
OVERVIEW OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING PORTFOLIO

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. The new single working age adults residential framework contract is out to tender. The outcome will be reported at the next Council meeting.
3. On 18 March 2014, the Council, in partnership with the North of England Commissioning Unit and Healthwatch Darlington, held an event in the Dolphin Centre to seek views and contributions on a local delivery plan for the National Mental Health Strategy, 'No health without Mental Health'. The Strategy, published in February 2011, sets out six broad outcomes to improve mental health and wellbeing. The event was attended by over 100 people and included a range of stakeholders including people with a mental health problem and their family carers. The event considered the six outcomes and asked the questions :-
 - (a) What should we be doing more of?
 - (b) What should we be doing differently?
 - (c) What should we be doing that is new?
4. A report of the event is being compiled by Healthwatch Darlington.
5. From 1 April 2014, the support provided within the four extra care housing schemes within Darlington is being provided by Making Space, following a procurement process, which included the potential TUPE transfer of in excess of 60 members of staff. Making Space is a national charity with over 30 years' experience in adult health and social care services. The organisation has worked closely with staff and tenants to ensure that the services which people currently receive will not change and is very proactive in listening to individuals and their carers in order to provide the best possible care and support.

6. Also, from 1 April 2104, there is a new Home Improvement Agency Service(HIA) delivered through a contract with Durham County Council. The HIA Service will continue to provide :-
 - (a) General information and advice to homeowners and tenants who are elderly, disabled, vulnerable or on low incomes regarding home repairs, maintenance and adaptation; and
 - (b) Support to Disabled People (including Disabled Children) to apply for a Disabled Facilities Grant, following an assessment of need and recommendation from Darlington Borough Council Occupational Therapy Team. For those who receive a grant, the HIA will also project manage the home adaptation work on their behalf.

BCF (Better Care Fund)

7. The Better Care Fund submission was made on the 4th April to the NHS Area Team, following approval from the Health and Well Being Board.
8. The fund will enable £1.4 million to be invested in new schemes in 2014/2015, in order to support people in their own homes, with £3.9 million being transferred from hospital care to community support in 2015/16. The key drivers are to further integrate adult social care and health via pooled budgets and closer working, and improving the outcomes for the population by enabling those who can be better cared for at home to remain at home and not have to go into hospital.

Adult Social Care – Operational Developments

9. The Draft Care Bill has the potential to be a landmark piece of legislation, transforming the social care system. Updates will be provided on a regular basis, the following is a brief update regarding the range of implications for Adult Social Care, under the Care Bill it will become a duty for Local Authorities to :-
 - (a) promote people’s wellbeing and put the outcomes which matter most to them at the heart of every decision that is made;
 - (b) enable people to prevent and postpone the need for care and support, rather than only intervening at crisis point; and
 - (c) put people in control of their lives so they can pursue opportunities to realise their potential.

10. Adult Social Care will also have a universal obligation towards all local people to :-
- (a) arrange services, facilities or take steps to prevent, reduce or delay the need for care and support;
 - (b) provide information and advice to help people understand the care and support system, access services and plan for the future; and
 - (c) promote diversity and quality in the market of providers so that there are high quality services to meet people's choices.
11. The Draft Care Bill introduces a number of key tasks for us as a Council and Officers are allocated to complete the tasks :-
- (a) we need to identify all local self-funders;
 - (b) we need to estimate the time needed to assess self-funders;
 - (c) we need to estimate the cost of meeting care costs for self-funders locally;
 - (d) we need to identify potential impact on current workforce (new skills, capacity and configuration);
 - (e) we need to consider ways of conducting proportionate assessments (including for the significant volume of self-funders who will want to set their care account running) including via third sector or self-assessment;
 - (f) we need to calculate the cost of implementation (excluding the costs of the cap – to be underwritten by Government);
 - (g) we need to review financial processes, information and advice systems and IT; and
 - (h) we need to involve local providers regarding the impact of the reforms.

Safeguarding Adults

12. We will be undertaking a Rapid Improvement Event in June 2014. The focus of the event is in direct response to feedback from the Peer Challenge in November. The event will ensure that the safeguarding adult process is clearly implemented by all; that individuals, carers, families, partner agencies, voluntary and third sector agencies are all involved; and that we are using all resources efficiently. The event will be sponsored by Mike Vening, the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

DAWN Re-launch

13. On 26 March, there was a re-launch of DAWN (Darlington Aging Well Network). I chaired this meeting and the secretariat was provided by Health Watch. The meeting was well attended, with over 20 representatives from a range of partner organisations. Informative presentations were given by Jackie Kay, Darlington Clinical Commissioning Group, on Health Transformation and Duncan Clark, Darlington Borough Council, on the Better Care Fund (BCF).
14. Following this re-launch, meetings will take place quarterly.

