duties within Darlington (building on existing good practice), notably around the MASH, and wider resources and points of access.
  - (b) Whilst working towards the eventual integration of services and functions with the Darlington CCG as a way of resolving financial pressure, the Council should recognise the risks associated with such a strategy. As well as managing the risks, the Council should continue to realise the efficiencies, savings and improved outcomes through its own management and operational actions.
  - (c) The reviewers noted that our approach to transformation through the development of community capital and community support networks is a positive one but commented it will need to be developed over a short time period, and that it can take time to develop and embed such co-production, even with initial investment.
  - (d) The last recommendation was with regard to reviewing the communication strategy to ensure that staff, service users and the wider public understand the challenges, options and opportunities better.
  
10. Actions have been taken around each of the four areas, and in advance of the report being made available to the Council, to ensure that identified areas for improvement were not subject to delay.
  
11. Some of the strengths identified were:-
  - (a) There is consistent, strong leadership for Adult Social Care, throughout the Council, and across Members and Officers.
  - (b) The Council appears to have a loyal, positive staff group, and high levels of trust throughout the organisation.

- (c) Management in Adult Social Care is seen as up to the job and delivering well in difficult circumstances.
  - (d) The Adult Social Care Peer Challenge identified many strengths in Darlington's Adult Social Care Services, as well as some risks to delivery against the challenges.
  - (e) There is a strong sense of place, identity, community and pride in Darlington.
  - (f) The Council has been open with the Public and there is an awareness of the risks around funding
12. The outcome of Peer Challenge assists us to take Adult Social Care forward in a very positive way, building on the strengths identified and facing the challenges of the future.

### **Assessment and Care Management**

13. Transfer of Darlington Borough Council's Home Care Service is on target with reviews of all services users being undertaken prior to transfer. Close partnership working with Making Space is ensuring all documents, policies, procedures, and service user files are set up ready for 1 April 2014. Occupational Therapy remains within budget targets, performance is good and we continue to maintain zero waiting list prioritising hospital discharges. The new structure in relation to the on-going care function, which includes Intake, MASH, complex on-going care and annual reviews, is working well with positive feedback from staff.

### **RIACT**

14. RIACT (Responsive Integrated Assessment Care Team) received excellent comments following the Peer Review. Some of the Peer Review Team were able to visit the Hundens Lane site and were impressed by the integrated approach to health and social care provided by the Service. It was also a way to reaffirm our direction of travel in the future. The subsequent Better Care Better Value (BCBV) bid which was put forward on 14 February 2014 has focused on our decision, along with partners, to develop this service further. This is an exciting time for Adult Social Care and the progression of Integrated Service as a way forward for the residents of Darlington.
15. RIACT has managed the challenge of winter pressures and continues to do so. Along with County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (CDDFT), Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV), North East Ambulance Service (NEAS), Police, Fire Brigade and Care Commissioning Groups (CCG's), there have been developments through Urgent/Clinical Care Board representation to promote a whole system approach to Darlington's social and healthcare economy. This has enabled organisations to consider and agree different approaches to support our Acute and non-Acute Hospitals.

## Safeguarding

16. Darlington Borough Council has been involved in an Executive Strategy process regarding a local private hospital. This followed a safeguarding referral relating to physical abuse against patients within the hospital. The process has been lengthy with safeguarding meetings starting in December 2012. The Support Worker was accused of physical assault and this was evidenced by CCTV footage. The Support Worker claimed that this was horseplay that got out of hand, she was found guilty on 2 counts of assault on one patient and was sentenced to 4 Months, suspended for 12 months given a 12 month supervision order and has to complete a 16 week women's programme. The patient who was involved was awarded £200 compensation. The Judge commented that he held management at the private hospital at fault and was frustrated that no one from the hospital was in Court and that his hands were tied in terms of the length of the sentence.
17. Throughout the safeguarding process we have worked with the Care Quality Commission, Police, the NHS (Commissioners, Clinical Commissioning Group, Local Area Team, North East Commissioning Unit and the Provider to ensure that there are good systems in place to ensure the safety and quality of care being provided. This work is on-going.

## Housing

### Cockerton Redevelopment

18. I am pleased to report that I have visited the Cockerton regeneration site to see the improvements made to date. All of the Council stock has benefitted from new kitchens, bathrooms, composite doors, improved insulation and new heating where necessary. New perimeter fencing has been supplied together with pavement crossings and hard standings for vehicles. Whilst in the area I met with Officers from North Star Housing Group who are providing new flats and houses to rent to replace some of the properties that have been demolished. All of the properties are being let via the Choice Based Lettings Scheme adopted throughout the Tees Valley area. I was able to meet one of the first families to move in and they told me how delighted they were with their new home, particularly the space standards and energy efficiency measures. They were also pleased that the rent was lower than they had been paying for something smaller in the private rented sector and the ability to return to live in the Cockerton area, where they had family and provided support to elderly relatives nearby. They commented on how the area was improving and there were clear signs of this as I toured the estate.
19. All of the social housing will be completed by midsummer and work will then take place to complete the landscaping which has been designed with local residents. The private developer, ESH Group, are building homes for sale at the same time. Their show home is now available to view and a number of plots have already been purchased. In the coming months there are plans for all partners to work together on a joint project to build community capacity and social cohesion.

## **Red Hall**

20. Work is continuing on master planning for the regeneration of Red Hall commencing in 2014/15, maximising its strategic links with future developments at Lingfield Point, the Eastern Urban Fringe and the former Red Hall stables site. Community support has been received for some selective demolition work, internal and external property improvements, environmental improvements, upgrading of footpaths and lighting and energy efficiency measures. Work is also commencing on establishing a Red Hall Community Group, comprising of local residents and stakeholders, who will help to inform and make decisions about Red Hall's future improvement plans.

## **Social Fund**

21. Over the winter period there has been a significant increase in both applications and successful claims to the Social Fund, reflecting both the on-going impact of the Welfare Reforms and the overall economic climate. In January 2014, for example, 232 applications were made for Crisis payments of which 181 were successful, totalling over £5,500. These were mainly for food from the Food Bank and utility payments. There were also 43 applications for Community Care payments in January, all of which were successful at a total cost of around £28K. The most popular items were for basics such as bedding, with 81 packages being provided followed by kitchen utensils, flooring and curtains. There is however a steady demand also for various items of furniture and white goods.
22. Single people continue to apply to the Social Fund far more than any other household group, followed by lone parents. Applications come from a very wide age range but from predominantly those between 20 and 59 years of age. Based on the first 10 months of this service operating, it is estimated that over 2500 applications will have been made to the Social Fund by the end of March 2014, which shows how difficult some of our residents are finding it to make ends meet.

## **GOLD**

23. A special Project Group made up of Lisa Holdsworth, Service Development Officer, Claire Llewelyn and five volunteers has been established to look at the future of GOLD on the basis of Council funding ending by April 2015. Various options have been explored and the group are currently writing to several organisations who they feel might be interested in working with GOLD into the future. Three groups have discussed the options and given ideas.
24. The volunteers are arranging a Celebration Event for 24th March at their AGM on 14th May, where these options will be discussed. They have met to plan a tea dance and arrangements are well underway, though more funding will need to be sought. Members of GOLD have arranged a stall in the Hospital on 26th February, to (belatedly) celebrate National Dignity Action Day and to promote dignity in care.
25. Ten members of Extra Care staff undertook the Level 2 training course Dignity and Respect in Care: Theory and Practice, and we understand that all will pass the

qualification, though there is a verification process to be undertaken. Three volunteers delivered this training and marked the training packs. The training pack will be altered because of what was learnt over the course. The next courses are currently being planned.

26. The Health Group continues to meet monthly. The last meeting did not have a speaker in order to give time for members to discuss current issues.

27. I have also :-

- (a) attended the Holocaust Memorial Ceremony;
- (b) attended a meeting of the Adults Safeguarding Board;
- (c) met with Ray Jeffrey, the new Chair of the Royal British Legion;
- (d) met the Regional Campaigns Officers for the RNIB;
- (e) attended the official opening of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Unit;
- (f) attended a meeting of the County Durham and Darlington Foundation Trust Governing Council; and
- (g) Attended the welcoming event for the new Bishop of Durham at St Aidan's Church of England Academy

**Councillor Veronica Copeland**  
**Cabinet Member with Portfolio for Adult Social Care and Housing**