Housing Services New Homes - Eastbourne

15. Work has commenced on a £7m scheme to build 76 new affordable homes on the former Eastbourne School site. This is a collaboration between the Council, Esh Property Services, Coast and Country Housing and the Homes and Communities Agency. I attended a ground-breaking event in March 2014 and was particularly pleased to welcome Coast and Country Housing who are providing housing in Darlington for the first time. The two and three bedroomed houses will be available for rental, shared ownership and purchase.

Registered Provider Development

16. The Salvation Army Housing Association (SAHA) redevelopment of Tom Raine Court has been completed. This scheme consisted of a mix of supported housing and general needs flats. It has been redeveloped to 27 one bedroom properties and two four bedroom houses. Although the properties are designed for general needs, the focus will be on assisting single homeless people. The SAHA will carry out an assessment of support needs and will provide tenancy support for those who need it. Fifty per cent of all allocations will be retained by the SAHA to let via a local lettings policy and 50 per cent will be let via Compass Choice Based Lettings system.
17. Coast and Country Housing Association has started work on the conversion of Regent House offices in the Town Centre into 51 one bedroom flats that will be let on affordable rents to couples and single people. The work is being partly funded through the Government's Empty Homes programme and will take about one year to complete.
18. Fabrick Housing Group who are now part of Thirteen Group after merging with Vela Group to form the biggest Tees Valley Housing Association, has started work in Woodland Road redeveloping properties in the grounds of the Memorial Hospital. It is redeveloping 57 existing apartments in six blocks plus a separate building (currently used as laundry/social room) purchased from County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust. The scheme currently houses NHS staff and, as part of the refurbished scheme, will continue to offer accommodation to NHS staff with the remainder available for Affordable Rent. The work will take 12 months to complete. Properties will become available to let early in 2015 via the Compass Choice Based Lettings system.
19. Around £6m of improvements to Council housing was successfully completed in 2013/14. Energy Efficient homes are a key priority for Council tenants on low incomes and at risk of fuel poverty. New condensing boilers and central heating upgrades have been completed to around 360 properties in accordance with our policy to upgrade systems every 15 years. Around 110 properties with lower than average thermal efficiency have benefitted from a range of improvement measures including new roofs, double-glazed PVCu windows and composite external doors. 270 properties have received extensive internal upgrades including new kitchens, bathrooms and where appropriate new heating and rewiring. £300k has been invested in home adaptations to support tenants and their families to live independently in their own homes, this is in addition to the adaptations included as

part of the above planned maintenance. Over £500k has been spent on external works such as fencing and footpath improvements. Other measures include structural work, hardwired smoke and heat detectors, Lifeline equipment and door entry upgrades, garage improvements and improvements to the communal areas of blocks of flats.

GOLD

20. The special Project Group made up of the Service Development Officer and five volunteers has continued to look at the future of GOLD on the basis of Council funding ending by April 2015. In response to its letter requesting expressions of interest in working with the Group, it received responses from seven organisations. The volunteers held a Celebration Event on 24th March to give some more information. Forms containing six questions to register an interest have been sent to the seven organisations, along with an estimate of costs. Completed forms were to be returned to GOLD by 28th April. Meetings are to be held with individual organisations who register their interest in early May, and a decision or choice on the future of GOLD is expected to be made at the AGM on 14th May.
21. The tea dance arrangements are well underway for 13th August, though more funding is being sought. The members have been reviewing and updating their publicity and documents (newsletter, expression of interest form and guidelines for speakers) and have been sharing more on their Facebook page and updated the website with help from Council officers.
22. Two more 'pilot' courses of the Level 2 training course Dignity and Respect in Care: Theory and Practice are planned, one with staff from care homes and one with domiciliary care staff, all from private providers. Following this, the course is expected to be absolutely finalised and there will be a small charge for each learner to the provider concerned.
23. The Health Group continues to meet monthly. The speakers were unable to attend the March meeting so the members discussed health issues and shared information and have asked some questions of services. Councillor Newall attended and, along with members, gave an update of Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and its special Stroke meeting.
24. Members continue to represent GOLD on various boards and meetings and have attended for example the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee, Darlington Organisations Together and the Carnival planning group.
25. I have also:-
 - (a) visited the refurbished Customer Services Centre;
 - (b) attended the Best of Darlington awards evening;
 - (c) supported the Spring Thing events;
 - (d) attended the GOLD celebration event;
 - (e) attended the CDFT Governing Council meeting;
 - (f) attended a meeting of the Adult Safeguarding Board;
 - (g) attended a special meeting of the Health and Well Being Board;

- (h) visited the new housing development at Tom Raine Court;
- (i) taken part in the Dignity in Care training along with members of GOLD; and
- (j) attended the Freedom of the Borough event for the Royal Signals 50 Regiment

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